



Appendix B

Middle Level Information and Rules

**Plymouth Community Intermediate School
Plymouth South Middle School**

Middle School Philosophy

Plymouth Community Intermediate School and Plymouth South Middle School are committed to fostering an educational and social environment that addresses the unique needs of emerging adolescents. Further, the schools serve as bridges between the structured framework in elementary school and the self-direction in high school. A diverse set of learning experiences is provided, exposing the students to a wide range of academic, aesthetic, cultural, and occupational opportunities. In each curriculum area, basic skills are stressed to provide students with the basis for further learning. It is our professional responsibility to demand high standards of performance from our students so that they will be successful in tomorrow's world.

Goals for all Students

Success is built from a variety of different directions. Middle school students are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Have all assigned work completed
- Have all appropriate materials
- Make the school community a positive learning environment through their behavior
- Be accountable for their actions and be fully cognizant of the guidelines contained in the handbook
- Respect all individuals in the school environment - teachers, aides, service workers, bus drivers, and other students

Grade 6

Students in grade 6 are assigned to a team of two or three teachers. Each team of teacher's works together to teach Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts. In addition to this, students will have teachers in other off-team courses. Grade six students are ready to assume more responsibility for behavior, classwork, and homework. Teachers, guidance counselors, and house administrators are here to provide support and guidance throughout the school year. Students are encouraged to ask questions and seek advice at any time. Many opportunities for involvement in school and community service will exist. We encourage participation. Participation will help a student grow as an individual and make school a more enjoyable and successful place for everyone.

Academic	Enrichment	Music Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English Language Arts• Mathematics• Ancient Civilizations• Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visual Art• Technology Engineering• Health• Exploratory Music• Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Band• Orchestra• Chorus

Grade 7

Students and teachers will be part of a "team" and will function almost like a "school within a school". The focus will be on cooperative learning experiences and increasing confidence to meet any goal set by the student or for the student by the teachers. By the end of seventh grade, students should have the tools to make better-informed and more independent decisions and be adequately prepared for the expectations of an eighth-grader.

Academic	Enrichment	Music Program	World Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts Pre-Algebra World History & Geography Science Literacy & Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Art Health Technology Engineering Physical Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band Orchestra Chorus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to French Introduction to Spanish

Grade 8

Grade 8 is a very important year in, itself, and for high school preparation. Teachers will still keep a watchful eye, but, during this year, the students are expected to become increasingly more independent in their studies. The students are expected to grow and mature both academically and personally. School responsibilities have not changed. It is still required to complete assignments and homework regularly, and respect for teachers, school staff, and peers is still required. Failure to follow basic guidelines will affect grades as well as relationships with others. Performance this year has a tremendous impact on a high school student's future.

Academic	Enrichment	Music Program	World Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts Algebra Civics Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Art Health Research Physical Education Make It Your Business Technology Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band Orchestra Chorus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> French I Spanish I

Academic Expectations

Grade Explanation for Grades 6, 7 and 8

Excellent Quality		Good Quality		Acceptable Quality		Poor Quality		Failing	
A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69		
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	F	0-59
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

WP	<i>Withdrawn Passing</i>	WDN	<i>Withdrawn from School</i>
WF	<i>Withdrawn Failing</i>	I	<i>Incomplete</i>
P/F	<i>Pass/Fail</i>	M	<i>Medical</i>
AUD	<i>Audit</i>	GNA	<i>Goals Not Attained (for Special Education Students)</i>

**A grade of incomplete (I) is assigned to signify temporary deferment of a regular final letter grade. It is used sparingly in compelling situations when a student is not able to complete work in the course by the end of the semester due to extenuating circumstances beyond the ability of the student to predict and control. Incompletes must be completed within two weeks of the close of the marking period, or earlier. If exceptions are required, they must be approved by the building administration.*

Honor Roll for Grades 6, 7 and 8

An honor roll based on scholastic achievement is published at the end of each marking period. The levels of honor roll achievement and scholastic requirements for each level are as follows:

High Honors (Grades 7 & 8 only)	<i>No letter grade below A- in every subject.</i>
Honors (Grades 6, 7 & 8 only)	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject.</i>
Honorable Mention (Grades 6, 7 & 8 only)	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject except one, which may carry a C or C+.</i>

Ways to Get Academic Help

Academic expectations and responsibilities increase for students at the middle school level. Academic work and grades can create rewards but often creates frustration and fear of non-promotion. Summer school may be required for those students having excessive absences, incomplete work, or failing grades. Students and families are encouraged to take advantage of the available help. Please call your child's counselor for more information about the following opportunities.

