



# **UNIVERSITY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

***Transforming minds, attitudes, and futures***

**2016-2017**

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year at University Middle School! This is the school where we *transform minds, attitudes and futures*. I look forward to a very productive school year with our scholars and they will be encouraged to reach their full potential. This scholar handbook and agenda will serve as your guide to a successful school year. The handbook section is a reference tool that provides information about the rules and procedures at University Middle School. It helps the school to operate smoothly and provide a safe and uplifting environment for our scholars. The agenda portion is the tool to support the organizational skills for our scholars' success.

The middle school years are a time to prepare for transition into high school, college and the workforce. These years are critical! This journey holds the promise of boundless opportunities to promote and to stimulate the growth and development of our scholars. They will experience a period of growth where they will embark on a quest to discover their abilities and uniqueness.

It is with pride that I commit every member of the University Middle School community to a partnership with our parents and scholars to facilitate their "discovery" in a safe environment that fosters the celebration of uniqueness, a respect for one another, and a love for learning. I look forward to an enjoyable year with everyone as we work together to achieve success for every scholar who enters our doors!

Sincerely,

***Andrea Tucker***

Principal

# I. INTRODUCTION

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University Middle School is an educational community committed to the presentation of a quality, research-based educational program for every sixth through eighth grade scholar who attends. It is here at UMS that children from a variety of elementary schools within the Irvington Public Schools are united for the first time. This union presents UMS with the opportunity to celebrate the rich diversity that characterizes our community and to access resources that will effectively prepare our children to become outstanding productive citizens.

The administrators and teachers of University Middle School have developed this handbook for the benefit of parents and scholars. The information in this handbook is designed to assist you and your child in making a smooth transition to grades six through eight. It is designed to provide the school rules, regulations, and guidelines for scholar behavior. Please take this opportunity to review and discuss the information provided herein. For your convenience, University Middle School does have a link on the district's website located at [www.irvington.k12.nj.us](http://www.irvington.k12.nj.us). The UMS website includes specific areas for parents and scholars. E-mail addresses for all teachers and other information are an integral part of the website and for households with Internet access; this is a fine source of information for many questions that may arise throughout the school year. Also please browse the district's website to stay current with district news, events, and school board policies.

Our efforts are directed toward establishing clear lines of communication between the home and the school. With your input, we are confident that the University Middle School staff will provide a positive growth experience for your child. While the administrative staff's intent is to be available for every parent at all times, depending on the time of day, it is possible that you will be transferred to our automated telephone system. The morning hours between 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. and the lunch hours are usually the most hectic. If you are calling with a question of a general nature, the main office staff can usually be of assistance. University Middle School administration is organized into grade level departments, which are staffed to service the needs of their respective scholars and parents. Each grade level department consists of an administrator and guidance counselor.

The grade level assistant principals assist the building principal in managing the needs of the scholars and parents and are empowered to make decisions related to most issues related to scholar life at UMS. The grade level guidance counselor handles a myriad of services related to academics, scheduling and registrations, counseling, special education and testing. **If you are in doubt about which office to contact, calling the main office is always a good place to start.**

Most questions and concerns can be routinely answered and serviced by the grade level staff. However, questions about grades, progress reports, and academic concerns should initially be directed to the guidance office. In doing so, we will be able to service your needs in the most efficient manner possible. We look forward to meeting you and your child and working together to ensure the best possible middle school level education for all of our scholars.

We look forward to a great year!

UMS Administration and Staff

## **II. GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **Hours of Operation**

**Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Eighth Graders: 8:25 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**Seventh Graders: 8:25 a.m. -4:00 p.m.**

**Sixth Graders: 8:25 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**Half-day Hours for Scholars: 8:30 a.m. - 12:42 p.m.**

**UMS conducts staggered dismissal daily; therefore, the dismissal times may be altered daily per grade level.**

### **Telephone Directory**

Main Office..... (973) 399-6879

Fax..... (973) 351-1025

### **Administration**

Andrea Tucker, Principal (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1608

Gary McGeehan, Assistant Principal 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> (Last Name A-J) (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1603

Chinaire Simons, Assistant Principal 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> (Last Name K-Z) (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1602

### **Guidance Counselors**

Nancy Howe, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1612

Emelyn DeLaCruz, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1610

Ann DiGiore, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1611

Sandra Lopez, Health & Social Services (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1620

### **Deans of Scholars**

Derrick Edmundson, 7<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grades (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1619

Dr. Ralph Bunche Terrell, 8<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grades (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1643

### **Medical Office**

Clavel Nelson, School Nurse (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1618

### **Other Personnel**

Mia Hayward, Secretary (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1608

Toi Womack, Register Secretary (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1605

Gayle Rosen (973) 399-6879 Ext. 1607

# UNIVERSITY MIDDLE SCHOOL

## VISION, BELIEFS AND DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

### 2016 - 2017

#### **Vision Statement**

University Middle School respects the diversity of its student population and is dedicated to the importance of developing our scholars into responsible citizens. We will provide each scholar with an academically challenging program that enhances creativity, develops an ability to use technology, and encourages critical thinking and problem solving. In support of this vision, we will ensure a safe instructional environment and promote life-long learning.

#### **Beliefs**

We believe that:

- Education is the shared responsibility of the scholar, family, school, and community.
- All children should be exposed to a variety of learning experiences.
- High expectations promote high achievement.
- All individuals need to experience success.
- Children need a challenging curriculum that is sensitive to their individual needs.
- Children learn best in a safe, supportive environment.
- Character development of children is part of the entire learning experience.
- The focus of education is for individuals to be lifelong learners.

#### **Daily Affirmations**

- I will greet this day with love in my heart
- I am a winner
- I am in control
- I will think before I act
- I will listen to learn
- I will pay attention with my mind, body and spirit
- I will treat others with courtesy and respect at all times
- I will treat others as I would like to be treated
- I will keep a positive attitude all day, every day
- I will not use the word "can't" to define my possibilities

### III. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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#### **Agenda Books**

At the beginning of the school year, each scholar will be given an agenda book for use during the school year. The purpose of the agenda book is to assist scholars with organizing themselves, properly completing homework assignments, recording grades, and scheduling upcoming school events. It is the scholars' responsibility to carry and utilize the agenda book throughout the school day, and they will be required to do so.

**Replacement books are available in the school store for \$4.00.**

#### **Guidance**

Scholars are assigned a guidance counselor, who will remain their counselor for the three years they will be at UMS. Guidance Counselors work with the scholars, teachers, and parents under the direction of the principal. The counselors also seek the assistance of the child study team and community resources when necessary.

Each scholar will be given the opportunity to see his/her guidance counselor. This contact may take place on an individual basis, in a counseling or conflict resolution group, or in a classroom lesson format. We encourage parents/guardians to contact their child's counselor to discuss concerns including: scholar achievement, behavior issues, special needs of their child, early intervention of potential crisis, and family difficulties or challenges. Parents may call their child's guidance counselor at any time for a phone conference or to set up an appointment.

