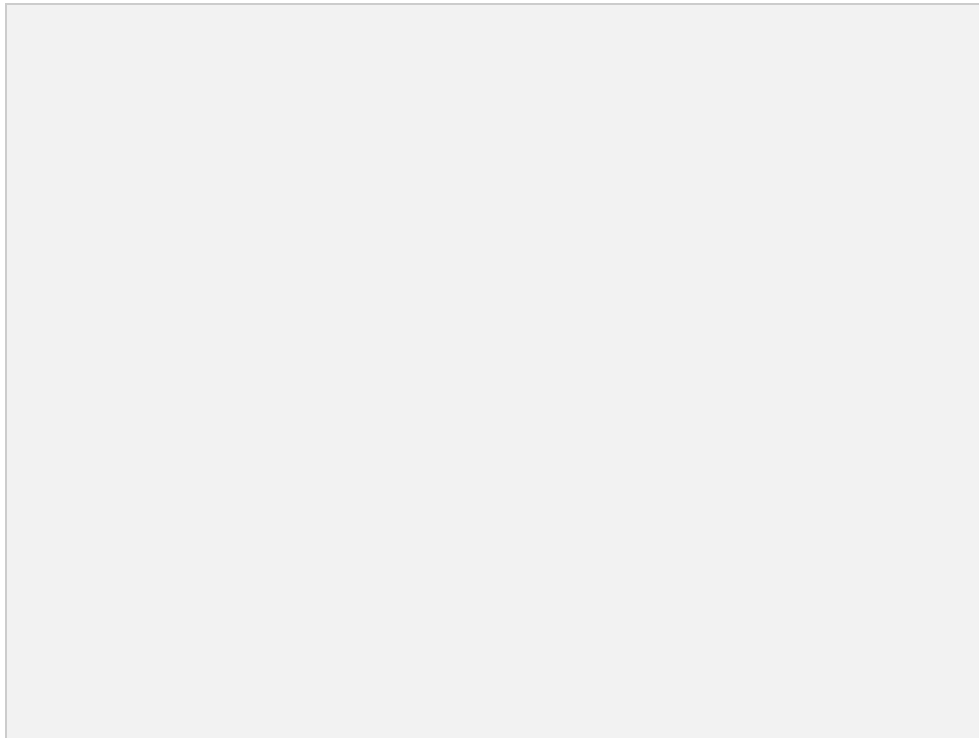


**Ashland Middle School
2021-2022
Parent Student Handbook**



Ashland Clockers

Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence

Ashland Middle School
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
Phone: (508) 881-0167
Absentee Phone: (508) 881-0196
Fax: (508) 881-0169
School Hours: 8:00am-2:25pm
Website: ams.ashland.k12.ma.us

David DiGirolamo
Principal

Michael Morro
Assistant Principal

James Adams
Superintendent

School Committee
Laurie Tosti- Chair
Marc Terry- Vice-Chair
Tina Fitanides - Secretary
Erin Williams- Member
Paul Kendall - Member

The information in this handbook is current as of September 2021 publication. Ashland Public Schools reviews and revises its policies and curriculum on a regular basis to meet local and state guidelines.

