

# LITCHFIELD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



## HANDBOOK 2011 - 2012

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LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06759  
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## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

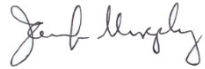
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2011 - 2012 school year! I look forward to our partnership in providing the highest quality education for our students. Our faculty and staff anxiously await their arrival.

At LIS, we are committed to providing an exemplary and dynamic education for our students in an environment which is nurturing and supportive. This year, we will continue to develop our interdisciplinary approach to instruction in order to appropriately challenge and support all of our students as they acquire and master literacy and numeracy skills. We believe this preparation will serve our students optimally as they progress throughout their education.

We welcome your input and communication as we join our efforts in making this school year enriching and exciting for our students. Please call, email, or visit the school if you have any questions. More information about our school is available at our district website, [www.litchfieldschools.org](http://www.litchfieldschools.org).

Sincerely,



Jennifer Murphy

## **LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The current members of the Litchfield Board of Education are:

Chairperson:	Frank Simone
Vice-Chairperson:	Gail Carr
Secretary:	Donald Falcetti
Members:	Elizabeth Fabbri, Frank Gorman, James Katzin, John Noone, Amy Rosser, and Wayne Shuhi.

Meeting times and locations are posted at the Superintendent's Office and on the district website. Parents, students, and other community members are welcome to attend the public meetings.

## **CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL**

### **Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Deborah Wheeler

### **Director of Business Operations**

Pat Buccitelli

### **Director of Special Services**

Gary Zaremski

### **Facilities Manager**

Tony Crowe

## Litchfield Intermediate School Staff 2010 - 2011

### **Principal**

Jennifer Murphy

### **Lead Teacher**

Lori Shuhi

### **Guidance Counselor**

Rachel Caporuscio

### **Nurse**

Tina Cordani

### **Secretaries**

Colleen Rodger, Colleen Renzullo

### **Grade 4**

Kirsten D'Amore-Jenks  
Tara Kraut  
Adam Piechowski  
Caitlin Van Stone

### **Grade 5**

Krista Beyer  
Rebecca Duquette  
Alison O'Leary  
Julie Rooney

### **Grade 6**

Melissa Brutting  
Jennifer Digliani  
Heidi Lechich  
Shelly Hill

### **Art**

Marsha Berkun

### **Music/Instrumental**

Mark Obolewicz

### **Chorus**

Peter Perkins

### **Occupational Therapists**

Lisa Martin, Kathleen Reeves

### **Information Technology Specialist**

Bob Rice

### **Physical Education**

Andy Parker

### **Instructional Assistants**

Jennifer Baldwin, Carol Dake, Connie Gillman,  
Mary McDevitt, Linette Pronovost, and Barbara  
Sanford

### **Physical Therapist**

Laurie Piwonski

### **Interns**

To Be Determined

### **School Psychologist**

Seth Newton

### **Language Arts/Social Studies**

#### **Coordinator/Supplemental Skills LA (4-6)**

Katie Sullivan

### **Science Coordinator (4-6)**

Melissa Brutting

### **Social Worker (K-12)**

Lisa Heuschkel

### **Library Media Specialist**

Debra Benedict

### **Spanish/French**

Aline Libassi

### **Math Coordinator (K-6)**

#### **Supplemental Skills (4-6)**

Lori Shuhi

### **Special Education**

Laurie Behmke, Melissa Malia

**Speech/Language Pathologist**

Betsey Lynn

**Custodians**

Kevin Brennan, Tim Wilcox, Nancy Light

**PREFACE**

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful school information. Both students and parents need to be familiar with its contents, which are intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning. Please be aware that the LIS Handbook is updated yearly, while Board of Education policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy, which affect portions of the Handbook, will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Litchfield Intermediate School community is to provide an education that leads students to a full and productive life. Our goal is to offer a safe learning environment in which all students develop to his or her full potential. We work to promote an atmosphere of collaboration, cooperation and open communication among students, staff, parents, and community. We strive, through encouragement and guidance, to have students become productive members of a diverse and changing society.