Guidance counselors help the scholars in a variety of ways. Scholars may request an appointment with their counselor by completing an appointment sheet located on each counselor's door. Some of the services provided by the guidance counselors are:

- Assisting with academic problems in an open and caring environment where scholars can learn to better understand themselves and others.
- Scheduling of classes based on academic strengths and interests
- Exploring possible careers and vocations.
- Reviewing academic progress reports and assisting in the adjustment to middle school.
- Assisting in the development of decision making skills.
- Conducting monthly guidance lessons on conflict resolution skills.

#### **Health and Social Services Coordinator**

University Middle School provides additional counseling sessions through our Health and Social Services Coordinator. The HSSC provides services for our scholars related to their health and social development. Additionally, they provide support to parents by introducing them to support agencies throughout the Irvington community.

## **Special Education**

Some young people in Irvington have special educational needs that cannot be met in regular classrooms by standard academic programs and regular classroom teachers. It is the goal of special education to provide programs and personnel to help these exceptional scholars achieve their full potential. At University Middle School, classified scholars are taught in self-contained, resource room, and inclusion classroom settings. Parents who feel that their child is exceptional and/or in need of special academic or behavioral programming may address their concerns with the grade level guidance counselor.

## **Curriculum Offered**

The curriculum offered at UMS is diversified. Designed to meet the academic needs of the scholars, the offerings satisfy the criteria established by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Each scholar in grades six through eight is required to complete the following minimum requirements:

### Sixth Grade

Language Arts Literacy  
History  
Science  
Mathematics  
Foreign Language  
Art

### Seventh Grade

Language Arts Literacy  
History  
Science  
Mathematics  
Computer Applications  
Music  
Pre-Algebra\*

### Eighth Grade

Language Arts Literacy  
History  
Science  
Mathematics  
Computer Applications  
Pre-Algebra/Algebra\*

\*Participation in these courses are by invitation only; with a grade point average criteria.

## **Grading Policy**

Scholars are evaluated in each class dependent upon the number of factors determined by the course, the curriculum, as well as teacher and departmental requirements. Grades are averaged in the following manner:

90-100 = A      89-80 = B      79-70 = C      69-60 = D      Below 60 = F

## **Junior Honor Society**

University Middle School Honor Society purpose is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, to develop character, and to encourage citizenship in the scholars of secondary schools. Membership is based upon scholarship and character.

All eighth grade scholars who have a 3.5 GPA and above during the four quarters of grades 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> and the first quarter of grade 8 will be considered for membership. Teacher recommendations/comments also impact membership eligibility. All honor society scholars must complete at least eight hours of community service (four of which are served at school), and regularly attend the honor society meetings.

## **Magnet Art and Music Programs**

Magnet programs in visual arts are offered at University Middle School. The magnet art program is intended for scholars who wish to pursue the visual arts in greater depth through a more sustained schedule of study. Based on the same standards as the comprehensive fine arts program, magnet programs provide scholars opportunities to

explore in greater depth traditional media in the areas of drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics. Scholars are guided in developing a portfolio of work, keeping sketchbooks, practicing the skills of articulating their art processes, and evaluating their progress. Scholars enter into this program through an audition and interview process in addition to maintaining good academic standing.

## **Intellectually Gifted**

University Middle has an Intellectually Gifted Resource Room Program for grades 6-8. This program serves those exceptional children in our school system that possess such superior cognitive abilities that they require special education to meet their unique needs. Intellectually gifted scholars perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Scholars exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Intellectually gifted scholars require differentiated education services beyond those ordinarily provided by the regular educational program. Outstanding abilities are present in scholars from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

## **Student Council**

The purpose of University Middle School is to develop and practice attitudes of good citizenship serving as role models for their fellow peers. Student Council also improves scholar-teacher relationships and provides harmonious relations throughout the entire school. In addition, the Student Council provides a forum of expression and welcomes scholars' ideas for the school, ultimately, to improve school morale and assist in the management of school activities for scholars.

## **Super Honor Roll/ Honor Roll**

Scholars in grades 6-8 may achieve Super Honor Roll or Honor Roll Status based on their grades for each marking period. The following is the criteria for Super Honor Roll and Honor Roll:

- **Super Honor Roll:** "A's" and not more than one "B" in an academic subject. "A's" and not more than one "B" in a special and/or a minor subject. No mark lower than a "B".
- **Honor Roll:** An academic "B" average as well as an overall "B" average. (An academic "A" can balance a "C" in a special subject, but an "A" in a special subject cannot balance an academic "C"). No mark lower than a "C".

## **Homework Policy**

The purpose of homework is to help scholars become self-directing and independent learners. It is intended to extend and reinforce the learning experience of the school. It provides scholars with practice in the mastery of skills, experience in data gathering, and an opportunity to remediate learning problems. The homework process recognizes the role of the parent in helping the scholar carry out assigned responsibilities. In general, daily homework is issued approximately 10 minutes per grade level. Therefore, 6<sup>th</sup> grade scholars will have 60 minutes, 7<sup>th</sup> grade will have 70 minutes, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade scholars will have 80 minutes of homework. Every effort should be made to access homework assignments via your child's scholar agenda book, as keeping track of homework is the responsibility of each scholar. For more information about your child's classes or teachers, please refer to the teacher's e-board via the school's website. **Homework counts as a percentage of the overall grade.**

## **Make-Up and Incomplete Assignments**

Scholars are required to make up all assignments, class work, and tests missed due to an excused absence. One day of make-up time will be given for each consecutive day of absence. In the event of a single day of absence on the date of an announced test, project, or other assignment, the work must be completed or submitted on the date of return to school. Scholars must complete all make-up work within one (1) week after the conclusion of the marking period. In the event of extenuating circumstances, extensions may be granted by the administration.

## **Marking Period Dates**

First Marking Period.....September 7 to November 15  
Second Marking Period.....November 16 to February 1  
Third Marking Period.....February 2 to April 7  
Fourth Marking Period.....April 10 to June 18

## **Progress Reports and Report Cards**

University Middle School administration makes at least eight (8) formal contacts per year concerning progress and grades. This is done in accordance with the school calendar. Progress reports are mailed out during the middle of each cycle. Additionally, report cards are mailed home at the end of each marking period with the exception of the first marking. Parents must participate in a parent/teacher conference at the end of the first marking period; at which time, they will receive the report card. Parents should review the reports with their child and call the school guidance office if there are any questions concerning these reports. Beginning this school year, parents have 24-hour access to PowerSchool for additional academic information. Parental involvement is crucial when improving scholar academic performance. Report cards serve a significant function in school/home communication. Report cards will not be issued to scholars who owe fines or have any outstanding financial obligations.

## **Retention Policy**

If a scholar fails three (3) core courses, he/she will AUTOMATICALLY be retained in their present grade. Core courses are defined as Mathematics/Pre-Algebra/Algebra, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education. Summer school is not an option for these scholars.

## **Eighth Grade Promotion Policy**

In order to participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotional exercise, scholars must pass all academic subjects. Scholars are considered ineligible to participate if they fail one major academic subject (math, ELA, social studies, science, physical education or two minor subjects (technology, art, music) for the school year. If a scholar fails two (2) core courses, summer school is available to that scholar. Attendance and successful completion of the course will lead to promotion. Failure to pass the course(s) or to attend the summer session will result in AUTOMATIC RETENTION. A maximum of two (2) courses may be taken. There is also an attendance requirement. Questions concerning retentions should be directed to the Guidance Department. Parents are encouraged to actively monitor their children's grades and behavior to ensure academic success and participation in the promotional ceremony.