A Message from Mr. DiGirolamo

Principal's Message

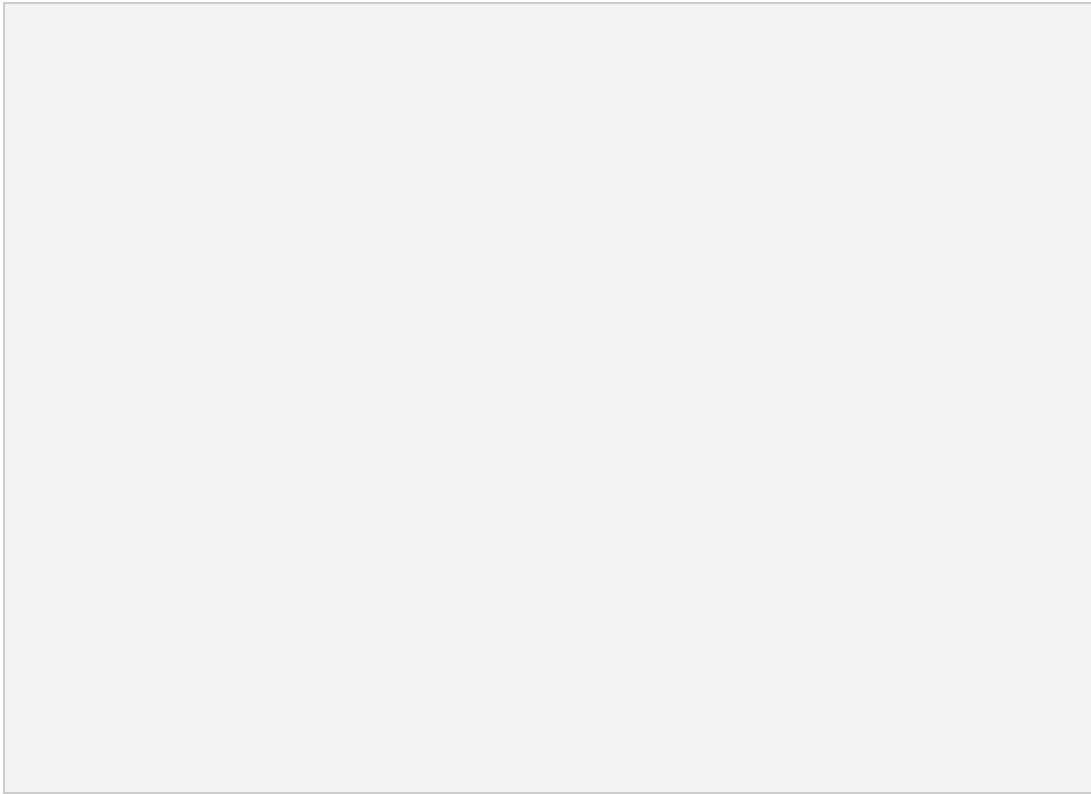
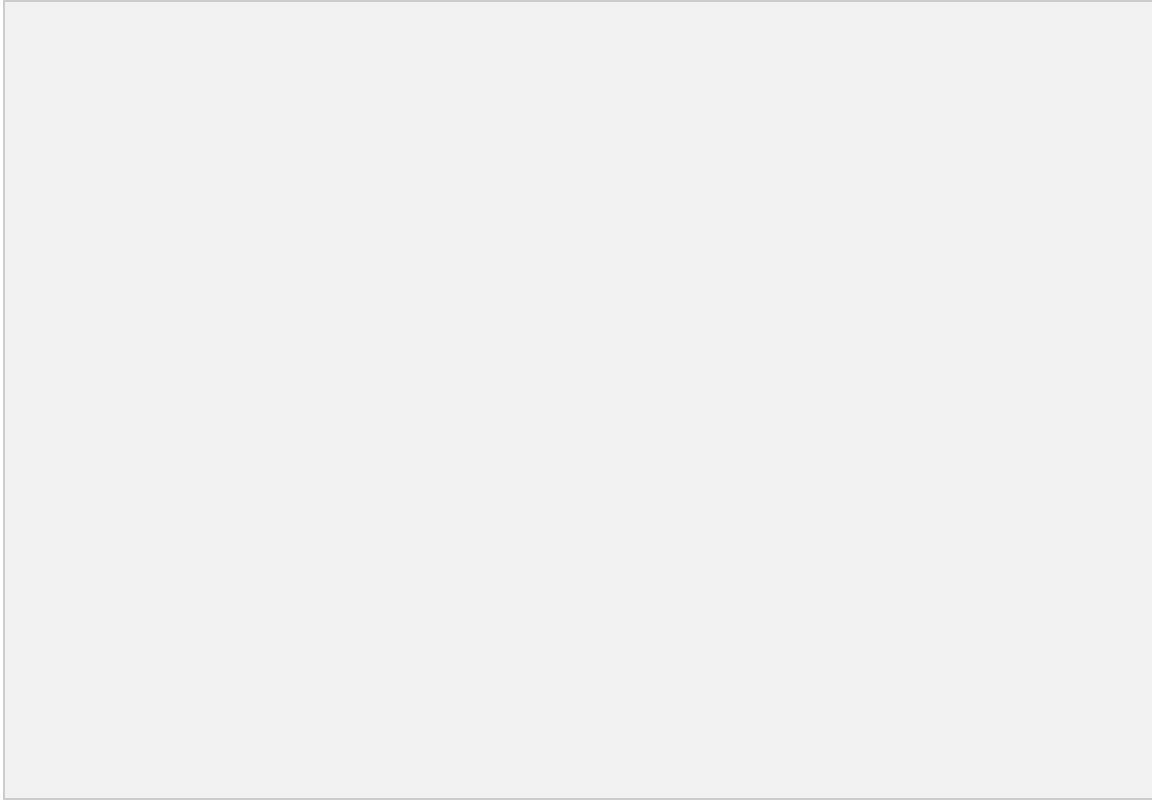
At Ashland Middle School, we strive to have students reach their academic potential as 21st century learners. Ashland Middle School aims to support and develop students to have them reach academic, social and emotional goals while engaging in quality academic and non-academic experiences. At AMS, we believe all students can be successful. Our core values at AMS are: Respect and Responsibility. We support students to reflect the core values on a daily basis and celebrate those students who do so. At AMS, we see communication as a fundamental component for success. We encourage families to engage in their child's learning experiences and seek to foster the connection between school and home. We look forward to an exciting school year and hope to see you soon at Ashland Middle School!

