

AMHERST REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Student and Family Handbook

2024-2025



Table of Contents

[Table of Contents](#)

[OVERVIEW](#)

[ADMINISTRATION](#)

[Regional School Committee](#)

[Central Office Staff](#)

[Amherst Regional High School](#)

[Administration](#)

[Dean's Office](#)

[Offices](#)

[Department Heads](#)

[Contacting School Personnel](#)

[Visitor Admission Protocols](#)

[CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS](#)

[SECTION I: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Statement of Belief](#)

[Role of Parents and Guardians](#)

[Absences](#)

[Absence Limits and Loss of Course Credit](#)

[Types of Absences](#)

[Excused Absences - Category I](#)

[School Related Absences](#)

[Non-School Related Absences](#)

[Excused Absences - Category II](#)

[Unexcused Absences - Category III](#)

[Notification of Absences](#)

[Making Up Work After an Excused Absence](#)

[Other Absence Related Issues](#)

[How to Report an Excused Absence](#)

[Early Dismissals](#)

[How to Report an Early Dismissal](#)

[Unexcused Early Dismissals](#)

[Student Athletes & Student Performers](#)

- [Dismissal Due to Illness](#)
- [Attendance Meetings](#)
 - [Scheduling an Attendance Meeting](#)
 - [Meeting Process](#)
 - [Possible Outcomes of Attendance Meeting](#)
- [Tardies](#)
 - [Tardy to School](#)
 - [How to Excuse a Tardy](#)
 - [Tardy to Class](#)
- [Time Out of Class](#)
- [Administrative Withdrawal](#)
- [Grades and Exams](#)
 - [Uniform Grade Policy](#)
 - [Course Designations](#)
 - [Letter and Number Grade Ranges and Conversions](#)
 - [Letter Grade Performance Achievement Level Definitions](#)
 - [Incompletes \(INC\)](#)
 - [In Progress Grades](#)
 - [Pass/Fail Grades](#)
 - [Honor Roll](#)
 - [Grade Point Average \(GPA\)](#)
- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [School to Home Communication](#)
 - [Report Cards](#)
 - [Progress Reports](#)
 - [Interim Communications](#)
- [Flex Block](#)
 - [Flex Block Attendance](#)
 - [Flex Block Grades](#)
 - [Senior Flex Block Exemption](#)
- [Final Exams](#)
 - [Exam Period Policies](#)
- [Graduation Requirements and Procedures](#)
 - [Graduation Requirements](#)
 - [Participation in Graduation Ceremony](#)
 - [Early Graduation](#)
 - [Credit or Partial Credit](#)
 - [Change of Student Programs](#)

- [Add/Drop Process](#)
- [Senior Schedule Changes](#)
- [Changing Levels](#)
- [Transferring Schools](#)
- [Release of School Records](#)
- [Full-Time Enrollment](#)
- [Re-Enrollment of Students Over 18](#)
- [Alternative Academic Experiences](#)
- [Alternative Learning Programs \(ALPS\)](#)
- [Work Study - Occupational & Vocational Programs](#)
- [College Courses](#)
- [Expectations for Enrollment](#)
- [Responsibilities for Enrollment](#)
- [Availability](#)
- [Student Records](#)
- [Withdrawal and Re-Enrollment Procedures for Families on Sabbatical](#)
- [Auditing a Course](#)
- [Criteria for Auditing](#)
- [Expectations for Auditing](#)

SECTION II: CODE OF CONDUCT

- [Disciplinary Philosophy](#)
- [Overview](#)
- [Restorative Justice \(RJ\)](#)
- [Chapter 222 \(Massachusetts General Law\)](#)
- [Equity Advancement](#)
- [The Right to Due Process](#)
- [Student Expression](#)
- [Disciplinary Protocols](#)
- [Overview](#)
- [Suspension](#)
- [Making Up Missed Work](#)
- [Participation in School Activities](#)
- [Responsibilities](#)
- [Deans and Administrators](#)
- [School Counselors](#)
- [Teachers](#)
- [Re-entry Procedures](#)
- [Expulsion](#)

[School Safety & Discipline Report \(SSDR\)](#)

[School Safety Infractions](#)

[Interventions](#)

[Consequences](#)

[Non-School Safety Infractions](#)

[School Climate Infractions](#)

[Additional Disciplinary and Safety Policies](#)

[Phones and Electronic Devices](#)

[Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Seniors - End of Year Responsibilities and Guidelines](#)

[Senior Prom](#)

[Senior Pranks](#)

[School Bus Behavior](#)

[Miscellaneous Other Discipline and Safety Policies](#)

[SECTION III: ATHLETICS, CLUBS, and STUDENT ACTIVITIES](#)

[Philosophy](#)

[Athletics](#)

[Core Values and Beliefs](#)

[Student-Athlete Expectations](#)

[MIAA Handbook](#)

[Gender and Participation](#)

[Sports Program](#)

[Supervision: Safety and Security](#)

[Responsibilities of Student Athletes](#)

[Locker Room](#)

[Team Rules](#)

[Transportation To and From Contests](#)

[Attendance in School](#)

[Concussion Policy](#)

[Levels of Competition](#)

[Sub-Varsity Teams](#)

[Varsity Teams](#)

[Tryouts](#)

[Playing Time](#)

[Attendance at Practices and Games](#)

[Team Captains](#)

[Expectations of Team Captains](#)

[Communication with Parents/Guardians](#)

[Communication Regarding Significant Behaviors](#)

[Electronic Communication with Students](#)

[Media](#)

[Out-of-Season Sports Participation](#)

[Non-Discrimination](#)

[Participation of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Academic Eligibility](#)

[Amherst-Pelham Regional School District](#)

[Academic Eligibility](#)

[Chemical Health Policy \(MIAA Rules for Alcohol, Tobacco Products, Smoking and Illegal Drugs\)](#)

[Bullying & Hazing Policy](#)

[Hazing](#)

[Defining the Crime of Hazing \(MGL, c. 269 § 17\)](#)