## **Lost Textbooks**

The Irvington Board of Education policy states that scholars are responsible for all textbooks and other non-consumable books issued to them. Scholars who lose or who return textbooks or non-consumable materials in damaged or unusable condition shall be assessed a fine for the replacement cost. Fines should be paid by cash or money order, payable to University Middle School. A refund will be made if the missing book is located and found in a usable condition. A second text will be supplied to a pupil who has lost a book for in class use. If the second book is lost, no replacement will be made until both missing book fines are paid. Scholars are reminded to keep their lockers secured and to check with the main office for lost books. Scholars should carefully examine their textbooks upon receipt and report any and all damage to the teacher immediately. Any unreported damage will be the responsibility of the scholar. Damage or loss assessments must be paid before report cards will be distributed.

## **Transfer Procedures**

The Guidance Office must be notified if a pupil is transferring from the school district. A transfer request can only be made by the parent/guardian; this must be done in-person. After completing a transfer form request, the parent should submit it to the main office secretary. A Transfer Clearance Sheet (TCS) will be issued to the scholar for teachers and personnel to sign. A signature indicates that all school obligations have been met. This should be completed on or before the last day of attendance. A transfer paper for the new school district will be issued to the parent on the last day of attendance at University Middle School provided that all financial obligations have been satisfied.

# **IV. SCHOOL PROCEDURES, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS**

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## **Attendance**

The Board of Education of the Irvington Public Schools charges the principal of the school with the responsibility for requiring compliance with school law. The New Jersey Statutes Titles 18A:38-25, 18A:38-26, and 18A:38-31, state that: "Every parent, guardian or other person having custody and control of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 years, shall cause such child to regularly attend the public school....Such regular attendance shall be during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the Board of Education...that the bodily condition of the child is such as to prevent his or her attendance...A parent...who shall fail to comply with any of the provisions...shall be deemed a disorderly person and shall be subject to a fine...."

Attendance at school is crucial for success and is the responsibility of both the scholar and the parent. However, we realize that occasionally scholars will be unable to attend school for legitimate reasons. Scholars are not entitled to any unexcused absences. A parent/guardian providing a written notice as to why a scholar was absent does not make the absence excusable. The attendance secretary will review all notes and deem if they meet the district's criteria of excused absences. At which time she will begin the legal proceedings as required by the district.

Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Absence due to parental/scholar neglect -- overslept, etc.
- Visiting a family member
- Truancy -- cutting of classes and scheduled periods.

When an absence is excused, the frequency of absences is still a concern. Therefore, when a scholar accumulates excessive absences, additional administrative contact may be made with the parent/guardian and/or medical/professional verification may be required.

## **Procedure for Scholar Absences**

1. The parent/guardian must call the attendance office between the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and provide the reason and the approximate length of absence. If no one answers, you can leave a message and the secretary will obtain the information. If a scholar is absent and a phone call has not been received, a call will be placed to the parent. The school must have reliable and current phone access to a parent/guardian at all times in case of an emergency. Please update scholar records when changes occur.

When a child is absent from school, a note from the parent or legal guardian explaining the “excused” reason should be given to the scholar’s homeroom teacher upon return. Excused absences are defined as follows: a) illness, b) recovery from an accident, c) required court attendance, d) death in the family, e) religious observance, and f) medical appointments.

**In the event a child is absent three or more consecutive days, a doctor’s note must be submitted to the school nurse upon the return of the child.**

If a child is going to be absent for a prolonged period of time, the school must be notified as to the length and reason. Arrangements should be made to receive homework for the child.

- Scholar attendance is closely monitored by homeroom teachers and guidance counselors.
- Chronic truancy problems will be referred to the attendance office for appropriate court action, commencing with the fifth unexcused absence from school. Scholar attendance is also one of the areas considered when determining the promotion or retention of a scholar at the end of the year.
- Scholars must be present in school for a legal attendance day in order to participate in an activity on that day. Failure to be present in school will jeopardize participation.
- Scholars are reminded that in order to participate in athletic and extra/co-curricular activities, they must be present in school on the day of each planned activity.

## **Unexcused Absences and Class Cuts**

Unexcused absences from school or class result in missed instructional time. Therefore, scholars who are absent from school or who choose to cut class will receive a “zero” for any work missed without the possibility of make-up.

Scholars are not entitled to unexcused days or class cuts and will be subject to disciplinary action. Continued class cutting or unexcused absences will result in a recommendation to exclude the scholar from the regular school program. Scholars who establish a history of absences (excused or illegal) may be required to produce medical verification for subsequent absences.

## **Tardy**

### **A. Tardy to School:**

Prompt arrival to school is vital to reinforcing responsibility of scholars and maintaining compliance with state law. The courts recognize three (3) tardies as one

(1) absence. Children must be in school and in class on time. **Scholars reporting to school after 9 a.m. must be escorted into the building by a parent/guardian.** Parents must escort scholars directly to the security desk and sign the tardy acknowledgement log. Failure to comply will result in the following:

- A phone call to parent/guardian
- Detention during their lunch period (failure to attend detention will result in a Home for Parent) HFP.
- Referred to Board of Education's truancy officer (repeat offenders)

Excuses received from a parent/guardian on the same day of the late arrival help the staff understand that circumstances were beyond the scholar's control, but it does not excuse their lateness.

## **B. Tardy to Class:**

If a scholar does not have a pass and arrives late to class less than fifteen minutes into the period, they will be subject to the teacher's tardy policy. If a scholar does not have a pass and arrives late to class fifteen minutes or more into the period, it will be considered cutting that class and they will be disciplined accordingly.

## **Early Dismissal/Appointments**

No child shall be permitted to leave school except:

1. In case of injury or sickness.
2. When accompanied by his/her parent or guardian **after said person has signed for the child in the sign-out book.**

The procedures to be followed for early dismissal are as such:

- Send a written request to your child's guidance counselor with the child, giving a specified date and time that you will be picking the child up.
- A pass will be given to the scholar. This pass will state the reason for leaving and the departure time.
- At the stated time, the scholar should show the pass to the classroom teacher and report to the main office.
- When the parent/guardian arrives to pick up the scholar, the parent/guardian will sign the child out of the building at the security desk.
- Upon the scholar's return to school, a note from the doctor or dentist office verifying the appointment must be submitted to the nurse's office.
- If returning to school the same day after keeping an appointment, the scholar must first report to the main office, where he/she will receive an admission pass.

Only a parent/guardian may dismiss a scholar early; unless the parent has been identified on the child's emergency information, individuals who may act on their behalf, then that individual can pick the child up early. Please note individuals noted as "emergency contacts" are not considered to be a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians must **present proper photo identification** to insure the safety of our scholars.