Dave DiGirolamo

AMS Principal

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Ashland Public Schools Blueprint for Continuous Student Improvement	5
Translations	6
Academics	6
• Educational Principles	6
• Curriculum	6
• Grading System	6
• Academic Ethics	7
• Acceptable Use Policy	7
General Information	7
• Bell Schedule	7
• No-school Announcements	8
• Calendar of Events	8
• Handbook Scope and Limitations	8
• Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	8
• Statement of Non-Discrimination	9
• Civil Rights Laws/District Coordinator	9
District Policies	9
Code of Conduct and Progressive Discipline Plan	10
Disciplining Students with Disabilities	10
MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H & 37H ½	12
Bullying Prevention Plan	14
School Attendance	15
Transportation Policies and Procedures	15
Parent Information	16
Health Services	16
• Illness	16
• Fever	16
• Strep Throat	16
• Head Lice	17
• Medication	17
• Health Record	17
• State Mandated Requirements	17
• Management of Life-Threatening Allergies	17
• Chronic Illness Policy	17



TRANSLATION:

Translation of the Parent/Student Handbook

Please call the main office at the school if you would like a copy of this document translated into a language other than English.

Por favor llame a la oficina principal en la escuela si desea una copia de este documento sea traducido a otro idioma que no sea Inglés.

Por favor, ligue para o escritório principal da escola, se você quiser uma cópia deste documento traduzido em uma língua diferente do Inglês.

يرجى الاتصال على المكتب الرئيسي في المدرسة إذا كنت تريد نسخة من هذه الوثيقة مترجمة إلى لغة غير اللغة الانكليزية.

Gelieve telefonisch contact op het hoofdkantoor op de school als u graag een kopie van dit document vertaald in een andere taal dan het Engels.

만일 당신이 그 문서의 사본을 영어가 아닌 다른 언어로 번역하려는 학교에 메인 사무실로 전화 주시기 바랍니다.