[Failure to Report Hazing \(MGL, c. 269 § 18\)](#)

[Duty to Issue a Copy of the Hazing Law to Teams \(MGL, c. 269, § 19\)](#)

[Bullying and Cyberbullying](#)

[Retaliation](#)

[Clubs and Activities](#)

[National Honor Society](#)

[Application](#)

[Clubs](#)

SECTION IV: HEALTH

[Nurse's Office Services and Staff](#)

[Health Screenings: Vision, Hearing, BMI, and Postural](#)

[Additional Screening Information](#)

[Visiting the Nurse's Office During the School Day](#)

[Emergency Contact Information](#)

[Health Policies and Requirements](#)

[Physical Examination](#)

[Sports Examinations](#)

[Immunization Requirements](#)

[Medication Policy](#)

[Other Health Policies](#)

[Condom Availability](#)

[Elevator Pass](#)

[Physical Education Excuses](#)

SECTION V: USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES and SAFETY

- [Emergency Procedures](#)
 - [Fire Drill Procedures](#)
 - [Shelter in Place](#)
 - [Lockdown](#)
- [Closed Campus](#)
- [Cafeteria and Lunch](#)
- [Student Lockers](#)
- [Student Parking](#)
 - [Parking Permits](#)
 - [Authorized and Unauthorized Parking Areas](#)
 - [Driving on Campus](#)
 - [Lost, Damaged, or Towed Cars](#)
- [Library](#)
 - [Visiting the Library During the School Day](#)
 - [Behavioral Policy](#)
 - [Food and Drink](#)
 - [Use of Computers](#)
 - [Circulation](#)
 - [Checking Out Library Materials](#)
 - [Overdue Library Materials](#)
 - [Lost or Damaged Library Materials](#)
- [School Murals](#)
- [Student Handbook Summary Sign-Off Sheet](#)
 - [Attendance Policies](#)
 - [Phone Use Policy](#)
 - [Time Out Of Class](#)
 - [Academic Honesty](#)
 - [Flex Block](#)
 - [Discipline](#)
- [Signature Page](#)
 - [Student Signature](#)
 - [Parent/Guardian Signature](#)

OVERVIEW

The Student and Family Handbook contains all the policies and expectations governing Amherst Regional High School for SY 2024-2025. The school administration reserves the right to amend all policies, pending notification to the school community, exclusive of those determined by Massachusetts General Law and the Amherst Regional School Committee.

Handbook Accessibility This handbook has been translated into the major languages spoken by parents or guardians of District Students. If parent's or student's primary language is not English, and the school has not already translated a student handbook or student code of conduct into their primary language, the school will translate a handbook and/or code of conduct into that language. The District will also make oral interpretation available for any parent or guardian with limited English skills, including parents or guardians who speak low-incidence languages.

Title VI; EEOA 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); M. G. L. c. 76, § 5; 603 CMR 26.02(2); 603 CMR 26.03; 603 CMR 26.08

ADMINISTRATION

Regional School Committee

Sarahbess Kenney (Chair) Pelham

William Sherr (Vice-Chair) Pelham

Anna Heard Shutesbury

Bridget Hynes Amherst

Deborah Leonard Amherst

Sarah Marshall Amherst

Irv Rhodes Amherst

Jennifer Shiao Amherst

Tilman Wolf Leverett

Central Office Staff

Dr. E Xiomara Herman Superintendent

Jennifer Ortiz Human Resources Administrator

Doreen Reid Director of Student Services

Jerry Champagne Director of Information Systems

Marta Guevara Director of Student & Family Engagement

Doug Slaughter Director of Finance

Rupert Roy-Clark Director of Facilities

Michael Gallo O'Connell Director of Food Services

Amherst Regional High School

Administration

[Talib Sadiq](#) Principal 413-362-1706

[Miki Gromacki](#) Assistant Principal 413-362-1715

[Samantha Camera](#) Assistant Principal 413-362-1714

[Victoria Dawson](#) Athletic Director 413-362-1746

Dean's Office

[Mary Custard](#) Dean of Students for Grades 9 & 11 413-362-1708

[Lamikco Magee](#) Dean of Students for Grades 10 & 12 413-362-1756

[Julie Woynar](#) Assistant to the Deans 413-362-1722

Offices

[Main Office](#) 413-362-1700

Principal's Office [Lirey Rodriguez](#) 413-362-1706

Registrar [Erika Lisle](#) 413-362-1703

Nurse's Office [Sonia Jaworski](#) 413-362-1743

Nurse's Office [Nora Zinan](#) 413-362-1744

Attendance Office [Julie Woynar](#) 413-362-1718

Guidance Office [Wilnelia Melendez](#) 413-362-1720

Master Schedule [Judi Dellamarco](#) 413-362-1714

Department Heads

[Jeff Stauder](#) Art Department 413-362-1584

[Nat Woodruff](#) Engineering and Technology 413-362-1541

[Sara Barber-Just](#) English 413-362-1508

[Ashleigh Sayer](#) English Language Education 413-362-1520

[Ella Stocker](#) Library 413-362-1772

[Jane Mudie](#) Mathematics 413-362-1563

[John Bechtold](#) Performing Arts, Physical Education, and Health 413-362-1502

[Krista Larsen](#) Science 413-362-1545

[Lisa Zephyr](#) School Counseling 413-362-1784

[Simon Leutz](#) Social Studies 413-362-1527

[Raloon Bialek](#) Special Education 413-362-1573

[William Roundy](#) World Language 413-362-1577

Contacting School Personnel

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to talk directly with teachers and other school staff when they have questions or concerns. Parents/guardians can best reach teachers directly by emailing or by telephoning the school during school hours (Monday-Friday 8:15am-3:45pm) to leave a voicemail. Parents and guardians should expect to receive a response within two school days. Please refer to the [ARHS Staff Directory](https://arps.org/arhs/staff-directory/) for a complete list of contact information, including email addresses and phone numbers. (<https://arps.org/arhs/staff-directory/>).