Parents/guardians **must meet the child at the security desk in the main lobby and sign** the early dismissal sign-out book. Children are **not** to be picked up on the bus-loading platform or parking lot, but **MUST** be signed out. If a note was not received prior to dismissal, teachers will release the scholar only when requested to do so by the main office. Children of separated or divorced parents/guardians will be released to either parent/guardian except in the case of a court order, which specifies which parent/guardian has custody. **A copy of a court order must be on file in the child's folder.**

## **Parent Information Update**

Each September, an information packet is sent home for parents to complete. It is necessary to return the packet as soon as possible so that the school can update scholars' records. The packet includes the following information: personal information, medical information, a field trip permission slip, emergency information, an internet permission slip, and a press image release form. Scholars will not be issued their first cycle report cards unless an updating sheet is on file. Any scholar who does not return this packet in a timely manner will receive a Home for Parent letter until it is returned.

## **Notification of Change of Status**

If you plan to change your address or phone number, please notify the register secretary at 973-399-6879 Ext: 1605 immediately. This information is vital in case of emergency.

## **Parent-Teacher Conference**

The staff at University Middle School seeks to partner with parents to maximize opportunities for every child to be successful. A parent-staff conference will be requested by the school when a scholar is encountering academic problems, behavior problems, or a combination of both.

In order for home and school to work more effectively for the education and training of the scholars, a mandatory parent conference is scheduled in December. During Open House in September, parents will be given the opportunity to meet with the administration, classroom teachers, and specialists who will be interacting with their children. There will also be an opportunity to schedule an appointment for the December conferences. Prior to the conference, parents will receive a confirmation letter. Additional conferences may be initiated either by the parent or the teacher when either deems it advisable. Any time a conference is needed, an appointment must be made in advance so that all concerned may plan their time accordingly. These conferences may be arranged through the guidance counselor's office, unless it is more convenient for both parties to do otherwise.

## **Visiting Policy**

Parents and guardians are welcome to visit the school at any time. They may visit with teachers at pre-arranged times. For the protections of our scholars, all visitors are required to enter through the front door only. All visitors must sign in at our receiving desk and follow the instructions of the security guard in charge. Visitors will be required to wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Scholar visitors are restricted; we cannot accept responsibility for their safety or behavior while in the school. Scholars are not to bring younger children to school. The issuance of any visitor pass is determined by the judgment of the principal.

## **Scholar Identification Cards (I.D.)**

A University Middle School scholar identification card and lanyard will be issued to all scholars at the beginning of the school year. This card identifies the scholar for admission to athletic events, after-school activities, dances, special film showings, library, and school district transportation. Scholars are required to wear the I.D. card and lanyard at all times during the school day, during field trips, or disciplinary action at the discretion of the building administration, will be instituted. Replacement I.D. cards are available in the main office for \$2.00 and the grade level color coded lanyards at a cost of \$1.00.

## **School Telephones**

Messages for scholars may be taken by the office in emergency situations only. Parents that constantly call the school to leave messages will be referred to the principal. Since office telephones are constantly in use for school business, scholars may not use an office telephone to call home unless there is an emergency. Parents are encouraged to call and/or email teachers when they have questions. Teachers will return calls and emails during their preparation period.

### **School Correspondence**

A University Middle School monthly calendar is sent home and posted on the school's website during the first week of every month. Additionally, notices are sent home frequently to notify parents/guardians of current and future events at University Middle School. Please ask your child for any flyers/notices. When indicated, please return them on the next school day. University Middle School teaching staff also utilizes their e-board to keep parents abreast with assignments and projects. Another source of communication is the SchoolMessenger System that is used via phone call.

### **Classroom Visitation or School Activity Observation**

If you would like to observe a lesson or activity in progress that includes your child, please call the main office at least one day (24 hours) in advance. The principal will arrange for your observation with the staff member. When observing, please remember that you are there to observe. Recording devices are not permitted, nor is the transcript of the lesson or activity. As this is a time during which the staff member is engaged in his/her responsibilities, it is not an appropriate time to try to engage the staff member in conversation. If you'd like a parent-teacher conference, we would be more than pleased to arrange for one another time. The length of the observation will be limited to one instructional period.

### **Electronic Devices and Cellphone**

Scholar possession of any audio, video, or digital device, including but not limited to CD/DVD/tape players, laser pointers, radios, cellular phones, digital cameras, pagers, or any personal communication devices, on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, and while under the supervision and control of school district employees is permitted under the circumstances described herein: **Electronic devices and cell phones must be kept out of sight and turned off during instructional and non-instructional times during the school day, which includes study halls, lunch periods, and passing of classes. Usage during any situation that compromises scholar safety is strictly prohibited unless directed by a school official.** Unauthorized use of such devices disrupts the instructional program, distracts from the learning environment, and has the potential to compromise scholar safety.

**Unauthorized use of electronic devices or cell phones is grounds for confiscation of the device by school officials, and parents/guardians will be required to appear in person to retrieve any confiscated equipment during the hours of 8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m., and 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.** School officials include administrators, teachers, and security officials. The school district is not liable for financial loss during the period of confiscation. Items unclaimed by the end of the school year will be considered abandoned and discarded. **Use in locker rooms and lavatories is considered unauthorized under all circumstances at all times.** Unauthorized use or illegal use (recording) of such devices will lead to disciplinary ramifications, privileges revoked immediately, and possibly legal action.

## **Damage to School Property**

A New Jersey Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-3) makes the parent or guardian of a scholar attending a public school responsible for any damages to school property that the scholar intentionally causes. Under this law, the parent or guardian is responsible for paying damages even if the parent or guardian is not at fault. All money collected is recorded and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes.

## **Uniform Policy**

Irvington Public Schools has a mandatory school uniform policy, which was approved by the Board of Education and has been in effect since September 1, 2009. University Middle School will consistently enforce the Board approved uniform policy.

**Boys** – must wear yellow-collar shirts, or polo shirts. Plain uniform khaki pants are to be worn.

**Cargo pants or shorts are not permitted at any time.** Pants should be appropriately fitting and belts are to be worn, with shirts tucked in. Shoes are preferred, but sneakers of a solid color (black, brown or navy) may be worn. Black, blue or white solid socks are to be worn. **Jeans are not allowed.**

Hats, scarves, and other headgear are not permitted at any time. **Shirts with any logo other than University Middle School's logo are not permitted.** Head coverings for religious reasons are permitted when documentation is presented.

**Girls** – must wear yellow-collar blouses, shirts, or polo shirts. Plain uniform khaki skirts or pants may be worn. **Skirts are required to be no shorter than three inches above the knees.** Black or brown hose or socks may be worn. **Multi-colored and/or bright colored tights/socks are not permitted.** Scarves and head coverings owing to cover uncombed or ill-fashioned hair are not permitted. Head coverings are permitted for religious reasons only. **Shirts with any logo other than University Middle School's logo are not permitted. Additional clothing such as tanks, vest, scarfs, etc. is not permitted. Hooded sweatshirts are not permitted at any time.**

Parents should understand that they may be asked to bring a change of clothing to school for scholars who are in violation of this policy. School officials may impose limitations on scholar participation in the regular instructional program where there is evidence that this policy is violated and the lack of cleanliness constitutes a health hazard or disruption of the educational program. Scholars have the responsibility to dress appropriately and to keep themselves, their clothes, and their hair clean.