ACADEMICS:

Ashland's Educational Principles

1. All students can learn.
2. All students learn in different ways at different rates.
3. All students deserve and need positive support and respect.
4. Students learn best as active participants in the process and should be encouraged to take risks.
5. Learning occurs best in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment.
6. The school community values differences and appreciates diversity.
7. The school community fosters honesty, integrity, and a strong sense of ethics.
8. The commitment to education is a shared community responsibility.

Curriculum

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has adopted the [Common Core State Standards](#). For specific information regarding implementation in Massachusetts follow this link: [Massachusetts Common Core Standards](#). Additionally, in the Ashland Public Schools the focus of the curriculum is not only upon the acquisition of cognitive skills, but also upon the development of appropriate physical, social/emotional and behavioral skills. The specific kind of instruction provided varies according to grade level. Instruction in art, music, technology, and physical education is provided to all children during the six day cycle.

Grading System

Grades on report cards are numerical:

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

WP = Withdrawn Passing

P = Passing

WF = Withdrawn Failing

I = Incomplete

WDN = Withdrawn from School M = Medical

A = Audit

Academic Ethics

The Ashland Middle School strives to provide a program of academic excellence and the opportunity for each individual student to excel. In keeping with this goal, a high standard of academic ethics must also be maintained. Students will thereby learn to value and demonstrate ethical behavior; will be better prepared to deal with such expectations outside the school environment; and will be assured that the integrity and value of their academic achievements will not be diminished.

Therefore, CHEATING, COPYING AND PLAGIARISM ARE NOT TOLERATED. The definition of plagiarism is the act of taking the ideas or writings of another and using them as one's own. First offense – a zero on the work/tests. Additional offenses will result in more severe disciplinary action that may include loss of class privileges and field trips.

[Please check this link for more information about homework, make-up work, academic probation and the RTI process.](#)

[Please check this link for more information about our Acceptable Use Policy regarding technology](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

AMS Bell Schedule

<i>Daily Schedule</i>	
Homeroom	8:00am – 8:04am
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students must be in homeroom by 8:00 - attendance is taken there. Students arriving after 8:00 are considered tardy to school.	
Period 1	8:06am – 8:49am
Period 2	8:51am – 9:36am
Advisory	9:38am – 9:50am
Period 3	9:52am – 10:37am
Period 4	10:39am – 11:24am
Period 5	11:24am – 12:54pm
<i><u>Lunch Times</u></i>	
<i>1 – 11:24am - 11:54pm</i>	
<i>2 – 11:54pm - 12:24pm</i>	
<i>3 – 12:24pm - 12:54pm</i>	

Period 6	12:54pm – 1:39pm
Period 7	1:41pm – 2:25pm

AMS Calendar: <https://www.ashland.k12.ma.us/Page/2565>

School Cancellations/Closings

- Please check the [Ashland Public Schools website](#).
- Superintendent Adams will be making a call via Blackboard Connect to all parent and staff households. NOTE: If you do not receive this early morning call, then you have either opted out of receiving these calls or your phone number is incorrect in our database. Please follow-up with your school's secretary once students return to school.
- Follow Supt. Adams' twitter feed at (<https://twitter.com/ashlandclockers>)
- No-school announcements are posted to the following live media outlets:
RADIO STATIONS WBZ, WRKO, WCVB
TELEVISION CHANNELS [4](#), [5](#), and [7](#).

Do not call the police or fire departments.

Calendar of Events

Please check the [Ashland Public Schools website](#) for school and district information and updates.

Please check this link for the [APS Calendar](#).

Handbook Scope and Limitations

The school and administration reserve the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for circumstances that may require actions that are not covered in this handbook. In all cases, rules, regulations and possible consequences shall be as consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations and consequences for similar incidents. Matters omitted from this handbook should not be interpreted as a limitation to the scope of the school's responsibility and, therefore, the school's authority in dealing with any type of infraction that may not be in the best interest of safety and welfare of our students.