If a parent/guardian is not sure who to speak with regarding a specific or general concern about their child, please use the grid below to determine the appropriate faculty and/or staff member.

Concern	Who to Contact
Student's performance/behavior in a particular course.	Classroom Teacher
General questions about curriculum, course sequence, or grading system for a particular department.	Department Head
Student's overall performance.	School Counselor
Personal concerns affecting performance.	School Counselor
If you have contacted a teacher or counselor and you feel your concern has not been adequately resolved.	Administrator
If you have spoken to an Assistant Principal and you feel your concern has not been adequately resolved.	Principal
If you feel that your concern has not been resolved adequately at the building level.	Superintendent of Schools
Student's school records.	Registrar

Please refer to the [ARHS Staff Directory](https://arps.org/arhs/staff-directory/) for a complete list of contact information, including email addresses and phone numbers (<https://arps.org/arhs/staff-directory/>).

Visitor Admission and Protocols

To best maintain the safety of our students, we will be utilizing the following protocol to monitor who comes into our building during the school day:

- All visitors will enter the school building through the front door.
- All school doors shall remain locked during the regular school day.
- All visitors should utilize the door access bell.
- Some transactions will happen through the main office window to cut down on traffic in the building.
- School office personnel, the building principal, or another authorized person will grant access after visual identification is made and the purpose of the visit is stated.
- All visitors will be directed to the main office to sign a visitor log and obtain a visitor badge.
- Visitors who fail to report to the main office to sign in or obtain a visitor badge will be reported to the building principal or other authorized person for investigation.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

“ The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, The Amherst Public Schools, and the Pelham Public Schools do not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, homelessness, or immigration status. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District’ policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of the

school district, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law. (Please see [Amherst Regional School Committee, Policy AC](#) for the complete text of the District's Non-discrimination and Harassment Policy).

Civil Rights and Grievance Procedures

Amherst Regional High School does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act). Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy and/or pregnancy related conditions, religion, disability, or homelessness status in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76 §5, M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L. c. 151C, and 603 C.M.R. §26.00.

Amherst-Pelham Regional School District has adopted and implemented grievance procedures to ensure the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of discrimination and harassment on the basis of membership in any of the above protected classes. Those grievance procedures may be accessed through the ARSD website, the Principal's office, and/or the Title IX Coordinator.

Sexual Harassment/Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and strictly prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in any education program or activity that it operates, including in admission and employment. Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions in its educational programs and employment activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; M.G.L. c. 151B; M.G.L. c. 151C; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5. The District's policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no

person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admissions, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

The District has adopted and implements a Title IX Grievance Procedure to ensure the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment. A copy of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Title IX Grievance Procedure may be accessed on the [District website](#) or through the office of the Title IX Coordinator.

For questions related to the District's Non-Discrimination policy or grievance procedures, to make a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, or for information relative to accommodations and services for individuals based on pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, please contact [Maureen Fleming](#), who serves as the ARHS Title IX Coordinator:

Maureen Fleming
Amherst-Pelham Regional School District
170 Chestnut St.
Amherst, MA 01002
413-362-1804
flemingm@arps.org

Inquires or complaints relative to sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, may also be directed to the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights:

U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
Facsimile: (617) 289-0150
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

ARHS has also designated certain staff members to serve as Confidential Employees with whom a student or employee may discuss a report of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, informally and without concern for further disclosure, unless such further

disclosure is requested. Please contact Maureen Fleming at FlemingM@arps.org or 413-362-1804.

Any employee or student found to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with procedures set forth in the Student Discipline section of this handbook and applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Staff members determined to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to professional discipline including possible termination of employment.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

High Achievement ★ Best Practices ★ Social Justice

- 1. The high school administration, faculty, and staff believe in promoting high achievement for all students.**
 - We develop and implement a developmentally appropriate, challenging and diverse curriculum based on national and state standards;
 - We emphasize high expectations for all students in all fields of endeavor;
 - We maintain inclusive and diverse educational environments that promote success for students with diverse challenges and learning styles.
- 2. The high school administration, faculty and staff believe in working from research-based best practices that promote student achievement.**
 - We collaborate with colleagues to regularly develop curriculum and assessment, incorporate known best practices to support effective instruction and classroom innovations, and to ensure high professional standards in our work.
 - We create effective ways of gathering and analyzing data from student performance and use it to monitor individual student progress and inform instruction within and across departments;
 - We build partnerships with academic institutions and community organizations that enrich students and staff and add value to our school system.
- 3. The high school administration, faculty and staff believe that an education in diversity and social justice is essential for all members of our community. We believe that these values help us to recognize our civic responsibilities and the potential we share to make a positive difference in and beyond the school.**
 - We develop curricula that educate students about the historical injustices suffered by people because of their identity;
 - We create a learning environment where students can grow personally, acknowledge their identities, and express difference while nurturing acceptance and respect for self and others;
 - We provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff in diversity training and social justice education;
 - We celebrate the diversity within our community and affirm the bond we share as human beings.

SECTION I: ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Statement of Belief

ARHS is committed to ensuring the success of all students. The school's policies and procedures are designed to facilitate this success. The most basic of these concerns attendance. The purpose of this section is to provide students and families with all the information about the ARHS attendance policy necessary for them to make sound decisions regarding attendance.

The most basic piece of information is this: unless they have a valid excuse, students must attend each of their scheduled classes on time. Both [Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 1](#) and [Amherst Regional Public Schools Policy JH](#) require daily attendance of all students. In addition to law and policy, the most important reasons for daily attendance are educational.

We strongly believe that what occurs in class is central to student learning. Ultimately the classroom is the centerpiece of the academic experience. The richness of the classroom environment - the exchange of ideas with peers and teachers, the opportunity to explain, defend and receive feedback on one's thinking, and learning to work collaboratively with one's peers - is irretrievably lost when a student is not present in class. Some academic experiences can be made up; these cannot.