**REPEATED VIOLATION OF THE DRESS CODE MAY BE VIEWED AS DEFIANCE AND APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL RESULT.**

**\*Violation of the Uniform Policy may result in: (not listed in any specific order)**

- Request to remove additional clothing/change clothes (if applicable), at which time said clothing will be confiscated
- Phone call to parent/guardian to bring change of clothes to school
- Face disciplinary actions, which could include BMR, before or after-school detention
- Mandatory parent conference
- Persistent offenders of the school uniform policy will face further disciplinary actions, which could include suspension and loss of privileges, including participation in extra-curricular activities and trips.

## **Physical Education Uniform**

Scholars must wear navy blue sweat pants/shorts and plain white t-shirts (no graphics).

**The administration will determine the appropriateness of a scholar's attire if it is in question. Repeated dress code violations will result in a mandatory parent conference. The administrators shall have the right to access/appraise any current fashion or fad and determine appropriateness of the attire for school. These guidelines apply to all extra-curricular activities and field trips unless otherwise stated by the administrators.**

## **Drug and Alcohol**

In accordance with state law, local ordinances, and the Irvington Board of Education policy: Any scholar known to have alcohol, drugs, and/or related paraphernalia in their possession of use and/or distribution or found to be under the influence of said substance while in school or while participating or attending an approved school function or trip, may be suspended or expelled from school, be referred to the district Health and Social Service Coordinator, be subject to supervised medical drug testing and/or be prosecuted.

## **Weapons**

In accordance with state law, local ordinances, and the Irvington Board of Education policy: Any scholar found to be in possession of any recognized weapon, objects designed to resemble or be used as a weapon, or the use of any object as a weapon, will be remanded to the custody of the Irvington Police Department. The parent/guardian will be notified, and legal proceedings will commence. Suspension or expulsion from school will proceed in accordance with the Irvington Board of Education policy and state laws and local ordinances.

## **Terroristic Threats**

Any scholar accused of terroristic threats, or who in any way undermines the safety of the University Middle School population, will be remanded to the custody of the Irvington Police Department. The parent/guardian will be notified, and legal proceedings will commence. Suspension or expulsion from school will proceed in accordance with the Irvington Board of Education policy and state laws and local ordinances.

## **Weapons/Contraband Search Policy**

In the interest of providing a safe learning environment, all scholars may be subject to search on any given day by school officials when there are reasonable grounds. Since scholar lockers remain the exclusive property of the Irvington School District, they may also be searched without prior notice, and a scholar will be given the opportunity to be present if possible or appropriate. School personnel and/or security officials will conduct the searches. Scholars will be required to stand in a line before a table and empty their pockets while their backpacks, coats, purses, etc., are searched. Hand-held metal scanners may be utilized in the searches. In addition, this policy extends to scholars entering the building for activities such as dances and other extracurricular activities.

## **School Dance**

University Middle School will host numerous school dances in order to raise money for scholar activities. All school rules are in effect during any dance at University Middle School. In addition, the following guidelines will be followed for all dances. **If scholars**

**do not adhere to these rules, they will be denied admittance to and/or removed from the dance:**

1. No loitering outside the building.
2. Scholars must arrive within the first half of the dance.
3. Once scholars have entered the building for the dance, they are not allowed to leave and return later. Parents will be notified for scholars leaving early.
4. If a scholar is absent from school on the day of the dance, the scholar will not be admitted to the dance.
5. Dance privileges may be revoked by the administration. Any scholar serving suspension within one (1) month of a scheduled dance may not attend.
6. Any scholar who has paid for a ticket in advance and is subsequently not allowed to attend or removed from the dance will not receive a refund.
7. Any scholar whose behavior is continually disruptive will not be permitted to attend school dances.
8. Arrangements must be made for transportation home from the dance in advance of arrival. For security purposes, parents must pick up scholars immediately at the conclusion of the dance or inform the school of arrangements made for their child's dismissal from the dance via the permission slip.
9. Every scholar attending the dance must have a permission slip that is completed by a parent/guardian.
10. Scholars must have their school identification card for entry into the dance.

**Lost and Found**

A Lost and Found Department is located next to the main office where lost items may be redeemed. Scholars who find items should immediately turn them into the Main Office. Personal items not claimed after thirty (30) calendar days will be considered abandoned and discarded.

**Fire/Emergency Drills**

At least two unannounced safety drills will be held each month. Directions for leaving the building are posted in each room, and teachers will inform the scholars of all procedures. Any deliberate, false activation of a fire alarm will result in school discipline as well as possible legal action. When the fire bell is sounded, scholars are to do the following:

1. REMAIN QUIET to hear instructions.
2. Follow directions for leaving the building.
3. Stay in line and WALK quickly.
4. Be alert and cooperative.
5. Stay with the class with whom you have left the building.

During a "Lock Down" drill all scholars will remain in their classrooms or in the office they may be visiting. Scholars and/or visitors in the restrooms or hallways will move to the nearest classroom and await direction from the Main Office. When appropriate, via the public address system, all scholars will be released to continue their daily schedules.

**Hall Conduct**

All movement between classes shall be orderly and reasonably fast. The following are the guidelines for the changing of classes:

1. Scholars have one (1) minute to change classes.
2. Scholars are to WALK on the RIGHT side of the hallways and stairwells.



3. No loitering is permitted in the hallways or outside classrooms and other areas of the building at any time—before school, during change of classes, lunch, etc.
4. Scholars are to enter their classroom immediately and be seated.
5. Scholars need to be in the classroom on time. Lateness will not be tolerated.

## **Lockers**

1. Lockers are provided to all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade scholars. Scholars may be required to share a locker with another scholar in their homeroom as assigned by the homeroom teacher. All scholars are responsible for their own materials.
2. Scholars are responsible for all of their books and personal property that are kept in their lockers. Locker combinations should not be given to anyone who is not assigned to the locker.
3. School lockers remain the property of the district even when used by scholars. Lockers are subject to administrative search in the interests of school safety, sanitation, and discipline.
4. Any illegal materials found in the locker will be subject to confiscation. Such materials may be used as evidence against the scholar in disciplinary proceedings. If school authorities have reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of scholars in the school or the school environment, the locker may be searched without prior warning.
5. Lockers may be searched by law enforcement officials upon presentation of a proper warrant.
6. If a scholar is habitually using his/her locker during unauthorized times, their lockers will be padlocked and they must carry their books to class.
7. Scholar shall be informed of this policy when lockers are assigned. Failure to follow school locker rules or misuse of lockers may result in loss of locker privileges.
8. Any insignias, signs, pictures, etc., should not be attached inside or outside the locker except when decorated for school activities. No writing will be permitted anywhere on or inside the locker.
9. Locker clean out will be held at intervals throughout the year. Scholars are responsible for keeping their lockers clean and orderly at all times.
10. At the end of the school year, scholars must remove all items from their lockers.
11. Padlocks may not be used on hall lockers without permission from the administration.