These rules and policies apply to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school, or any school sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school, students and staff.

All students are responsible for adhering to the current rules and regulations set forth by the state of Massachusetts.

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

The Ashland Public Schools ensures equal employment and educational opportunities for its employees and students. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school or any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and/or homelessness. (M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C, Title VI, Title VII and Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ADA) In addition, the Ashland Public Schools does not discriminate against its employees on the basis of age (M.G.L. 151B/ADEA) or on the basis of veteran's status.

Massachusetts state law prohibits discrimination against students in public schools, including protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation. It states: *No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.*

The Ashland Public Schools offer all courses of study, extra-curricular activities and school services without regard of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In addition, the School Department adheres to the Federal requirements provided under Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

The Ashland Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or handicap in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.

The administrators identified at the following link have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: [Civil Rights Links / District Coordinator Information](#).

PARENTAL RIGHTS UNDER FERPA(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act): <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS/DISTRICT COORDINATOR
[Civil Rights laws/District Coordinator](#)

DISTRICT POLICIES:

The School Committee “shall have the power to establish educational goals and policies for the schools in the district consistent with the requirements of law and statewide goals and standards established by the Board of Education (M.G.L. c71, §37).” The Ashland Public Schools School Committee maintains policies to ensure the school district operates in an effective and efficient manner. Review of School Committee Policy is on-going throughout each school-year. It is the responsibility of each individual to monitor the Ashland Public School’s website for the most current policies. Policies printed within this handbook were current at the time of printing.

Please click this link to access the [Ashland Public School’s Policy Manual](#).

If you have any questions regarding current School Committee policies, please contact the Office of the Superintendent of Schools at 508-881-0150.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN:

Students at Ashland Middle School are expected to behave in a **responsible** and respectful manner. The rights and responsibilities of all students and staff members must be respected at all times. To support this goal, Ashland Middle School has adopted a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model. The PBIS model is a systems approach to positive behavior which recognizes the importance of teaching positive behaviors. The AMS PBIS team has led the school through the process of establishing core school values and developed a matrix of expected behaviors in the school that support these values. Students are responsible for knowing our behavioral expectations, understanding their importance, and following them. **See more information about our [PBIS Matrix](#).** We are committed to this research based model and its ability to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students.

The Ashland Middle School uses a progressive discipline model. Progressive discipline is an approach that promotes positive student behavior and enables the principal and/or assistant principal to choose the appropriate consequences to address inappropriate student behavior. It has several important elements, including:

- **Engaging parents – There will be ongoing dialogue with parents about students' achievement and behavior.**
- **Helping students to learn – Students will have opportunities to learn from the choices they make. Early and ongoing interventions will be provided when appropriate.**
- **Establishing clear standards – The school has a matrix of behaviors for students to follow and inappropriate behavior will have appropriate consequences.**

The administrative approach to discipline will involve the principal/assistant principal considering mitigating factors like the student's age, the circumstances of the behavior, and the student's history before determining the most appropriate way to respond to each situation.

Please check these links for our [Code of Conduct](#), [Dress Code](#), and [Cell Phone Policy](#).

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

In general, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the student handbook and the school's code of conduct. In accordance with Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and with federal law IDEA 2004: Section 615 (k), and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. Section 794 (A), the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current placement for no more than 10 school days. Special provisions are outlined below for students with a documented disability who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.

Case-by case determination

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student with a disability who after disciplinary actions has been found to have violated the school code of conduct. (IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR Part 300, M.G.L. c71, §§ 37H, 37H½)

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days

Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities. Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may

place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement.

Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension exceeds 10 school days
If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal is considered a “change of placement”. A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.

Prior to any removal that constitutes a change of placement, the school will convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address your child’s problematic behavior.

Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must inform you that the law requires that the school district consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is related to your child’s disability. This consideration is called a “manifestation determination.” Parents have a right to participate in this process. All relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, and evaluation reports.

