

## Home of the Tigers

130 High Street  
Ipswich, MA 01938  
(978) 356-3535  
[www.ipsk12.net](http://www.ipsk12.net)

# Ipswich Middle School

## 2023-2024 Student Planner and Handbook

### **Mission Statement:**

Our mission at the Ipswich Middle School is to create a nurturing community where students are encouraged to develop confidence as lifelong learners with the awareness and flexibility necessary to adapt to a changing world. We strive to bring out the best in every student and adult in our learning community.

### Ipswich Middle School Students are TIGERS

**Truthful.** We are true to ourselves and to others.

**Inclusive.** We are inclusive of all. We do not judge others.  
We accept everyone for who they are.

**Gracious.** We are proud of our accomplishments, but we are also humble.

**Enthusiastic.** We are persistent and show 100% effort in everything we do.

**Respectful.** We treat others with care.

## Ipswich Middle School Contact Information:

Phone: 978-356-3535  
Fax: 978-412-8169  
Website: www.ipsk12.net

### **Principal**

Peter Ginolfi  
pginolfi@ipsk12.net  
x2167

### **Assistant Principal**

Sean Fitzgerald  
sfitzgerald@ipsk12.net  
x2160

### **Administrative Assistant**

Victoria Feger  
vfeger@ipsk12.net  
x2163

### **School Secretary**

Katie Henderson  
khenderson@ipsk12.net  
x2104

### **Program Manager, Special Education**

Jackie Potter  
jpotter@ipsk12.net  
x2176

### **Guidance Counselor (A-L)**

Laura Ananian  
lananian@ipsk12.net  
x2148

### **Adjustment Counselor**

Gena Bevilacqua  
gbevilacqua@ipsk12.net  
x2207

### **Guidance Counselor (M-Z)**

Allison Tivnan  
ativnan@ipsk12.net  
x2149

### **School Nurse**

Jennifer Reed, R.N.  
jreed@ipsk12.net  
x2253

### **School Resource Officer**

Joe Perna  
jperna@ipsk12.net  
x2250

**This handbook belongs to:**

**Name:**

**Grade:**

**Locker #:**

## Procedures and Protocol

### Activity Fees

The Ipswich Middle School offers a wide variety of after school activities and intramural/interscholastic athletic opportunities for students. User fees are collected for some activities, as determined by the Ipswich School Committee. All students are allowed to participate regardless of the ability to pay.

### Arrival/Departure Times

School starts at 7:45 a.m.; students should not arrive on school grounds before 7:00 a.m. Students may eat breakfast in the cafeteria or the lobby beginning at 7:00 a.m. School is dismissed at 2:21 p.m., except on Thursdays when dismissal is 1:17 p.m. Please see the calendar for the few exceptions.

All school doors will be locked at 8:00 AM and remain locked throughout the school day. Visitors must ring the security doorbell and identify themselves and the reason for their visit before being admitted to sign in at the front office.

### Attendance Procedures

Parents are asked to call the Main Office in the evening, prior to an absence, or by 8:00 on the morning of an absence to notify us. If we do not receive notification of an absence, we will contact a parent by phone.

When the student returns from an extended absence, a note explaining the absence is always necessary. Excused absences are for illness, court appearances, family emergencies, medical and dental appointments, religious holidays or other emergencies approved by the administration. It is recommended that medical and dental appointments be made outside of school hours. Students may not attend or take part in student activities on the day of an absence – this includes dances and after school sports. Students must be in school by 9:00 a.m. in order to participate in after school activities or functions on that day.

Every effort should be made to make travel arrangements for family vacations during vacation periods and not during school instructional time. Students who are absent more than 10% of the accumulated school days are considered chronically absent by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. School administrators have the right to exclude chronically absent students from school-based activities and events in order to make up any missing school assignments. Parents must complete a Voluntary Absence Form if a student will be absent for three or more consecutive days. This form may be obtained in the main office. The Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences when considering a child's attendance record.