## **Gym Lockers**

In an effort to prevent unnecessary theft or loss during Physical Education classes, scholars are encouraged to bring a combination lock to school for use during gym class. However, scholars must remove the lock and personal belongings at the conclusion of each class session.

## **Cafeteria Expectations**

The University Middle School has three (3), 42-minute lunch periods. Free and reduced lunch applications are available from the parent coordinator's office. Weekly/daily lunches may be purchased from the cafeteria at any time. The following are the procedures and guidelines for the lunch periods:

1. Upon entering the cafeteria, scholars are to be seated. Designated tables will then be permitted to obtain lunches in an orderly manner.

2. Saving seats is not permitted.
3. Remain in your seat during lunch period unless you have been granted permission by an administrator. Ask permission to use the restroom, water fountain, or to return to the lunch line. Passes to the restroom are provided on a first come, first served basis.
4. Scholars are responsible for disposing of all trash in their lunch area. This will be completed with the aide's supervision. Dismissal will also be completed with the lunch aide's supervision.
5. For safety reasons, bottles or glass containers are not permitted in the dining hall and/or in the school.
6. Scholars will spend the entire 42 minutes in the cafeteria unless otherwise directed.
7. ABSOLUTELY NO FOOD WILL BE CONSUMED ANYWHERE ON THE PREMISES, INSIDE OR OUTSIDE, EXCEPT IN THE CAFETERIA.
8. Scholars should report to their lockers after lunch.
9. Scholars have four (4) minutes to report to their next class after leaving the cafeteria. Tardiness will not be permitted.
10. Please be considerate of others. Quiet conversation will be permitted; however, loud boisterous behavior will not be tolerated.
11. Inappropriate behavior or dress code violations during any lunch may result in removal from the cafeteria. Offenders will eat lunch in isolation away from their peers.
12. Scholars are subject to guidance from all adults assigned to supervise the cafeteria. This includes Lunch Aides, Security staff, Custodians, Cafeteria Workers and Teachers.
13. In order for scholars to leave the cafeteria, they must present to monitoring staff a pass from the teacher/staff member of whom they are visiting.

### **Breakfast Program**

"Breakfast in the Classroom" is offered to all scholars. Breakfast begins promptly at 8:10 AM, and concludes at 8:36 AM.

### **Field Trips**

In order to expedite the smooth planning of approved field trips, it is necessary that all pupils desiring inclusion on said trips do the following:

- Secure and complete a signed permission slip by a parent/guardian. Provide current and reliable information.
- Return the permission slip in a timely manner. No scholar will be permitted to attend any approved trips unless such criteria are met. The teacher/sponsor will be in charge of distributing, collecting, and accounting for all monies and permission slips.
- Complete any homework, tests, and classwork missed as a result of attending the approved trip.

### **Year End Incentives**

Scholars must earn the right to participate in the end of the year incentive activities. Each grade level will have an end of the year incentive trip. Grades six and seven will host a Cotillion, and grade eight will have a Dinner Dance. Those scholars who have displayed exceptional behavior over the course of the school year will be eligible to attend the planned events. The field trip is an all-day event, depending on the venue, scholars may be required to report to school earlier than the regularly scheduled time.

## V. SCHOLAR RESPONSIBILITIES

The school has an obligation to the larger society to educate young people to assume the responsibilities of adult life. The school is said to act "in loco parentis", that is, in the place of the parent with respect to the supervision of the scholars' education and conduct while in school. This authority extends to school-sponsored functions as well as functions in other schools and sites involving approved activities. Schools have the power to enforce rules and regulations by imposing disciplinary sanctions. Irvington School District has a scholar code of conduct on the district website <http://irvington.k12.nj.us/>. Below you will find a list of scholar responsibilities that are important to create an efficient and safe learning environment at University Middle School.

### **Expectations of Scholar Behavior:**

1. Scholars are to prepare themselves mentally and physically for the process of learning:
  - be nourished, rested, clean, and properly dressed and groomed
  - be prepared to learn
2. Scholars are to take responsibility for their own behavior and learning both in school and at all school-related activities:
  - recognize that academic development is the primary purpose
  - complete all classwork, homework, and other assigned tasks
  - make appropriate decisions
  - accept constructive criticism as part of the learning process
  - accept disagreement when necessary and appropriate
  - accept the consequences for their actions
3. Scholars are to demonstrate respect for self and for others:
  - are honest, courteous, and polite
  - respect the opinions of others
  - are respectful of different cultures
  - settle differences peacefully and appropriately
  - display good sportsmanship
4. Scholars are to respect the natural and physical environment:
  - Participate in the maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities and property.
5. Scholars are to share responsibilities when working as a member of a group or team:
  - cooperate, contribute, and share in the work of the group
  - accept and assume leadership when appropriate to do so
  - listen to the viewpoints of others
6. Scholars are to use their time and resources in a responsible manner:
  - attend school regularly and on time
  - use learning materials and equipment appropriately
7. Scholars are to communicate appropriately with parents and school personnel regarding their needs and goals:
  - take time to discuss academic learning and school programs
  - transmit information to parents and return responses to school personnel (in a timely fashion) when appropriate
  - seek assistance from appropriate school personnel in time(s) of need
8. Scholars are to be responsible for meeting individual class requirements:

- participate actively in learning activities
  - follow all class rules and procedures
  - arrive to class on time with all appropriate materials
9. Scholars are to work to their potential, monitor their progress, and seek help when necessary.

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING POLICY (HIB)**

The Irvington Public School District will enforce a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy in compliance with New Jersey State Law P.L. 2010, Chapter 22. The Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy prohibits any gesture, any verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national, origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school and/or the rights or others. Likewise, the incident or series of incidents could result in actual or potential physical or emotional harm to the pupil or his/her property and/or creates a hostile educational environment that interferes with learning. All reported incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be investigated by administration and handled appropriately in accordance with state law.

Further, all bystanders will be subject to investigation and remedial/disciplinary action. Bystanders enable HIB behavior by encouraging a bully to physically attack a scholar, spreading rumors, or shunning a scholar who has been ostracized by a group.

Any scholar or scholars who retaliate against the individual who reported the original HIB incident or who falsely accuses an individual of HIB will be subject to administrative action.

All reported cases of HIB are to be referred to the building Principal or designee. Reports can be made in person, via district form posted on the website, or anonymously via phone call, email, or letter.

Cases will be investigated by the School Anti-Bullying Specialist, reviewed by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, and reported in closed session to the Board of Education each month.

The Building Anti-Bullying Specialist in your building is:

**Emily DeLaCruz**                      **(973) 399-6879 Ext. 1610**

The District Anti-Bullying Coordinator is:

**Claire Hamm**                      **(973) 399-6897 Ext. 1823**

Further information regarding HIB can be found on the district website.

## **VI. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS (CODE OF CONDUCT page 20)**

## **Positive Behavior Support in School (PBSIS)**

University Middle School will continue to incorporate the PBSIS program. The purpose of PBSIS is to help the school create positive learning environments that lead to decreases in discipline problems, increase opportunities for all scholars to learn the use of positive proactive and practical interventions, produce socially desired behaviors, and encourage and support pro-social scholar behavior at the school wide, classroom and individual scholar levels.