At a manifestation determination meeting, the Team will consider:

- Did the student’s disability *cause* or have a *direct and substantial relationship* to the conduct in question?
- Was the conduct a *direct result* of the district’s failure to implement the IEP?

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action *was* related to the disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the special circumstances). The Team will review the IEP or Section 504 Plan and any behavioral intervention plans.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action *was not* related to the disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according the school’s code of conduct. For students with IEPs, during the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension.

Special circumstances for exclusion

Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension.

School personnel will provide Parent’s Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. Parent, guardian and/or student may petition Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504). Until issues are resolved, the student remains in his or her current placement.

MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H & 37H ½:

Section 37H

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

Section 37H½

Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(a) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(b) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

Section 37H3/4

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any

school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

Bullying Prevention Plan:

Please see the entire [Ashland Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#).

Bullying, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §37O, means the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or damage to his or her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include cyberbullying. Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a: wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to: electronic mail, internet communications, instant messaging or facsimile communications.

It is important for all members of the community to understand that conflict is not automatically synonymous with bullying. Arguing, bantering back and forth, ignoring, roughhousing and fighting, while potentially serious forms of conflict; are not necessarily instances of bullying. Bullying is characterized by intention, repetition, and power imbalance. Not every conflict meets these criteria.

In Ashland students are expected to behave in a responsible and respectful manner. Our goal is to maintain a positive environment, which promotes learning and contributes to each child's social, emotional, academic and physical development.

It is the responsibility of the building Principal or his/her designee to make clear to students and staff that bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation or harassment in the school building, on school grounds, on our school busses or school sanctioned transportation, or at school sponsored function will not be tolerated. The Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for the implementation of bullying prevention and intervention procedures, including investigating all charges of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Please refer to Appendix A which includes a draft district wide process, draft forms, and procedures to support the reporting, response and investigation. Reporting bullying or retaliation: The Ashland Public School Staff members are required to immediately report to the Principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witness or has reliable information about bullying.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents, or guardians, or others. This can be in oral or written form, face to face, via telephone or by email when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

The faculty and administration of Ashland Middle School are committed to offering a quality education to their students. School attendance is crucial to learning and will be closely monitored. Classroom participation and student/teacher interaction are fundamentally important reasons for good school attendance. Students participating in after school functions/activities must have attended school on that day.

Please see more specific information regarding [school attendance](#).

TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

We strive to make arrival and dismissal times as safe and time efficient as possible and greatly appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Cars are not allowed in the circular driveway during morning arrival or afternoon dismissal. During these times this driveway is designated to bus traffic only. There is a designated drop off and pick up area located near the parking lot to the left of the school. The students can easily walk to and from the building from this location. Parents that wish to park please utilize the parking lot so as not to block the exit driveway or impede the bus traffic.

Please see more specific information regarding our [transportation policy and procedures](#).

PARENT INFORMATION:

Parents are welcome in the building for conferences, various presentations, and meetings. All visitors must enter and exit the building at the main entrance, check in with the secretary, and sign in on the Visitor's Log which is on the counter in the front office. Visitors must wear a visitor's badge at all times while in the building. No one will be let through the locked doors unless they have checked in with the secretary. Please note that this is for the safety and security of the children. Additionally, should there be a need to evacuate the building; the Fire Department has requested we keep a log of people visiting the building. When your business in the school is complete, please sign out on the Visitor's Log to indicate that you are no longer in the building and kindly return the visitor's badge.

Please see more specific information [regarding procedures, parent organizations, physical education/travel team and new student registration information.](#)

HEALTH SERVICES:

The role of the professional school nurse is to strengthen the educational process by assisting students in maintaining optimal health. This is accomplished in a variety of ways: evaluation of health concerns, first aid and emergency care, medication administration, monitoring of chronic illnesses, maintaining individual health records in accordance with DPH requirements, and performing State mandated health screenings.