Role of Parents and Guardians

[Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 2](#) directly addresses the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure their children's consistent attendance. As it is derived from Massachusetts General Law, we hope and expect that parents and guardians support the ARHS attendance policy and encourage their children's daily attendance.

An important way parents and guardians can support ARHS's attendance policy is to inform the school about the reasons for absences, dismissals, and tardies (see [How to Report an Excused Absence](#), [How to Report an Early Dismissal](#), and [How to Report a Tardy](#)).

When it is possible for parents and guardians to do so, they should make every effort to provide advance notice of any absence, particularly when an absence may be an extended one.

At times, the school and parents and guardians will disagree about what constitutes a legitimate excuse. The school will work to be fair and reasonable in its judgments, but ultimately retains the right to make these determinations.

Absences

Success more readily comes to students who are in class, on time, every day. Families and students need to be mindful of the accumulating total of absences in each of a student's courses, as exceeding the absence limit may result in the loss of course credit.

Absence Limits and Loss of Course Credit

Students are allowed up to ten (10) absences per semester course, or five (5) absences per quarter course. If a student exceeds these absence limits, the student will receive a grade but no credit for the course and is required to schedule and attend an [attendance meeting](#). All [Category II](#) and [Category III](#) absences will count toward the absence limit, as do tardies.

Three (3) tardies are equal to one absence. So, for example, if a student was absent from class seven (7) times and was also tardy to the same class six (6) times, equal to two absences, then the student's absence total would be nine (9).

The school will mail home absence total reminders when students accumulate five (5) and ten (10) absences in any of their classes.

Types of Absences

There are three categories of absences. Each category bears differently on the potential loss of course credit. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between each of them.

Excused Absences - Category I

The following absences do NOT count towards a loss of course credit. Generally these absences are beyond the control of students and families (see [How to Report an Excused Absence](#) for more information).

School Related Absences

These absences do NOT require students or families to submit any supporting documentation.

- School-sponsored field trips
- School-sponsored foreign exchanges

- In-school meetings with college representatives for juniors or seniors [limit of three (3) per school year]
- School suspensions

Non-School Related Absences

These absences require students or families to submit supporting documentation.

- Observation of religious holidays
- Quarantine or physician-documented long-term illness, injury, or physician authorized recurring appointments
- Death in the immediate family, family illness, or serious emergency
- Mandated court appearances
- College visits for juniors or seniors [limit of three (3) per school year]

Excused Absences - Category II

The following absences count towards a loss of credit. Generally, students and families retain a degree of control over these circumstances (see [How to Report an Excused Absence](#) for more information).

- Short-term student illness;
- Early dismissals (see [Early Dismissals](#) for more information)
- Medical appointment*
- Family vacation
- Driver's license test
- College visits beyond the three (3) school day limit
- In-school meetings with college representatives, beyond the three (3) period limit

*For students who have regularly scheduled appointments with health care professionals, parents should request that these appointments be scheduled outside of school hours.

Unexcused Absences - Category III

The following absences count towards a loss of credit. Generally students and families retain complete control over these circumstances.

- Missed school bus
- Traffic or car trouble

- Student oversleeps
- If a student is driven to school by a parent/guardian, sibling, or friend and that ride is late or did not show up

Notification of Absences

If a student is absent from first period class, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified via email and a computer-generated phone call. If an absence note is received within 48 hours, the absence will be re-categorized as excused. If an absence note is not received within 48 hours, the absence will be considered unexcused and the student may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Making Up Work After an Excused Absence

For each day a student is out with an excused absence, they have two school days to make up any missed work and/or to schedule the completion of that work with their teacher. Teachers may extend this two-day grace period at their discretion. If a student misses work that is unique to the classroom experience and cannot be made up, they may be given an alternative assignment. Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the Flex Block to meet with teachers and get back on track following an absence of any length. Students with extended absences (greater than ten (10) school days) should plan to meet with their school counselor upon return to facilitate this process.

Students with unexcused absences are encouraged to complete any missed work with the understanding that teachers are not obligated to give credit for work missed due to an unexcused absence.

Other Absence Related Issues

- **Extended Absences for Medical Reasons**

If a student is absent from school because of an extended illness or surgery, a doctor's note at the time of diagnosis must be sent to the office. If the student is absent from school for more than 14 consecutive days for medical reasons, the student may be eligible for home/hospital tutoring services.

- **Extended Absences for Non-Medical Reasons**

In the event of an extended absence, the parent/guardian should notify the student's guidance counselor as soon as possible.

- **Missing Substantial Class Time**

If a student misses twenty (20) minutes or more of any given class period for any reason (including early dismissals and tardies), the student shall be considered absent for the entire period.

- **Seniors**

Are required to attend all classes through Friday, May 30, 2025.

How to Report an Excused Absence

In order to report an excused absence for a student, please follow the following procedures. Parents or guardians may report an absence.

If the absence is excused by same day phone call or a note within 48 hours (two school days), and falls within the guidelines for an excused absence, the absence shall be considered excused and the student will have the opportunity to make up all work missed during the absence for credit.

If an absence is not reported by same day phone call or an excused absence note is not received within 48 hours (two school days), the absence will be considered unexcused. Any absence reported after 48 hours (two school days) must be approved by the Dean of Students. Approval will be granted only under extreme circumstances.

Phone Call - Day of Absence Only

- Parents may report an absence by calling the Attendance Line at 413-362-1718 on the day of the absence. *Next day phone calls will not be accepted.*
- If a same day call is made to excuse an absence, the student is not required to bring in a note when they return to school.

Parent/Guardian Note upon Return to School

- If no same day phone call is made to excuse an absence, the student is required to bring a note signed by a parent or guardian that informs the school that the student was absent with the knowledge of the parent/guardian.

- Students and families have two school days to submit a note. For example, if a student was absent on a Monday and returns to school Tuesday, they have until the close of the school day on Wednesday to submit their note.