**Dismissals:** Students must present a dismissal note to the Main Office on the morning of dismissal. Students must be signed out by a parent before leaving the building.

**Tardiness:** School begins at 7:45 a.m. Any student arriving after that time will be considered tardy. Students who are late must have a note explaining good cause for tardiness. Students will be assigned an office detention after three unexcused tardy arrivals per trimester.

The following table outlines the absence and tardy procedures.

Absence	Action
Student absent without phone call	Main Office/School Nurse calls home
Absent two consecutive days without parent contact by phone or note	Follow-up call from Guidance or Asst. Principal to parent
Fifth absence without medical documentation	Telephone call from Principal or Asst. Principal; Meeting with Guidance and/or Asst. Principal

Seventh absence without proper documentation	Letter sent home; Letter placed in student cumulative folder; Parents invited to meet with the Attendance Remediation team. Possible loss of activity privileges.
Each absence beyond seven without medical documentation	School may be obligated to file charges in court
<b>Tardiness</b>	<b>Action</b>
Tardy three times in one trimester	One detention per each day tardy past three, Asst. Principal contacts parent.
Tardy seven or more days	Detention for each day tardy; Parent conference with Guidance and Asst. Principal; Letter sent home and placed in student cumulative folder.
Tardy ten or more days	Parent conference with Principal, Asst. Principal, School Resource Officer; Possible loss of activity privileges

### **Bus Procedures**

All school transportation should be a safe, orderly and efficient activity. The Ipswich School Committee provides transportation in accordance with the law. Students and parents, however, should be aware that transportation of students is a conditional privilege and not an absolute right. The school committee has delegated the responsibility for dealing with discipline issues to the building principal. Parents must be notified of all bus suspensions by the principal within twenty-four hours of the infraction. Behavioral concerns in school may result in the limiting of privileges on the bus, i.e. assigned seating.

Failure to abide by bus rules or follow directions will lead to the following progressive disciplinary steps:

- 1) Warning (depending on the severity of the offense)
- 2) Consequences (depending upon the severity of the offense)
- 3) Removal from bus, both short term and long term.

### **Cafeteria**

Ipswich Middle School offers breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria each school day. All food and drink is to be consumed in the cafeteria and not taken outdoors, into the halls or into the classrooms. Students are responsible for cleaning their table and surrounding area after they have eaten. The Code of Conduct is enforced during lunch. If in violation of rules, students may lose the privilege of eating in the cafeteria. Cafeteria vending machines are to be used only during after school hours.

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Unless approved and supervised by a staff member the use of cell phones and non-school issued electronic devices is prohibited during the school day. All devices should be shut off and placed in lockers for the entire school day. Failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action. This includes wireless ear buds, smart watches, cameras, iPads and any other device that can be used to connect to the internet, communicate or post pictures or messages. This policy is in effect on all school sponsored trips, field trips and learning experiences.

### **Counseling and Support**

The mission of the Ipswich Middle School Guidance Department is to provide a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes the academic and social growth of all students. School counselors collaborate with students, families and staff members to address the development milestones and challenges that students encounter. Through curriculum, education, and relationships, school counselors work proactively with students to equip them with the necessary skills to be effective learners, responsible citizens, and respectful members of the school community.

## Dress Code

The responsibility for dress and appearance begins with students and parents. Students are expected to come to school dressed in clothes that are appropriate for learning. Students should take pride in their appearance and dress appropriately for school. Their manner of dress should reflect the seriousness and purpose of school. Students who are found in violation of the dress code will be asked to change and parents may be called to provide suitable clothing.

Faculty or parent groups may recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. These events must meet the requirements set forth above and requirements will be conveyed in writing to both students and parents via email and paper handouts, to be sent home with students. The principal and assistant principal have final discretion over dress code violations. Due to changing styles, this list is subject to change throughout the school year at the discretion of the principal and assistant principal.