- **Communication** of current and upcoming projects, tests, and quizzes.
- **Stay for extra help after school with subject teachers.** This is the simplest – but often least used – tool for success. Teachers list days they stay for help. Late buses may be available.
- **Tutoring** – may be available before school
- Use of the “**agenda book**” for a list of daily assignments as well as parent, teacher, student communication.
- **Guidance counselors** are available for help or advice with school or family issues. Each counselor aims to help students make the best decisions about their present and future. Guidance counselors are trained to provide students with ways

to cope with anything in their lives that may affect how and what they do in school. Students are encouraged to get to know their counselors.

- Come to our **Parent Night Programs** and our monthly **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)** meetings or **School Council** meetings where academic issues and school questions are often discussed.

Homework Policy

The Plymouth School Department considers homework an integral part of the academic curriculum. Homework provides an opportunity for reinforcement and expansion of classroom learning and is essential in teaching student's accountability and responsibility. Homework typically consists of but is not limited to, reading, skill development activities, writing assignments, and other appropriate learning tasks. Homework is monitored by teachers and is factored into student evaluation. Students should expect homework almost every night. Families should establish a routine that sets aside home study time every day. Assignments should be written down. Agenda books are helpful for this purpose and are provided to each student. Extras are available for purchase at each school.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Any student who has cheated on any academic exercise will receive no credit for that exercise. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. A parent/guardian will be notified by the involved teacher in all instances of cheating. The investigation of the claim of cheating and plagiarism will involve the student, teacher, and administration.

Makeup Work

Completing classwork and homework is crucial for academic progress. Students will be allowed to make up the work they missed during all absences. Students will be allowed two days for every day absent to make up work through the end of the term. In the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstance, teachers may grant students additional time to do their make-up work. Students who are unable to complete all the work missed by the established deadline may receive partial credit for the work completed and turned in. Students who fail to make up any of their work will receive no credit. In instances when a student is absent for an extended period of time (i.e., 4 days or more), parents may make arrangements to obtain the missed work and should expect that staff will require a minimum of 24 hours to gather the missed assignments. A student should not be required to make up a test the day s/he returns from an absence. This does not apply to in-school suspensions.

Class/Course Changes

- May be initiated by the student's parent/guardian submitting a written request to the principal.
- The counselor will make a recommendation to the principal regarding the change.
- Level changes in courses may be made during the year with the approval of the guidance counselor and the principal.
- Changes to elective classes must be requested within ten (10) days of the first class meeting.

Promotion Policy

Each student's report card indicates four-term grades and one final grade for the year in each major subject. This final grade is what is used to determine promotion. Sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students who pass their major academic subjects will be eligible for the promotion. Students failing two or more of their academic subjects may want to attend summer tutoring. Promotion or retention of any student failing two or more subjects is at the principal's discretion. We are a community dedicated to individual growth for our students. Family members or staff may request a review of a decision of non-promotion with the principal.

Attendance/Absence

Students are expected to attend every day that school is in session. School attendance is governed by state law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Sections 1 & 2, which state that no child may exceed seven (7) days absence from school in any six months except for medical reasons). All students are required to be in attendance for 90% of the school year. Students failing to attend 90% of the school year may be referred to the supervisor of attendance and will be reviewed for non-promotion to the next grade level. Parents or guardians are required to contact the school on the morning of the day the student is absent (P.C.I.S.: 508-830-4450 or P.S.M.S.: 508-224-2725). If students are unaccounted for, the school will make every attempt to contact the parents or guardians. Students arriving at school after the first bell will be considered tardy. If at all possible, the parent/guardian should accompany the student into the school's office. If the parent/guardian cannot accompany the student into school, a note should be sent in with him/her. When returning to school from an absence, the student is expected to bring a note from home, signed by a parent/guardian, to clearly explain the date(s) and reason(s) of the absence. This note, including full name, must be given to a homeroom teacher on the day of return. Notes must be provided even if a phone call has been made to notify the school of the absence. Students who do not bring absent notes will be considered truant. Truant students are subject to disciplinary action. Only the school administration has the authority to approve absences.

Excused Absences

Excused absences may include:

- an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a physician (parents/guardians have up to 5 days to send in a physician's note)
- a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- suspension from school
- court appearances
- school-sponsored field trips
- medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school
- religious holidays
- juniors and seniors will be allowed three (3) documented college visits each year

Tardiness

Tardiness to school or class can have negative effects on success in school; therefore, it should be kept to a minimum. Tardiness to school after 11:30 A.M. will count as an absence from school. Tardiness of more than 10 minutes to a class (15 minutes to the first period) without a valid pass will count as an absence from that class. If tardiness to school results in missing or being more than 10 minutes to a class (es) (15 minutes to the first period), absence(s) will be recorded for the affected class (es).

What Is an Unexcused Absence?