Early Dismissals

The purpose of an early dismissal is to allow a student to schedule a critical appointment that cannot be scheduled after school, such as a court summons. Dismissals should not be requested on a regular basis. Students who are dismissed from school and miss 20 minutes of a class period due to an early dismissal will be considered absent for the entire period. Upon returning to school from a dismissal, a student must check in to the main office and receive a pass to class.

How to Report an Early Dismissal

In order to receive an excused absence for a planned early dismissal, students must:

- Bring a signed note from a parent/guardian to the Main Office stating the date and time of the dismissal **prior** to leaving the building. Photos of signed dismissal notes may also be submitted via email to arhsoffice@arps.org by the parent/guardian. Notes from student email addresses will not be accepted.
- Early dismissal notes must include:
 - The time of the dismissal
 - The purpose of the dismissal
 - A signature from a parent or guardian

Unexcused Early Dismissals

Students who leave school without following these dismissal policies and procedures will be considered as having cut school and will receive an unexcused absence. They may be assigned disciplinary consequences and for an unexcused absence may not receive credit for any missed work.

Student Athletes & Student Performers

If an in-season student-athlete is dismissed early, they must present a note from a parent/guardian to the Athletic Director in order to be eligible for participation that day. Student athletes who leave school grounds without permission are ineligible to compete or

practice. The same policy applies to students participating in Performing Arts rehearsals and performances. These students must present a note from a Parent/Guardian to the Performing Arts department head.

Dismissal Due to Illness

Students who become ill during the school day should inform their teacher and report to the Nurse's Office with a pass from the teacher. The school nurse will assess the student and attempt to contact the parent/guardian before making a judgment as to whether or not the student is to be released from school.

Students are permitted to leave school due to illness only with clearance from the nurse and after proper arrangements have been made with a parent/guardian.

Attendance Meetings

When a student exceeds the absence limit total of ten (10) days for a semester-long course or five (5) days for a quarter-long course, they will be placed on non-credit status. This means they are eligible to receive a grade, but not credit, for the course.

Once a student is placed on non-credit status, they must schedule an attendance meeting. The school assumes that exceeding the absence limit is an opportunity disguised as a problem. The absence meeting provides an opportunity for the school and family to collaborate on a plan to improve the student's attendance pattern. If there is no evidence of extenuating circumstances, the prospect of losing credit is a real one, however, the goal of the meeting is to ensure consistent attendance by resolving the issues that prevent it.

Scheduling an Attendance Meeting

The school will notify families when a student exceeds the absence limit in any particular course. This notification will not wait until the end of the semester, but will come as soon as the student has exceeded the absence limit. This letter will direct parents and/or guardians to contact the Office of the Deans of Students to make an appointment for a meeting (413-362-1722).

Meeting Process

Attendance meetings must be attended by both the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s). If a student or parent/guardian is unable to attend, the meeting will be rescheduled. The student's school counselor will be invited to attend, as will the liaison if the student has an IEP.

At the meeting, students and parents/guardians must be prepared to present documentation and describe circumstances that the school may not be aware of that they believe explains the attendance pattern. Assertions without documentation will not be looked upon favorably.

Possible Outcomes of Attendance Meeting

- The permanent loss of credit.
- The restoration of credit.
- The loss of credit with conditions to meet before credit is restored.

The school principal or their designee will preside over attendance meetings and make all final decisions. These decisions are not subject to appeal.

If the evidence does not support the restoration of credit, the student will NOT be guaranteed the opportunity to make up the course. A number of considerations may preclude this: the course may not be offered; the course may be offered only at a time in the day that conflicts with another course in the student's schedule; and there may not be available seats in a particular course. If a course is fully enrolled, the enrollment ceiling will not be raised to accommodate students who need to retake the course due to absences.

Tardies

In addition to being present in class, the school believes that the start and end of class are critical. Students should make every effort to arrive on time for the school day and to be on time for each of their subsequent classes.

Tardy to School

Students are considered tardy to school if they are not in their first period classroom when the bell rings at 9:05 am. If a student is late to school after 9:25 am, they must report to the Main Office before going to class. Students who arrive after 9:25am are ineligible to participate in any school-sponsored activities on that day, including athletic practices/games ,

rehearsals/performance, and club meetings unless their notes are approved by the Athletic Director or the moderator of the activity.

How to Excuse a Tardy

Students may submit a note to the main office upon arrival specifying the reason for their tardiness. Note that unlike an absence, tardies cannot be excused by a phone call to the main office or the absence line. Tardy excuse notes will be accepted in the following cases:

- **Medical Appointment/Emergency:** The student must bring a note from a parent/guardian identifying the time and date the student was seen or a doctor's note stating the same.
- **Court Appearance:** The student must bring a note from a parent/guardian identifying the time and date of the appearance. A note from the court clerk or probation office identifying the date and time of the student's appearance is also acceptable.

In the case of other urgent or extenuating circumstances, the Dean of Students is authorized to engage students and families in a conversation to better understand the circumstances and make a final decision about whether consequences will be waived. Traffic jams or the alarm clocks not going off are not considered "urgent or extenuating".

Tardy to Class

Students are marked tardy to class when they are not inside their assigned classroom when the bell rings at the start of the period. As noted in the absence policy, three (3) tardies are the equivalent of one (1) absence in that course and count towards the potential loss of credit in that course.

Time Out of Class

Students are expected to be in class for the entirety of the class period. As noted in the introduction to this section, the classroom experience is the most valuable part of the school day. While some academic experiences may be replicated elsewhere, the classroom experience cannot be. In addition to absences, tardies, and early dismissals, special consideration has been given this attendance expectation.

All students are expected to follow these policies:

- Only one student may be out of class at a time

- Students may not be out of class for more than five (5) minutes in any given class period
- Students may not leave class during the first five (5) and last ten (10) minutes of any class period
- Students may not take unsupervised breaks
- Students must carry a hall pass with them at all times when out of class
 - Any adult may ask to see a student's hall pass at any time
 - If an adult staff member asks a student for their name or destination, the student must tell them

Students who fail to meet these expectations may be written up and may be required to meet with Deans and/or Administrators in addition to other consequences.