## Extra-Curricular/Clubs and Activities

We encourage all students to get involved in after school clubs and activities as a way to explore interests and make social connections with other students. In order to attend dances, play on a sports team, participate in drama activities, or play intramural sports, students must be in good academic *and* disciplinary standing. A student may not participate in an activity if he or she received a failing grade on the most recent progress report or report card. The criteria for good standing are determined by the principal and assistant principal.

## Field Trips/Place Based Learning/Class Trips

Field trips and class trips are an extension of classroom learning. While participating in field trips, students are expected to follow the instructions of chaperones, guides and rules of the field trip site. All students must present a signed "Parental Consent Release from Liability and Indemnity Agreement" form to the teacher before the trip in order to participate in the activity. Violations of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action.

## Grading System

The following grading system will be used by all teachers in all classes:

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

- High Honors: Students must have earned 90-100% in all graded classes, including the related arts.
- Honors: Students must have earned 80-100% in all graded classes, including the related arts.

## Health and Wellness

The Ipswich Middle School nurse promotes student health and safety, intervenes with health issues and collaborates with school faculty and parents. The school nurse maintains medical records for each child. All prescription medications are securely stored in the health room and distributed by the school nurse. Massachusetts requires that a current physical be on file each year with updated immunization documentation. Students must present documentation that a physical exam was conducted within the past 12 months in order to participate in athletics. The school nurse also coordinates vision, hearing, and postural screenings, as well as other screenings mandated by the state. Parents who choose to not have their children screened by the school nurse must put the request in writing.

## Lockers

All middle school students will be assigned a locker. Students are not permitted to change lockers or share with friends. Lockers are school property and may be inspected by the principal or assistant principal if there is reasonable suspicion that it contains something illegal, dangerous, or disruptive to the school environment. Students should treat lockers with respect, therefore damage, stickers and graffiti are not allowed. Locker

contents are to be considered private property. All book bags will remain in lockers during class time. No student is allowed to open another student's locker without permission.

### **School Dances**

Students are invited to dances sponsored by the Student Leadership Senate.

- Dances are scheduled a few times a year from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- Students cannot leave prior to the end of the dance unless special arrangements are made with the principal/assistant principal.
- The school dress code is followed at the dance.
- Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing to attend dances.
- Students must be present in school the day of the dance.
- Dances are for Ipswich Middle School students only.
- Cell phone policy is in effect.

### **Searches**

School officials may search a student's person, locker and/or desk, book bag and any luggage taken on an athletic, music or other school trip if there is a reason to believe that drugs, alcohol, weapons or contraband are being held or transported. A search may also be warranted if school rules are being violated and/or a student's actions jeopardize their individual safety or that of the school.

### **Visitors**

All visitors must enter through the main office door after being allowed in by school personnel. Visitors should report to the main office when entering the building. Students should not open any exterior door to visitors. Student visitors are not allowed. Parents of prospective middle school students may contact the main office to arrange a school visit.

## **Code of Conduct**

The Ipswich Public Schools' main priority is the safety of our students. We expect all members of the Ipswich Middle School community to treat others with respect and courtesy and to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of respect of others in order to promote a safe and positive school climate. Our code of conduct includes respecting people, property and, most importantly, yourselves. All students will respect the property of others, have no involvement with illegal substances or articles, and resolve conflict in a non-violent and responsible manner. Bullying, harassment and hazing will not be tolerated.

Every student deserves a safe learning environment. Any member of the school community whose conduct adversely affects the school will be in breach of the Ipswich Middle School Code of Conduct. This warrants appropriate forms of intervention. The Ipswich Middle School Code of Conduct applies to all members of the school who are in attendance, on the way to or from school, and at any school-sponsored activity on the property or elsewhere.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to work to the best of their ability in every aspect of their academic life. One component of this expectation is academic integrity. Students will be instructed as to what cheating and plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Cheating and plagiarism will not be allowed. Cheating refers to the giving or receiving of information in anything evaluated as the student's own work. Plagiarism refers to stealing or passing off another's work as one's own.

- First offense: parent notified; student will be expected to redo assignment.
- Second offense: parent notified; student receives a grade of zero for the assignment; student will be expected to redo the assignment.