**OUR GOALS**

As an educational community, we strive to provide a comprehensive educational program which:

- Implements a challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Supplies the resources and materials which support the curriculum
- Recognizes the individual needs of students
- Ensures the cognitive and emotional growth of students
- Promotes wellness among students and staff
- Encourages the development of a strong self-image and respect for a culturally diverse society
- Fosters critical and creative thinking designed to promote students' problem solving skills
- Involves staff, family members, and community resources in the educational process
- Affords the opportunity for professional growth

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

At Litchfield Intermediate School, we recognize that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family. Successful parental involvement should include the following components:

- Have your child at school on time.
- Ensure that your child is well-rested and prepared for the school day.
- Ask to see your child's school assignments/assignment planner on a regular basis.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students at the intermediate or upper elementary level are expected to be accountable for their actions and preparedness. Successful Intermediate School students exhibit the following traits:

- Respect for self and others.
- Give your best effort every day.
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.

## **SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Litchfield Intermediate School is a part of the Litchfield Public Schools and is bound to abide by all Board of Education policies and Connecticut Department of Education guidelines. The school will provide the following:

- A challenging curriculum that is suited to the age and ability levels of the students in accordance with Connecticut State Frameworks and Guidelines.
- A safe environment conducive to student learning.
- Highly qualified, experienced teachers.
- Regular communication between school and home.

## **PROGRAM OF STUDIES**

### **ART CLASS**

In art class students learn and apply art concepts and skills that are age appropriate. Through the study of art history, students gain an appreciation for cultures and their impact on society. Interdisciplinary art lessons integrate the core subjects such as math, social studies, and science. Art lessons are linked to the art curriculum and state standards. Art allows students to express themselves while utilizing higher order thinking skills.

### **BAND**

Band provides an opportunity for students interested in musical instruments to perform with a group, creating a feeling of accomplishment for its participants while providing musical entertainment for others. Band, like all music, is an opportunity for students to express themselves. It is a unique course because students and their teacher create and present a product together. It is also an activity that teaches self-discipline and dedication. Full band groups meet during Academic Enrichment periods. Small section lessons occur on a rotational pull-out basis. Students in Band are expected to have their instrument and music when required, practice their instrument in preparation for lessons and rehearsals, attend all rehearsals and concerts, and attend a lesson once each week.

**Jazz Band:** Participants are determined by audition. The Jazz Band studies and performs appropriate jazz literature from the 30's to the present. Students who wish to play saxophone, trumpet, trombone, or drums in the Jazz Band must be current members of the LIS Band.

### **CHORUS**

The chorus program provides an opportunity for members to develop their musical talent and an appreciation of music. Music that is appropriate for the age level is chosen for practice and performance. Students participating in chorus are expected to attend all rehearsals. Students in chorus are expected to keep up with their other classes so that they can participate fully in the choral program. Chorus is a year-long commitment.

### **GENERAL MUSIC CLASSES**

The LIS General Music Curriculum follows the National Standards. Composing and improvising provide students with a unique insight into the form and structure of music and at the same time help develop their creativity. Broad experience with a variety of music helps students to make informed musical judgments.

## GUIDANCE CLASS

The Developmental Guidance Program at Litchfield Intermediate School is an integral part of each student's educational environment. The program is comprehensive and is designed to meet the developmental needs of all students. It includes sequential activities implemented by a certified counselor with the support of the administrator, teachers, parents, and students. The program addresses the needs of each student's personal, social, academic and career development needs. These needs are met through the use of a guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and program management.

## HEALTH CLASS

The students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 are assisted in utilizing core information to analyze and evaluate health issues, information and resources in order to become a healthy and responsible citizen. Students are provided with a foundation of information to encourage them to choose health-enhancing behaviors.

The 4th Grade Health Curriculum begins with a review of cells. From cells, further study of the muscles, bones and the nervous system of the body evolve. The digestive system then is reviewed with a focus on the body as a whole. Throughout the year, the immune system and how to stay healthy is discussed. Nutrition and fitness are threads of the Health curriculum throughout the year. Body changes for girls are reviewed in the spring with female students only.

In Grade 5, **nutrition** continues to be a focus along with **fitness** and **exercise**. The **respiratory** and the **circulatory systems** are concentrated on individually and as they interrelate. **Diseases** are discussed in an informational and preventative framework. **Body changes** are discussed with girls and boys separately.