The success of an educational program relies on the involvement of the entire school community: scholars, parents, and staff. The professional staff will handle routine discipline matters through: individual scholar conference, parent conference, phone calls home, teacher detentions (lunch/after school) and referrals to the assistant principals. The role of the school administration is one of support for the professional staff in disciplinary matters. Administrative staff will work with pupils, staff, and parents to resolve disciplinary issues. Scholars are to follow these clear expectations for all school areas.

Any disciplinary action taken by the administration is intended to insure the safety and welfare of everyone at University Middle School and benefit the scholar through improving attitude and subsequent behavior. The disciplinary options available to the administration are regulated by law and school district policies; and are strictly enforced to maintain a safe learning environment for all. The disciplinary option chosen depends on: (1) nature of the offense, (2) the nature of the scholar's previous behavior, and (3) stated policy or precedent based on previous action.

### **DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS:**

It is important to note that a scholar may be suspended for conduct that he/she should have been aware of as a violation of school policy though not specifically listed in the statute. A school may also suspend a scholar for grounds where that misbehavior is detrimental to school safety, stated discipline procedures, or property. Consequences for non-compliance can include any of the following depending upon the seriousness and/or frequency of the matter: (not listed in progressive order)

Adult to pupil conference (warning)

Home contacts

Parent-pupil-teacher conferences

Detention (early morning or after

school)

Denial of privileges (i.e. field trips, dance, etc.)

Home for Parent (HFP)

BMR Assignment (ISS)

Out of school suspension

Expulsion

Please remember that our actions involving disciplinary measures are meant to correct inappropriate school behaviors. Our goal (the school and parent's) is common: to produce happy, healthy, well-adjusted individuals who will lead successful adult lives. Please support our school's efforts to have scholars behave appropriately while at school, on a trip, and on the school bus.

### **Denial of Privileges**

Privileges must be earned. They will be withdrawn for improper behavior. The length of denial depends on: (1) the nature of the offense and (2) the previous behavior of the scholar. Privileges can be denied from one day to the entire year depending on the circumstances. Privileges include but are not limited to:

1. Attendance at dances and other school related activities
2. Eating in the cafeteria
3. Use of hall passes
4. Attendance at dances and other school related activities.
5. Any other activities/events deemed non-academic.

## **Detention**

Detention may be held before school at 7:30 a.m. or after school at 3:00 p.m. All detentions will be held within 24 hours of the offense unless an administrator, after conferencing with the parent and referring teacher, designates otherwise. All administrative detentions will be held in the auditorium and last forty-five minutes to one hour. All scholars must bring school work to occupy their time during detention. Scholars, upon request, will be allowed to call their parents to notify them of the assigned detention.

No talking is allowed and can result in dismissal from detention. Those who fail to attend detention or complete detention satisfactorily (as determined by teacher or administrator) will be assigned other consequences as deemed by school administrators.

## **Behavioral Modification Room (BMR)**

This option is a temporary exclusion from classroom attendance. The purpose of this alternative is to remove disruptive scholars from the regular instructional program, and to reassign them to a designated room for a period of time, and provide them with behavior modification strategies and techniques they may use in the future. These scholars will stay in an assigned area for the duration of days assigned by an administrator. The scholar is expected to complete schoolwork during this time. Attendance will be taken at 8:00 a.m. Scholars absent from school during any of the days assigned will report for a make-up day immediately upon their return to school. Tardiness is not permitted when assigned to BMR. Scholars in BMR are not eligible to participate in any school function or activity during their suspension. It is the scholar's responsibility to bring textbooks and materials they may need to the room. Scholars will be given the appropriate credit for work completed in the BMR. Failure to complete work or unsatisfactory work will receive a grade of "0" for all assignments. Parents will be notified by telephone and letter when their child has or will be re-assigned to BMR. The maximum time a scholar will be assigned to BMR is three (3) times, after which a more severe consequence will be imposed.

**IF A SCHOLAR IS DISRUPTIVE IN BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION ROOM, HE OR SHE WILL BE SUSPENDED AT HOME FOR AT LEAST THREE DAYS.**

## **Home for Parent (HFP)**

Scholar will receive a letter notifying parents that they have displayed negative behavior or broken a school rule. Scholars will not be readmitted to school without a parent conference with an administrator. If a child enters the building without a parent, he/she will be considered trespassing and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Irvington Police Department.

## **Out of School Suspension**

An out of school suspension is the temporary denial of the scholar's right to attend school. Scholars can only be suspended by the building principal or his/her designee. Each suspension shall be reported to the scholar's parent and the Superintendent of Schools, who shall report the suspension to the Board of Education. Parents have the responsibility of guaranteeing that the scholar remains in the confinement of the home during the time of suspension. A parent conference with an administrator is necessary for a scholar's re-admittance to school. Scholars are required to make up all missed work. All assignments will be provided, and it is expected that the scholar will complete work while at home. Assignments must be returned upon scholar's re-admittance to school. If a child enters

the building without a parent, he/she will be considered trespassing and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Irvington Police Department.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is the denial of the scholar's right to attend public school and may be imposed solely by the Board of Education. A scholar may appeal an expulsion decision of the board of Education to the Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education. A prerequisite to any board action for expulsion of a non-handicapped scholar is referred to the district's child study team for preliminary determination. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the scholar's misbehavior arises from a handicapping condition.

### **Physical Restraints/Force**

In accordance with state law, physical restraint or reasonable force may be used for the following reasons:

1. To quell a disturbance.
2. To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
3. For the purpose of self-defense.
4. For the protection of persons or property.

The administration reserves the right to skip the sequence of disciplinary options as outlined in this section if the offense so warrants.

## **VII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

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Representing the school and community on the field of athletic competition or through a performing group or club, carries with it an important responsibility. Those who participate beyond which is required deserve praise, but not unfair advantages over those scholars who choose not to participate. Every scholar who wishes to participate in the sports program must follow the recruitment and participation guidelines for that particular sport.

### **Participation**

The Irvington Board of Education, in accord with recent New Jersey Department of Education mandates, shall establish the following criteria for all scholars who wish to participate in extracurricular activities:

1. To be eligible for any sport, a scholar must maintain a "C" average.
2. No scholar who has been absent from school may participate in any activity after school hours on the day of such absence. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the principal or assistant principal for emergencies, funerals, etc., and must be cleared prior to the absence. Illness will not be considered as cause for exception to this policy.
3. Scholars who are serving in BMR or out-of-school suspension are also ineligible to participate in any school related function or activity during the time that they are under suspension.
4. Any scholar involved in the use of alcohol or drugs (not of a medical nature) will be removed from all eligibility lists for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

5. All scholars eligible for sports must also meet the following attendance requirements:
- Any scholar eligible for fall and winter sports becomes ineligible after seven unexcused absences from school or until an appeal is filed by the attendance office.
  - Any scholar eligible for spring sports becomes ineligible after fifteen unexcused absences or until an appeal is filed and approved by the attendance office.
  - At the discretion of the principal, a scholar may be declared ineligible for failure to comply with school rules and regulations regarding tardiness, class cutting, and proper behavior in school, on the athletic field, and in the community. The principal will consider recommendations for the athletic director regarding any of these matters.
  - All special education scholars must meet the requirements outlined within his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
  - Anyone is eligible to try out for a sport providing they have a grade point average of "C" or better. All scholars are required to have a permission form filled out and signed by their parent or guardian. At that point, the scholar will be scheduled for a physical examination by the school doctor provided that he/she meets the academic requirements.