## **Appropriate Language**

All members of the school community are expected to use respectful and supportive language. Swearing, vulgar or obscene language will not be allowed at school or during school-related activities. Using such language may result in disciplinary action.

## **Bullying/Cyber-bullying**

As student cell phone use and social media have become increasingly important aspects of students' lives, Ipswich Middle School encourages parents to implement measures to monitor their children's posts and the content they consume. We remind students and families that once a message, picture or video is sent or posted, the child loses control of who sees it, and the consequences can be widespread and long lasting. Incidents that occur outside of school via cell phones and social media between children can negatively impact student learning and the school community. Ipswich Middle School's role is to support students in feeling comfortable and ready to learn and will support parents in their efforts to teach children how to access technology responsibly and safely.

Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. The Ipswich Public Schools will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying. Bullying is considered to be any unwelcome written or verbal expressions, physical acts or gestures directed at a student or another member of the school community with the purpose (intended or not) to intimidate, frighten, ridicule, humiliate, or cause physical or emotional harm to that person including, without limitation, repeated taunting, threats of harm, verbal or physical intimidation, cyber-bullying (bullying through, without limitation, electronic emails, cellular phones, instant messages, text messages or websites), pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, or taking or damaging another person's personal property while on school grounds or engaged in any school activity, on or off campus.

If a student believes that they have been bullied by another student or by a staff member (including a teacher, teaching assistant, office staff member, custodian, school administrator or other individual in a position of power), they should report this to a trusted teacher, guidance counselor, parent/guardian, assistant principal, or principal. Any accusation of bullying/cyber-bullying will be investigated by the assistant principal or principal. A written report of the investigation may be filed with the principal and the superintendent of schools.

If it is determined that a student has bullied another student the consequences will be:

1. A parent-student conference will be held with the Assistant Principal and/or Principal.
2. The student may be asked to apologize to the victim.
3. Depending on the severity of the incident, a student may be assigned up to 5 days of office detention and/or suspension from school.
4. In cases of repeated bullying by a student, a recommendation will be made to the Superintendent and/or School Committee for further disciplinary action and/or possible expulsion from school.
5. Depending on the severity of the incident, a referral will be made to the local police.

Reprisals, threats or intimidation of a student following bullying incidents will be treated as a serious offense and may result in a 5 day suspension. A referral may be made to the Superintendent for disciplinary action including referral to the School Committee for further action up to and including permanent expulsion from school. All reports of bullying will be treated as confidential and will be maintained in such a way as to protect both the target of the bullying and the alleged aggressor.

## **Classroom Behavior**

All students are entitled to a safe and supportive learning environment. It is a student's responsibility to arrive prepared to participate in classes each day. This includes having the proper materials for class and arriving on time. Respectful behavior towards staff and other students must always be maintained. Failure to be respectful and follow school rules will lead to progressive disciplinary measures.

## **False Alarms**

Bomb threats, false alarms, and the inappropriate use of 911 calls jeopardize the safety and security of the entire school building. These offenses will result in suspension or expulsion, referral to the Superintendent of Schools for further action, and police notification.

## **Fighting**

Fighting during school or school-related activities for any reason will not be tolerated and is considered a very serious offense. Students guilty of instigating or participating in a physical fight will face suspension. All fighting incidents will be thoroughly investigated and parents will be notified.

## **Harassment**

All students should be able to attend Ipswich Middle School without fear of harassment or bullying from other students, staff, and teachers. Intimidation, including written threats, online threats, physical gestures or inappropriate/obscene language, will not be tolerated. These offenses may result in suspension and may include police notification. Students and parents should familiarize themselves with the district's bullying prevention plan and state law.

## **Illegal Substances**

**Drugs and Alcohol** - Alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited in school, on school grounds, and at all school sponsored activities. Any student involved in the possession, use, distribution, or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia, synthetic drugs or alcohol in school or during a school function will face disciplinary action. Violation of this will result in parental notification and may include suspension, law enforcement involvement, or counseling referral. Additional penalties may be imposed depending on the severity and nature of the violation.