In Grade 6, **nutrition, fitness, and exercise** are highlighted. **Substance abuse** information is covered. Alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, marijuana and other drugs are discussed. Information is presented, influences are analyzed along with interpersonal communication and decision making within the focus of long-term goal setting and individual lifelong health. **Diseases** and their prevention are reviewed. **Wellness** is viewed from the **physical, emotional, and mental** focus. Body changes are discussed with girls and boys separately.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LITERACY

Through interdisciplinary collaboration with classroom subject areas, students build research and independent study skills using technology and the library resources.

## LANGUAGE ARTS

The LIS language arts program offers students the opportunity to build their literacy skills to meet grade level benchmarks and become life-long readers. Reader's and Writer's Workshop emphasizes an individualized literacy approach and serves as our instructional foundation.

## **MATH**

Litchfield's math program utilizes a hands-on, conceptually-based approach to numeracy. Students work with real life applications to increase their number sense and problem solving skills. Both of LIS' math programs support this foundation: Fourth and fifth grade use the *Growing with Math* program; sixth grade uses the *Impact* math program which is continued at Litchfield Middle School in seventh and eighth grade.

## **SCIENCE**

Our inquiry-based approach to science offers students in all grade levels to learn about the world around them through research and hands-on investigation. All students participate in a school wide Science Fair.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

LIS' social studies program emphasizes the acquisition of literacy skills through non-fiction reading and social studies content information. Students study history, communities, cultures, and geography.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS**

The physical education program at Litchfield Intermediate provides students with the fundamentals, knowledge, and basic skills to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Students are provided with activities that are age appropriate, such as, fitness, cooperative games, project adventure and an introduction to team sports. These activities not only allow the students to grow physically but also intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Students interact in an environment that demonstrates respect, responsibility, cooperation, teamwork and sportsmanship. Every student has PE class twice during each six day specials rotation.

## **WORLD LANGUAGE**

Students in Litchfield begin their formal study of Spanish and French in fourth grade. Emphasis is placed on introductory vocabulary, conversation, and culture. Students will study Spanish and French for a half year in grades four through six.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LITCHFIELD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

### **CAFETERIA**

Students at LIS may sit at any table at lunch. The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the school office or from the school nurse.

### **CLASS PLACEMENT**

Every effort is made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Among the issues considered in the making of the groups are learning styles, special service needs, girl/boy ratio, reading partnership compatibility, personalities and friendships. The final decision for placement rests with the Principal.

### **DRESS GUIDELINES**

Students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school environment and activities. We encourage students to wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Students participate in recess every day, and sneakers are best for the playscape and the playing fields.

### **EARLY PICK UP FROM SCHOOL**

In the event it is necessary for a student to be picked up early, a parent or guardian should send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student will be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Only those individuals listed on the student's emergency form may pick up the student from school.

We will assume your child will ride the bus home daily (or walk if not assigned to a bus route) unless we receive a written note stating otherwise. Please send a note to school with your child on the day of the change. Phone calls with changes are discouraged and will only be taken before 2:00 p.m. It is very difficult to make changes to your child's dismissal procedure at the last minute.

Children may not change busses to ride to other children's homes for parties. Notes are necessary for after-school activities or parent pick-ups. This includes all Park and Recreation Department activities, Brownies, Cub Scouts, etc.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES**

We encourage students to leave cell phones, iPods, or electronic games at home. These items are not permitted in class and risk being lost. Students are discouraged from keeping these expensive items in their lockers, as well.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on the District's Alert Now automated telephone communication system and local radio stations WZBG (97.3 FM). Emergency closings will also be posted on Cable 5, and local NBC, ABC, and CBS affiliates.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

The mission of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. The mission is accomplished:

- By providing intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats;
- By providing instruction to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas;
- By working with other educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students.

Students are invited to use the books, periodicals, newspapers, and other materials located in the library.

## **LOCKERS**

Each student is assigned a locker. Sixth grade students are allowed mid-year to put school-issued locks on the lockers. Valuables should not be kept in a school locker.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Any articles which are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in to the Lost and Found. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity after a period of time.