The activities and clubs sponsored by the school are intended to provide personal enjoyment, help in developing cooperativeness, initiative, self-confidence, creativity, and group experiences. The nature and variety of clubs will depend on scholars' interest.

## **VIII. SPECIAL PROGRAMS & PUPIL SERVICES**

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### **Guidance**

UMS school counselors work with the students, teachers, and parents under the direction of the principal. The counselors also seek the assistance of the Child Study Team and community resources when necessary. Rapport on a one-to-one and group basis is an important part of the counseling process to help students establish life skills and resolve personal, social, and emotional problems. Guidance, therefore, hopes to provide an opportunity for individuals to grow and develop their potential to the maximum.

### **Child Study Team**

The Child Study Team consists of three members: a learning disability teacher consultant, a psychologist, and social worker. The primary role of the team is to evaluate students who may experience a learning and/or an emotional difficulty and to provide, when necessary, supportive services.

### **Special Education**

Some young people in Irvington have special educational needs that cannot be met in regular classrooms by standard academic programs and regular classroom teachers. It is the goal of Special Education to provide programs and personnel to help these exceptional students achieve their full potential. At Chancellor Avenue classified students are taught in a resource center setting or consultative model.



## **Speech Therapy**

Therapy in the area of speech and language is offered to students who are experiencing difficulty in the articulation of sounds and/or in the reception of the expression of language. The therapist provides instruction, individually or in small groups, up to several times a week, depending on the needs of the students.

## **New Jersey Youth Helpline**

The New Jersey Youth Helpline, 2NDFLOOR, is a toll-free, anonymous and confidential helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to all New Jersey young people, ages 10 to 24. Youth can call 2NDFLOOR at 1-888-222-2228 to speak with professionals and trained volunteers who listen attentively, non-judgmentally and compassionately to issues and problems they are facing. Visit [www.2NDFLOOR.org](http://www.2NDFLOOR.org) <<http://www.2ndfloor.org/>> for more information and try the message board!

## **Health Services**

Good health is basic to learning. School health services include growth, dental, vision, hearing, tuberculosis, scoliosis, and physical screenings, as required by state law and in accordance with district policy. These services are coordinated and/or carried out by a full-time certified school nurse in consultation with the school physician.

In addition, the school nurse maintains accurate health records on all scholars, manages illness/injury occurring during school hours, confers with staff and parents, participates in the child study process, counsels scholars in matters of health, and is a resource person in health education.

The primary responsibility for health rests with the parent or guardian. In school, management of illness and injury is limited to first aid. The parent or guardian will be contacted in situations that may need further attention. If not urgent, it will be the parent's responsibility to come to the school and have treatments rendered as necessary. In matters of urgency, the scholar may be referred to the family physician or emergency squad. Therefore, since there is a possibility of parents/guardians not being home in such instances, it is necessary to have parents/guardians complete and sign the scholar emergency form with the name, address, and telephone number of a relative or friend who will assume responsibility in the absence of a parent or a physician.

Please do not request that the school nurse "check" an injury that occurred outside of school, since this can only result in a referral to medical care. In addition, please keep the school nurse informed of changes in your child's health (including medication) to ensure the accuracy of health records.

## **Medication Policy**

Administration of medication is not the responsibility of the school. All requests for the administration of a prescription medication must be in the form of a written note from a doctor. All prescription medication to be dispensed in the health office must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the name of the scholar, medication, doctor, and the times to be administered. Scholars are not permitted to carry or take medication in school. This includes over the counter medicine such as aspirin, cough drops, etc.

If a scholar has to take medication during school hours, it will be necessary to provide:

- the medication labeled by the pharmacy

- a statement from the private physician indicating the diagnosis of the condition for which the medication is prescribed, and the length of time during which medication should be taken.
- written permission for dispensing medication. (Please note the time that prior doses are given and if the scholar is to receive more than one dose a day).
- non-prescription medication is never dispensed at the school.
- the school nurse and the parent are the only persons authorized to administer medication.

### **Required Immunizations**

Scholars will not be permitted to attend school unless immunization requirements have been met. All scholars must present records of complete immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella for enrollment in the Irvington Public Schools.

### **Scholars Unable to Participate in Physical Education**

If a scholar is unable to participate in gym class for an extended period of time, an excuse from the doctor is required. A doctor must also give permission for a scholar who has a known physical problem to participate in athletics.

### **Elevator Usage**

Scholars requiring the use of the elevator need to provide a doctor’s note to the School Nurse stating that the elevator is needed and for how long.

### **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)**

The PTA is an active organization at University Middle School whose primary objectives include the following:

1. Promoting the welfare of children and youth in home, school, and community.
2. Raising the standards of home life.
3. Bringing into closer relation the home and the school in order that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of their child.
4. Uniting efforts that will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.
5. Membership is \$5.00.
6. Meetings are held every Thursday in the library of the school, beginning at 4:00 PM.

### **The Parents’ Role: Supporting School Discipline**

There are many factors, which contribute to excellence in education. Among the most prominent of these factors is the development of a school environment, which reflects order and discipline.

Discipline is achieved when learning is valued and teachers are respected; disruptive behavior is dealt with firmly, fairly, and quickly; students are expected to attend classes and complete assignments; high academic standards are expected to be met; and when learning entails effort, hard work, and sacrifice.

To maintain this kind of discipline, cooperation is needed from all elements of society, especially parents. By supporting and enhancing discipline in the school, parents foster a situation in which teachers can spend their time engaged in the process of teaching rather than consuming valuable time dealing with disruptive students and poor learning attitudes.

The following are suggestions for parents as to what they can do to promote better discipline in the schools:

- Become knowledgeable of the behavior policy of the school. What conduct is expected in the classroom and on the school grounds? What procedure is followed when problems arise?
- Instill in your child a sense of responsibility for what he/she does. Children should realize that disruption and disorder in the classroom undermines the educational effort and hurts everyone.
- Encourage respect for authority.
- Create an atmosphere where your child feels secure about discussing school related concerns and problems. Discuss their concerns and problems with your child's teacher or administrator.
- Review your own attitude toward discipline. If parents don't enforce reasonable and firm rules consistently, then perhaps it is too much to expect such discipline within the schools.
- Most importantly, parents must be a model of respect for the learning process. A key to the attainment of excellence in education is the rededication to learning within the home.



**PARENT AND SCHOLAR  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM  
2016-2017**

Please review and discussed this handbook with your son/daughter; sign this sheet and return it to your child's homeroom teacher. This form will be kept in your son/daughter's personal folder.

**FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WILL NOT RELIEVE A SCHOLAR AND/OR THE PARENT(S) FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONTENTS IN THIS HANDBOOK. THIS INCLUDES RECEIPT OF THE IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Scholar's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom \_\_\_\_\_

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