Administrative Withdrawal

When a student who is 16 years or older has exceeded the absence limit and cannot earn credit, an administrative withdrawal may be in their best interest. This is a potential option the student and their family may want to explore with the school. The student and their parent/guardian will be encouraged to re-enroll the student for the following semester with a support plan developed with the student's school counselor and an Assistant Principal.

Permanent Withdrawal - M.G.L. c. 76, §18

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which the student last attended has sent notice within a period of five (5) days from the student's tenth (10th) consecutive absence to the student and the parent/guardian of that student in both the primary language of the parent/guardian, to the extent practicable, and English. The notice shall initially offer at least two (2) dates and times for an exit interview between the superintendent, or a designee, and the student and the parent/guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving school and shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within ten (10) days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall be for longer than fourteen (14) days. The superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent/guardian if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian. The exit interview shall be for the purpose of discussing

the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and to consider alternative education or other placements.

The superintendent or a designee shall convene a team of school personnel, such as the principal, guidance counselor, teachers, attendance officer and other relevant school staff, to participate in the exit interview with the student and the parent/guardian of the student.

During the exit interview, the student shall be given information about the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school, the benefits of earning a high school diploma and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

Grades and Exams

Uniform Grade Policy

The following uniform grade policy has been developed to ensure that students and their parents/guardians understand how letter and number grades are defined, as well as the definitions for all course designations and performance achievement levels. Students are responsible for learning and understanding the grading practices for each of their courses and are encouraged to speak with their teachers early if they have questions or concerns about a specific grade or course policy.

Course Designations

CP: College Prep

AP: Advanced Placement

HON or H: Honors Courses

ALPs: Alternative Learning Programs

Letter and Number Grade Ranges and Conversions

Letter Grade Conversion to Numerical Grade			Numerical Grade Conversion to Letter Grade		
A+	96.5 – 100	C+	76.5 – 79.49	A+	98
A	92.5 – 96.49	C	72.5 – 76.49	A	94.5
A -	89.5 – 92.49	C-	69.5 – 72.49	A-	91
B+	86.5 – 89.49	D+	66.5 – 69.49	B+	88
B	82.5 – 86.49	D	62.5 – 66.49	B	84.5
B-	79.5 – 82.49	D-	59.5 – 62.49	B-	81
		F	59.49 and below		

Letter Grade Performance Achievement Level Definitions

A = Superior	INC = Work Incomplete	EXC = Excused
B = Good	DRP = Drop Passing	IP = In progress
C = Fair	DRF = Drop Failing	P = Passing
D = Passing	WDP = Withdrawn Passing	AUD = Audit
F = Failing	WDF = Withdrawn Failing	U = Unsatisfactory
S = Satisfactory		

Incompletes (INC)

In case of illness or other excused absences, students may be given a grade of Incomplete to give the student time to make up any missing work. Incompletes may also be used by a teacher when a student has demonstrated the ability to complete a course, has made a good faith effort to do so, and needs additional time. Any other reason for an Incomplete must be approved by the Assistant Principal. A grade of Incomplete will not be given to students who cut class or fail to make-up work.

Students have two weeks from the end of the term to hand in missing work, with the exception of seniors during Semester 2/Quarter 4. If work is not submitted, the “incomplete” assignment grades will be changed to a failing grade (F) and the final grade will be calculated.

Students will be notified by teachers individually no later than the day that grades are submitted if the student has received an Incomplete.

In Progress Grades

In Progress (IP) is used when a student cannot complete a course by the end of the semester because of a major illness or other serious obstacles. An agreement is made between the student, parent, and teacher with the approval of the assistant principal to extend the time allowed to complete work. A specific date for completion must be identified.

Note for Seniors: *Incomplete and In Progress grades will not be granted to seniors during the second semester since final credit checks and grade point averages must be completed before the graduation ceremony.*

Pass/Fail Grades

In some situations, it may be appropriate for a student to take a course with the grade of Pass (P) or Fail (F). A student who will need significant modifications to take a particular class may be

eligible to use the Pass/Fail option. To request the use of a Pass/Fail grade a student or parent should discuss the issue with a counselor. If the request is appropriate the counselor will contact the teacher for input and the Assistant Principal for approval. This process must be completed by the end of the drop add period at the beginning of the course unless there are significant extenuating circumstances. A Pass/Fail grade may not be requested after a course is completed. In addition, all students taking an Alternative Learning Project (ALPs) for Community Service or School Service credit will receive a Pass/Fail grade.

Honor Roll

The high school Honor Roll will be published at the end of each semester. Only semester grades will be used to determine eligibility for the Honor Roll. Every student whose report card includes at least three graded classes with no grade lower than B- and no U (Unsatisfactory) or INC (Incomplete) grades will be included on the Honor Roll. Grades in all classes including ALPs, Physical Education, university and college courses will be used to determine Honor Roll eligibility. Students taking ungraded courses or ALPs must receive a pass in those classes. Students who receive incomplete grades will not be eligible for the Honor Roll unless the incomplete is completed within two weeks of the end of the semester and a grade is submitted to the registrar. Courses dropped must be dropped with a passing grade (DRP).

Grade Point Average (GPA)

GPA is calculated for each student at the end of each semester. All academic subjects completed in grades 9-12 at Amherst Regional High School are included with the following exceptions:

- ALPs which do not have a written curriculum or are not graded by an ARHS teacher
- Courses taken outside of ARHS (including college classes)
- Academic support courses

Note that all grades at ARHS are unweighted and class rank is not calculated or reported for ARHS students except to determine the valedictorian and salutatorian. Class ranks are also provided to students who are applying for merit scholarships. Students must have completed two full school years and 44 credits counted in GPA to be considered for valedictorian. The Class of 2026 will be the last graduating class with valedictorians and salutatorians.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty and integrity are important to our school community and our community. The values of honesty and integrity are the cornerstones of academic success and life-long

learning habits. To this end, students have the responsibility to acknowledge the work of others and to take credit only for work that is solely their own. Using the words or ideas of others without giving them credit (plagiarism), cheating on tests or attempting to cheat, not crediting the work of each participant in a group project, copying assignments, using AI without explicit permission to do so, or sharing work in any way not directly permitted by the teacher are forms of academic dishonesty. Giving or receiving help on tests or projects unless specifically permitted by the teacher are also forms of cheating. Theft of academic materials such as teacher's editions of textbooks, teacher notes, and any assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, labs, etc.) that provide students with an academic advantage over other students will also be treated as an academic honesty violation. The use of electronic devices to copy academic materials will be considered both a theft and an academic honesty violation, and both sets of consequences will apply.