## **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The Litchfield PTO is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO. Meetings and events are publicized in advance. The Litchfield PTO serves both Litchfield Center and Litchfield Intermediate Schools. All meetings are at Center School and begin at 7:00 p.m. This year's meeting dates are Thursday, September 29th; Thursday, January 26th; and Thursday, May 17th.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are sent home with students three times a year. Report cards are issued within one week of the end of the trimester.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

Regular school days at Litchfield Intermediate School begin at 8:25 AM and end at 3:20 PM. On early release days students are dismissed at 1:00 PM. Pick-ups are at 12:45 PM. For 2 hour delay openings, school begins at 10:25.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Students are allowed to use the phone in the office with permission from the Principal or office staff. The student must first ask permission and give a rationale for the call. Students may not use the phone to make after school arrangements with friends. The use of cell phones is prohibited at school.

## **TESTING**

All students in grades 3 - 8 will participate in the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). The CMT consists of tests in Reading Comprehension, Degrees of Reading Power, Holistic Writing Prompt, Editing and Revising, Science, and comprehensive Mathematics tests. The CMT takes place in March.

## **TRANSFER AND WITHDRAWAL**

Students withdrawing from school must notify the office in advance of their last day. Parents must complete a formal Release of Records form upon withdrawal.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Unsatisfactory student behavior on the bus may result in suspension of transportation services or such other disciplinary action that is appropriate for misconduct. We encourage parents to remind students about the importance of bus safety: staying seated and calm voices.

## **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Parents and other visitors/volunteers are welcome at Litchfield Intermediate School. All visitors must first report to the office to sign in.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS**

### **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill may be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills. The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. When the alarm sounds, students are to move along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

### **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the social worker and guidance counselor include helping students function more successfully within the school environment.

Individual counseling or group sessions are opportunities to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, or educational.

### **NURSE'S OFFICE**

Our school nurse is on staff to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school. A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information. Vision screening is performed on students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Hearing screening is done on students in grades 5 and 6. Scoliosis screening is done on students in grades 5 and 6.

When students visit the nurse and are ill or injured, parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. Our school nurse is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

**Administration of Medication:** Parents of students requiring prescribed or over-the-counter medication during school should contact our school nurse. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the nurse's office. All

medication must be in original container with proper labels and delivered to the nurse's clinic by a parent.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per a written medical order stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self testing. Such self testing will be done in the nurse's office in her presence.

**Communicable/Infectious Diseases:** Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

**Emergency Medical Treatment:** Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency. Updates throughout the year are encouraged as contact numbers change at home and work.

**Health Assessment Requirements:** All students must have a complete medical evaluation and completion of the State of Connecticut Health Assessment Record Sheet by parent and physician/P.A./APRN prior to school entry. In addition, students continuing to reside in Litchfield must have additional **medical evaluations in Grades 6 and 10**. The school physician will perform this health assessment if your child qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Please contact the school nurse for more information.

**Immunizations:** All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a written certificate of such. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. There are no new required immunizations in grades 4, 5, or 6. However, there are specific requirements before entry into 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Students new to Connecticut must comply with all Connecticut immunization standards up to and including requirements at the age of registration.

**Notes from the Doctor:** It is important that parents notify the office in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician. In the event that an injury requires elevator use, a doctor's note is required. Students who are unable to participate in Physical Education or recess activities are required to bring a physician's note detailing the limitation and the length of restriction.

**Physical Disabilities:** The school district will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision. Arrangements will be made to accommodate students with disabilities on all off campus events or fieldtrips.

## **SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority. The cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's rules for behavior.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow the instructions of adults who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **PUPIL SERVICES**

For students in need of Special Education programs, a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for periodic review of all students presently in Special Education.

**Referral Process:** Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must first be referred to a Teacher Assistance Team. This team consists of a variety of teachers and staff members who determine the merit of the referral. Should strategies in the classroom suggested by the Teacher Assistance Team be ineffective, the student is then referred to the Supplemental Skills Program. If after a reasonable amount of intervention with the Supplemental Skills staff the student is still struggling a PPT may be requested to discuss the situation with the parents and possible request formal evaluation.

**The Parent's Role:** Parents who have children served by special education should familiarize themselves with their rights as parents, timelines for evaluation, and the specific goals of their child. The parent is a key member of the PPT committee and their input is valued. While the teachers know the student academically, the parents know the whole child. A combined effort between the school and the parents results in the best outcome for the student.