Illness

Families are strongly encouraged to communicate any student health concerns to the school nurse. If your child has allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizures, attention deficit disorder or any other medical or mental health issues please communicate with your school nurse regarding treatment plans and medications prior to school entry or upon diagnosis.

The nurse is available throughout the school day for students and staff who are injured or become ill in school.

Those who wish to see the nurse during school time must secure a pass from the teacher and present it to the nurse. If the nurse is not in her office, the student must report to the main office so that the nurse may be located and notified. If a student misuses the nurse's office, administration and parents/guardians will be notified. Students who remain in the nurse's office for an entire class period must provide a pass to the teacher that same day or the following day attesting to the amount of time spent in the nurse's office. Time spent in the nurse's office is for illness not for common fatigue.

Optimal learning requires good health. In an effort to promote parent-school cooperation for the benefit of our students, the following guidelines concerning health issues are enforced.

Fever: Students should not be sent to school with a fever (temperature of 100°F or higher). A student must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to school.

Strep Throat: If strep throat is suspected, students must remain out of school until the culture results are known. If the culture is positive, the student must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

For any illness requiring antibiotic treatment, the student must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

Students returning to school after recovering from a communicable disease must be readmitted through the school nurse's office.

Head Lice: If the parent of a child finds lice or nits in their child's head, the school nurse must be notified. If lice or nits are found by the school nurse, the child will be sent home for treatment. After treatment the student must return with a parent so that the student may be checked by the school nurse. In order to return to school, hair must be free of all nits and lice.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation and further care of the student if the student becomes ill or injured on school property. Students may not be sent home without parental approval. In an emergency situation the school nurse will call 911 and the student will be transported to the nearest hospital.

Medication

The School Nurse is responsible for the administration of all medications taken by the students during the school day, unless otherwise specified. The school nurse, with the permission of the Department of Public Health, will delegate authority to administer medication on a field trip to another adult.

The following form must be completed and on file in the Health Office before any medication is administered:

- Doctor's Order (Renewed yearly)
- Parent/Guardian Consent

Under protocols written by Ashland's School Physician, nurses may administer Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Tums, and lozenges as needed. Parent permission for these is required and is included on the Health-Emergency form completed at the beginning of each school year.

Medication Policy and all forms can be found on APS website under [Health Services](#).

Health Record (Physical Exams and Immunizations)

Each student has an individual health file. Please submit any new physical exams or immunization information to the school nurse. All students new to Ashland Public Schools are required to have a current physical examination and up to date immunizations. Immunization requirements change when new State regulations are passed.

State Mandated Requirements (Physical Exams and Screenings)

State mandated health requirements include the following: Physical exams are required in grades PK, K, 4, 7, and 10. Vision screening occurs annually in grades PK, K-5, 7 and 10. Hearing screening occurs annually in grades PK, K-3, 7 and 10. Postural screening occurs annually in grades 5 through 9. Body Mass Index (BMI) screening occurs annually in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. Parents who choose to waive BMI screening must submit a written request to school nurse.

Management of Life-Threatening Allergies

Ashland Public Schools recognizes that students with life-threatening allergies (LTA) require reasonable accommodations necessary to ensure access to available education and education-related benefits.

Ashland Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with LTA. The goal is to minimize the risk to students with LTA. The guidelines established include building-based plans, the implementation of Individual Care Plans, and training programs for personnel. Specific responsibilities for the student, parent, and school personnel are listed in the policy.

Chronic Illness Policy

It is the policy of Ashland schools to work together with parents, students, health care providers, and the community to provide a safe and supportive educational environment for students with chronic illnesses and to ensure that students with chronic illnesses have the same educational opportunities as other students.

Please see [more health related information on the APS website](#).

When you are finished reviewing, please download, sign and return the [AMS Handbook Signature Page](#) to AMS by September 17.