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. *This is not true.* Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.

- the student needed to babysit
- cutting class
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar
- attending driver's education classes for road practice during the school day

Coming Late and Leaving Early

If a student misses more than twenty minutes of a class it will count as an absence from that class. Students having nineteen absences from a class may be denied credit.

Early Dismissal Procedure

A student is asked to:

- Bring his/her dismissal note to the house secretary in the morning. The note should give the student's full name, the time to be dismissed, and the name of the person who will be picking up the student. The secretary will issue the student a dismissal pass.
- Show the dismissal pass to the teacher at the beginning of the class.
- Report to the main office at the designated time to await dismissal.

A photo ID will be required of the person signing a student out of the building. If there is any court decision documentation, which would restrict dismissal to only certain identified adults, we need to know this and receive a copy of this information. If another adult is likely to pick a student up in an emergency, parents/guardians must add his/her name to the registration cards. Dental and medical appointments should not be scheduled during any part of the school day. Telephone requests for dismissal will not be honored. School dismissals will occur only in the event of illness. Students must first see the school nurse, who is authorized to dismiss any student. No student should leave the school directly from the Nurse's Office. The student must first report to and check out from the Main Office.

Attendance at Extra-Curricular Activities

Students who intend on participating in extra-curricular activities must attend school on the day of the activity. Emergency and unusual circumstances will be considered through administrative review. For evening activities such as performances, concerts, cultural events in which the student is not performing, we ask that students be in the presence of an adult. We expect that our audiences will be able to view school performances without interruption or distraction. Students found disturbing the event or wandering the building may be removed or may be subject to disciplinary action.

Dances/School Functions

Throughout the school year, dances and various school functions are held and are chaperoned by school personnel. Permission slips are sent home one week before the dance and ticket sales are conducted in the cafeteria during lunches. The cost of the dance, as well as the date and times, are noted on the slip. Students must have a valid ticket to enter. No dance tickets will be sold at the door. Students are not allowed to leave the dance until its conclusion. Parents and guardians must arrange the pickup of their child promptly after the dance. For safety reasons, pickup must be on school property.

Corridor Passing

When walking in the corridors, students are to keep to the right. They are not to run or yell in the corridors. Following these rules will help to prevent confusion and keep everyone safe. A pass is always needed when traveling alone.

Late Bus

The late bus may be provided only for those students involved in school-sponsored activities. The late bus will transport students to the vicinity of their homes using the main roads in town. The late bus is essentially an extension of the school itself. Improper conduct aboard the bus is to be treated as a school offense, subject to punishment at the discretion of the school administration. This may well mean denial of

the privilege of transportation. Please see pages 20-21 for more information regarding “School Bus Procedures & Regulations.” Please contact your child’s school for information regarding late bus routes and stops.

Lockers

Having a locker is a privilege and a serious responsibility. A few important points:

- Visits to lockers should be kept to a minimum and are up to the teacher's discretion.
- Students must not give a locker combination to anyone.
- Students must not use a locker assigned to any other student.
- A locker will be assigned on an individual or shared basis (as space permits) for as long as a student is a member of the school. The school will not be responsible for missing articles taken from any locker. Anything of importance or value should not be stored in a locker.
- Students should check with the administrator responsible for the locker assignment whenever there is a problem.

Lockers are the property of the school department and are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the locker neat and clean at all times.

PTA

The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) provides many services to students and teachers. Among its activities, the association raises money for field trips special events, and after-school activities. We ask all parents/guardians to consider membership in their PTA and attend the monthly meetings. Our school is a better place when parents/guardians and teachers work together.

Telephone Use

During the school day, the use of cell phones is prohibited. However, in the event of an emergency, a student may use a school telephone. To use a school phone, the student should request a pass from his/her teacher to go to the house office. From there, the call can be made. Students, if at all possible, should avoid leaving class to make a call. Parents wanting to contact their child at school should call the office, not their child's cell phone, even if to just leave a message.

Behavior/Consequences

The following chart has been developed to demonstrate the possible consequences, which will follow misbehaviors such as those listed in the examples. This chart is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all problems or examples, but it is hoped that it gives the student and parent/guardian an idea of the specific areas of concern and the types of consequences, which will typically follow. The goal is to apply this concept of differing levels of inappropriate behavior to all disciplinary problems in a fair, consistent manner. It is also recognized that there are extenuating circumstances, which relate to a particular problem behavior. Such circumstances may indicate that a specific incident should be dealt with more severely or less severely than the typical situation. Thus, this policy statement includes a degree of administrative discretion as is in the best interest of an individual student. The commission of, or participation in, any of the following types of activities, within the school buildings, on the school grounds, or at school-sponsored events is prohibited.