Plagiarism, cheating, attempts at cheating, and falsification of materials (including written, audio-visual, Internet, and other computer technologies) will meet with the consequences itemized below.

- **First Offense**

Zero/no credit for the assignment, parent/guardian - teacher communication, loss of eligibility for honor roll for the semester in which the infraction occurred, and if applicable, loss of membership in the National Honor Society or loss of eligibility to apply for the remainder of the school year.

- **All Subsequent Offenses**

Zero/no credit for the assignment, parent/guardian - administrator conference, loss of eligibility for honor roll or National Honor Society for the remainder of the school year; notification of all colleges to which the student applies.

- **Discretion of Administration**

Any offense (whether a first or subsequent offense) of plagiarism, cheating, attempts at cheating, and falsification of materials may result in additional consequences, up to and including in school suspension, out of school short term suspension, out of school long term suspension, and expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 and 603 C.M.R. 53.00 *et. seq.*

To provide students with an incentive to make the right decisions in this domain, once a teacher declares that an assessment has begun, any student that has an unauthorized electronic device out, visible or in their hands will receive a zero on that assessment.

School to Home Communication

Report Cards

Classroom teachers update grades regularly in PowerSchool, and they can be accessed by students and their families. Final grades are issued at the end of each quarter, for most electives and at the end of each semester for most core classes. Hard copies of Report Cards will be issued by request only. Please contact the main office by phone 413-362-1700 or email arhsoffice@arps.org to request a hard copy of the Report Card or if you need the login information to PowerSchool.

Progress Reports

At the end of the first/third quarter and the midpoint of the semester, students receive an electronic progress report. This will include the student's grade at that moment. Comments will be provided if a student has below a C average in that course.

Interim Communications

Beyond report cards and progress reports, circumstances may necessitate additional communication with parents and guardians. Specifically, faculty are obliged to initiate communication when there are significant changes in a student's behavior or academic performance. These communications would be sent via email and be copied to the student's guidance counselor and/or special education liaison. However, as a matter of course, faculty will not notify families about missing assignments or attendance. This information is readily available via the Parent Portal on PowerSchool. To learn how to access the Parent Portal, parents or guardians should contact the Main Office at 413-362-1700 or arhsoffice@arps.org.

Flex Block

Flex Block is a period at the end of the day intended for students to get additional academic support in the classes where they need it most. Flex Block also provides opportunities for clubs

and student groups to meet, performing arts groups to practice, as well as student athletes who need to leave early for games to do so without disruption to the core academic school day. The typical student will likely attend 3-4 academic support Flex Blocks each week and 1-2 extracurricular Flex Blocks. Students are strongly encouraged to consider their coursework, upcoming or missing assignments, and current grades when considering how to schedule their Flex Blocks in a given week. Academic needs should always be prioritized over other options during Flex.

Flex Block Attendance

Students are required to attend the entirety of Flex Block every day. Students should remain in the same flex for the entire period.

An unexcused absence or skip from Flex is considered with the same weight and seriousness as skipping any class and will have similar consequences.

Flex Block Grades

Students will receive a grade for Flex Block, based on their attendance: “S” for satisfactory attendance and “U” for unsatisfactory attendance. This grade will go on student transcripts.

Senior Flex Block Exemption

The Senior Flex Block exemption is designed to encourage students to stay academically focused during their last semester at ARHS. The Flex Block exemption is optional and all Seniors are encouraged to attend Flex Block if it is advantageous for them to do so.

Seniors who meet the criteria will be exempt from attending Flex Block during the 4th Quarter ONLY. The eligibility criteria for senior Flex Block exemption will also be modified in accordance with any specific IEP or 504 stipulations.

Seniors must meet ALL of the following criteria to be eligible for the Flex Block Exemption:

- The Senior must have an average of B- or above for the 3rd Quarter.
- The Senior must have no more than five (5) absences and/or three (3) tardies in any class during the Spring Semester. If more than five (5) days are missed, regardless of the reason, the student’s eligibility will be revoked.
 - Only absences that come at the request of the school do not count toward this total and are limited to:

- AP exams
- MCAS testing
- Court appointments
- Three excused college visits
- School-sponsored foreign exchange trips
- School-sponsored field trips
- School-sponsored athletic events
- All other absences count towards the absence limit for the Senior Flex Exception.
- The Senior must have NO unexcused absences in Semester 2.
 - An unexcused absence in one class will disqualify the student from the Flex Block exemption in all classes.
- Disciplinary infractions or violations of the Code of Conduct may result in a loss of eligibility for the Flex Block exemption at any time.
- Students who qualify for exemption and are NOT attending a Flex Block are expected to leave the building.

Please see the section on [How to Excuse an Absence](#) to ensure that all excused absences are reported correctly.

To avoid any last-minute surprises, students are encouraged to use the PowerSchool portal to monitor their attendance throughout the semester.

Seniors are required to attend all classes through Friday, May 30, 2025.

Final Exams

All courses may include a cumulative experience designed to evaluate student achievement. Exams or similar culminating activities will be included in the grade for each course. The weight of such grades will be determined by each department within a range of ten to twenty percent of the semester grade. The weight of exam grades will be consistent within each course regardless of teacher but may vary between courses or departments (e.g. the same weight will be used for all Chemistry classes, all Algebra classes, etc.).