### **Tobacco Possession/Vape Products/E-Cigarettes**

Students are not permitted to carry or have on their possessions any form of tobacco, lighters, matches, vaping products, or e-cigarettes on school grounds, buses or school trips. Any student found smoking or in possession of tobacco or vaping products on school property will face disciplinary action.

## **Social Media**

Students are not allowed to take or post pictures of school personnel or classmates without explicit permission from the administration. The posting of pictures on social media sites or other public forums from school or any school related activity is prohibited. Messages posted with the intent of ridiculing, harassing or threatening a student or staff member will be considered a violation of the Code of Conduct.

## **Technology in the School**

The middle school embraces the powerful use of technology as a tool for learning. Each year students and parents must sign and adhere to the district's Acceptable Use Policy. Students can use their own devices only with teacher permission and must strictly adhere to this policy. Failure to comply will result in the student losing permission to use technology for a period of time. Damage to a school-issued device, whether intentional or by negligence, may result in the need to charge the family for repair or replacement.

The use of the internet and other computer software is a privilege. This privilege may be revoked at any time for school policy violations. Examples of behavior which may result in the loss of computer privileges:

- Sending hate mail and making discriminatory remarks
- Accessing or processing inappropriate material, text files, social media or any files dangerous to the integrity of the local network
- Using the Internet to cause harm to other people
- Interfering with other people's computer work
- Trespassing in other people's files
- Using someone's name without their permission
- Using other people's computer resources without authorization
- Using the Internet for illegal activities

Student computer files are considered to be school property and are subject to search. Consequences include loss of access to the computer for the remainder of the school year, as well as disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

## **Vandalism**

Students are expected to treat all school property with respect and care. Willful defacing or destroying of school property will not be tolerated and will result in consequences and/or restitution in the form of payment and/or community service.

## **Weapons**

A weapon is defined as any instrument designed or used to injure or intimidate another person. Weapons are not allowed on school property or during activities. Possession of a weapon at school will result in serious disciplinary action including suspension, parent notification, and police involvement.

## **Discipline Procedures**

### **Philosophy**

Middle school is a time of great personal growth. As part of that growth, we recognize that middle school students make mistakes. Ipswich Middle School staff members share the responsibility of creating a safe, supportive learning environment and for referring students to the office for any behavior that violates the Code of Conduct. In many cases, a consequence is warranted by the offense. Discipline consequences may include teacher detention, office detention and suspension.

### **Detention**

Students will be assigned to detention as a consequence of certain unacceptable behaviors. Students will be asked to phone home to advise parents that they will be detained. Detention is for one half hour from 2:25 – 2:55 p.m. Students are expected to stay on the day of the assigned detention unless other arrangements have been made with administration.

### **Suspension**

Suspension from school is considered a “last resort” in developing good behavior. The student is responsible for teacher-provided assignments and tests during the suspension period. Work missed by unexcused absence and suspension may be made up with credit.

Suspension will be preceded by a due process hearing involving the completion of a suspension form on which the student may make a statement. Parents will be notified of the suspension by either a confirming telephone call or a letter informing them of: 1. the suspension; 2. the reason for the suspension; 3. the length of the suspension; and 4. the date the student may return to school. A copy of the form will be sent to the Superintendent of Schools and placed in the student’s file. Parents will be notified if an extended suspension or expulsion is being requested by the principal. If a student poses an immediate threat to the academic process, to themselves, or to the school, they will be sent home immediately and a hearing will follow. If the situation warrants, the principal may request the Superintendent’s approval to extend a suspension to more than ten consecutive days, necessitating a hearing before the school committee.

Suspension may be in school or out of school and will be determined by the principal or assistant principal. During suspension, students lose their right to be on school property and may not attend any school related events and activities.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion of students from school is the most severe sanction a school can impose. A student may be expelled by the Principal for conduct covered by M.G.L. c. 71 37H and 37H ½. Refer to the School Policies on the district website for a description of the expulsion policy.