Explanation of Consequences

Warning:

If an administrative warning is given, it is an indication that the behavior is inappropriate

and that continuation of this behavior may result in serious consequences.

Conference:

Talking often prevents further problems. Conferences may take place with teachers, administrators, counselors, fellow students, and/or parents/guardians.

Essays:

An essay may be assigned as part of any disciplinary action, with the intent that the student will use the essay to reflect on his/her more positive actions in the future.

Detentions:

Detentions are assigned for not following school rules. Detentions take priority over all other activities, including after-school jobs. However, religious activities, medical appointments or counseling appointments verified by a parental note will result in a postponement of the detention. Students will be given at least twenty-four hours' notice before detention is to be served. Failure to stay for detention could result in additional disciplinary action.

In-School Suspension (ISS):

In-School Suspension occurs when a student is expected to attend school but is suspended from classes. The student will be supervised in an area outside of his/her regular classrooms and will be provided with classwork. An in-school suspension may be for all or part of a school day.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):

Out-of-School Suspension occurs when a student is suspended from school and required to remain at home. The student is restricted from the school building and grounds and may not participate in any school activity or sport while on out-of-school suspension.

Exclusion from School:

Exclusion is a long-term suspension from school for a duration of up to 90 school days, depending upon the judgment of the Principal. The student will receive an alternate educational service, which will be coordinated between the administration, guidance counselor, and student.

Expulsion from School:


Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H3/4.

Behavior/Consequences Chart

Type of Problem	Common Examples	Common Consequences
<p>TYPE 1: Actions that create disturbances in and around the school, or that show disrespect for the health, welfare, and/or property of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chewing gum ▪ Distribution/selling of gum/candy ▪ Tardiness to Class ▪ Class disruptions ▪ Spitting ▪ Pass Violations ▪ Failure to stay for detention ▪ Showing disrespect to adults and students ▪ Throwing objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detention, parent/guardian contact ▪ ISS ▪ OSS one day - parent/guardian conference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roughhousing ▪ Use of rude, obscene, or improper language/gestures ▪ Excessive, unexcused tardiness 	
TYPE 2: More serious actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refusal to report to assigned areas ▪ Cafeteria Disturbance ▪ Intentionally disturbing a school function ▪ Inappropriate behavior at school events ▪ Misrepresentation of parent/guardian/school communication ▪ Repeated Type 1 behavior(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Detention, parent/guardian contact ▪ ISS ▪ OSS one day, parent/guardian contact ▪ OSS 1 - 3 days, parent/guardian conference ▪ Removal from school events
TYPE 3: Openly defiant behavior and actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbal abuse/profanity ▪ Possession/Use of tobacco products ▪ Sexual language ▪ Profanity/Civil Rights Violation ▪ Stealing or taking what is not yours ▪ Defacing school or anyone's property ▪ Truancy from school or class ▪ Leaving school grounds ▪ Willful, repeated misbehavior ▪ Repeated Type 1 & 2 behaviors ▪ Smoking/Vaping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ISS ▪ OSS one day, parent/guardian contact ▪ OSS 1 - 3 days, parent/guardian conference ▪ Restitution when appropriate
TYPE 4: Dangerous and seriously disruptive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actions that may cause injury to others ▪ Fighting ▪ Abuse of others/discrimination/sexual harassment ▪ Swearing at an adult ▪ Dangerous behavior such as throwing hard objects, tripping, pulling chairs from beneath other people, etc. ▪ Possession of and/or igniting matches or lighters ▪ Possession/use of stink bombs ▪ "Pantsing" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OSS 1 - 3 Days, parent/guardian contact ▪ OSS 1-3 days, parent/guardian conference ▪ OSS 1-5 days with a review for further action

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discrimination ▪ Repeated Type 1, 2, 3 behaviors 	
TYPE 5: Gross misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stealing by threat or use of force ▪ Sexual harassment ▪ Serious physical assault ▪ Threatening/displaying physical abuse ▪ Vandalism ▪ Hazing ▪ Destruction, damage, theft of school property ▪ Discrimination ▪ Repeated Type 1, 2, 3, 4 behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OSS 3-10 days with a review for longer suspensions in the most serious instances. ▪ Possible recommendation for Central Office Hearing for exclusion. ▪ Referral to police will be made for violations of state law.



Please note:

- Restitution is required in addition to discipline for destruction, damage, and/or theft of property.
- Out-of-school suspensions may be used for multiple offenses of any type.
- Referral for a Level II or Level III hearing may be made at any time in the discipline process.
- This is a list of common offenses. In no way is this list all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to discipline for behaviors/circumstances not listed above. Any school incident may be given more severe punishment at the discretion of the building principal or designee.