## Procedures for Discipline for Students with Disabilities

Students identified as receiving Special Education or 504 Plan services are expected to meet the school requirements for acceptable behavior, unless otherwise determined by the IEP Team, or 504 Team. Additional provisions that can be made for students with disabilities include the following:

- The IEP or 504 Plan for each student will indicate if the student's disability requires a modification of the discipline code.
- The building principal will notify respectively the building Program Manager (for special education students) or counselor (504 Plan students) regarding the suspension offense for a student with disabilities within one school working day. The Program Manager will immediately notify the Director of Pupil Services.

The provisions also apply to students in the process of being evaluated for services, including:

1. Students who have had concern expressed in writing by parents.
2. Students for whom staff have expressed concerns regarding a pattern of concerning behavior. This concern can have been expressed to the principal, Program Manager, or the PPS Director.
3. Students who are formally in the process of having been referred for an evaluation or are suspected as having a disability.

These provisions do not apply to students whose parents have refused an evaluation or special education services. They also do not apply to students who have been evaluated and have been found ineligible. The principal, special education staff, counselors and other related service providers have all been trained in understanding the regulations regarding the following:

- **Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** The Ipswich Public School is responsible for providing FAPE to all students. A special education student may not be suspended for more than 10 days without the provision of FAPE. Schools are responsible for ensuring that students receive educational services that allow access to the general curriculum and can make progress toward IEP goals.
- **Manifestation Determination:** For suspensions that will extend beyond 10 school days, the special education Team must determine if the behavior that warranted the disciplinary act was caused by or had a direct relationship to the disability, or was a direct result of the school district's failure to implement the IEP.
- **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** An FBA must be completed within 10 school days after the 11<sup>th</sup> day of suspension. In the Ipswich Public Schools, the stand practice is to closely monitor student suspensions and patterns and proactively begin an FBA at or around the 7<sup>th</sup> day of suspension. The goal of the FBA is to determine the function or reason for the problematic behavior(s) and to proactively develop a positive Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).
- **Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES):** An IAES is a change in placement that allows the student to receive educational services. Teams must decide, based on a student's unique circumstances, when an IAES is appropriate for suspensions that extend beyond 10 days. Teams must work with the PPS Director to discuss IAES options that are appropriate and available.

Special circumstances exist when a student engages in behavior that includes the following:

1. Possession of a weapon
2. Possession of drugs
3. Potential to cause serious bodily harm.

If the behavior includes one or more of the above, the principal of the school may order the student to an IAES for up to 45 school days or beyond, if deemed appropriate. Parents will have been informed of this process through provision of both oral and written notice regarding the opportunity for a hearing. In the case of the special

education student, the Manifestation Determination Meeting will be held to examine the potential nexus of the offense to the disability. Early scheduling of this meeting allows the team to examine the patterns of behavior, and to discuss appropriate responses to support the student, including assessments and or changes to the IEP or 504 Plan.

**For further information:**

The Ipswich Public School District's policies continue to be reviewed and updated. Please refer to the district website ([www.ipsk12.net](http://www.ipsk12.net)) for all of the district policies, as well as other information that may be useful to students and parents.

## **IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### ***Successful Habits of Mind***

#### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Expectations**

##### **Perseverance**

With perseverance we persist through challenges, manage pressure and maintain an optimistic outlook.

##### **Collaboration**

Through collaboration we demonstrate mutual respect and shared responsibility as we work with others to accomplish a task and achieve shared goals.

##### **Critical Thinking**

Through critical thinking we reason abstractly, concretely, quantitatively, and resourcefully for a purpose.

## **Creativity**

With creativity we imagine and explore possibilities, challenge existing structures and develop novel thoughts and forms of expression.

## **Self-Management**

With self-management we take responsibility for our behavior and success by setting goals, organizing our resources and revising our strategies based on self-reflection.

## **Communication**

Through communication we exchange ideas using a variety of formats while considering the audience.