Exam Period Policies

Exam periods will be scheduled at the end of each term. Attendance in Exam Periods is required for all students.

- All exams are to be taken during the regularly scheduled exam period for the course. Students are not permitted to take exams before their class is scheduled to take them. There are no exceptions.
- Students who have an unexcused absence will receive a zero (0) for all missed exams. A student who has an excused absence will receive an incomplete (INC) on his/her/their report card.
 - In Semester 1 and Quarters 1, 2, and 3, students who miss exams due to an excused absence must complete their missed exam within the first two weeks of the new quarter/semester. Students who do not complete final exams during this time will receive a zero (0) for the final exam grade.
 - In Semester 2 and Quarter 4, students who miss exams due to an excused absence must complete their exam during the summer and will be supervised by a teacher, counselor, or administrator by appointment. Students must take their exams before the second week of the new school year. If they do not, their grade will become a zero (0) for the final exam. Seniors must complete all coursework by the last day of classes for seniors.

Graduation Requirements and Procedures

Graduation Requirements

Each year, a student must take at least four (4) blocks each semester, earning up to 32 credits for the year. The equivalent of a 4-credit subject may be two quarter long classes or one semester long subject, an ALPs program, or a no-credit audit as long as the student is in daily attendance in the course. To receive a diploma from Amherst Regional High School, current 12th grade students must have earned a total of 96 credits.

Most one-semester courses in grades 9-12 earn 4 credits. Most quarter long courses in grades 9-12 earn 2 credits. Only credits earned during grades 9-12 count toward graduation. The following distribution of credits by subject is specified:

Subject	Credit Distribution and Required Courses
English	16 credits required • Four-credit semester courses in 9th-11th grades • 2x two-credit courses in 12th grade, one of which must be a literature course Students must be enrolled in an English course every school year even if they have already earned 16 credits
Physical Education/ Health	4 credits - There are 2x required two-credit courses • Physical Education Adventure Challenge - (Grade 10) • Health Education - (Grade 9)
Social Studies	12 credits • Four-credit required U.S. History (Grade 10) • 2x additional four-credit courses in Grades 9 and 10
Mathematics	8 credits
Science	8 credits in laboratory science

Most one semester courses in grades 9-12 earn four (4) credits. Most quarter long courses in grades 9-12 earn two (2) credits. Some courses, such as work study programs and ALPs, may be variable based on hours worked or other factors.

Participation in Graduation Ceremony

In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, students must have satisfied all graduation requirements by the last day of classes for seniors. All work must be turned in before that date.

Early Graduation

Each student needs to think carefully about early graduation. Considering the rich and varied course offerings, most students can find interest and challenge in our curriculum for four years.

It is important to note that most competitive colleges and universities do not view early graduation as a plus in the admissions review, unless the student has exhausted the high school curriculum, and place more weight on the quality of a student's academic program than on other factors in the admissions process.

Process

To be considered for an early graduation plan, a student must complete the process outlined below during a student's junior year. The school will not support a request for early graduation from a student who has not followed this process:

- Meet with parent/guardian and counselor to review graduation status, college/career and future plans.
- Discuss with parents/guardians and agree that an early graduation is a reasonable option to consider.
- Independently investigate college/career interests and the implications of early graduation.
- Write a letter to the School Counseling Department Head outlining the following:
 - Describe the reasons for requesting early graduation.
 - Explain how they will use the time between the completion of high school classes and the June graduation ceremony. Include evidence that arrangements for this time have already been made, or are well-developed.
 - Describe their future plans and the implications of early graduation.
 - A parent/guardian must co-sign the letter.
- Meet with the School Counseling Department Head and a parent/guardian to discuss a plan.

If the plan is approved, the student will then need to meet with their school counselor to adjust course requests by June of junior year and then confirm in August before their senior year that their schedule is accurate.

Students should also discuss their plans for early graduation with a college counselor during their junior year college-counseling meeting.

Credit or Partial Credit

As a general policy, partial credit will not be given for courses that have not been completed. Exceptions to this policy have been allowed for students graduating early. If a student wishes to receive less than full credit for a course and desires to petition for an exception to this policy, the following conditions need to be satisfied.

- Decisions of this nature need to be resolved in advance. If a student and teacher wish to contract for less work than might be required for full course credit, the option is available under ALPs. Enrollment in a course assumes that the student will complete all requirements for that course.
- Partial credit petitions will be accepted only from students desiring to graduate early or leaving our school. Students in residence will be expected to complete all course requirements.
- “Ex post facto” decisions on course credits will not be approved. Issues regarding partial credit must be approved by the Assistant Principal.

Change of Student Programs

Families should choose courses carefully during the registration period. Students will receive their course schedule for both semesters in August. Students and families will be asked to carefully review their course schedule for and be informed about the Course Change Request process if there is a need for any change. Any Course Change Request should be communicated to the student’s school counselor as early as possible.

Add/Drop Process

Students have the first five (5) days of the school year to request to add or drop a course. It is important for students to look carefully at all quarters of the year, as changes are often not possible later in the year and will only be made when absolutely necessary.

Priority will be given to:

- Students missing major academics
- A placement error (for example: Spanish 1 v. Spanish 2)
- Students with unbalanced schedules (fewer than 3 academics in one term)
- Students who have failed courses and/or completed summer school

Requests that will be considered but cannot be guaranteed:

- Students who did not get their first choice electives regardless of subject

Schedule changes will not be made for the following reasons:

- Students seeking a specific teacher, period, or term for a particular class
- Students seeking a revision to an already balanced schedule
- After the designated first semester Add/Drop period, only teacher-initiated, course-level changes will be honored.

Senior Schedule Changes

Seniors should make sure that their schedules for both semesters are accurate when they are received in late August. Any errors or other special requests for changes should be made before the end of the Add/Drop period at the beginning of the school year. No record of the course change will appear on the student's permanent record if the course is officially dropped during the official Drop/Add period.

Once transcripts have been mailed to colleges, no change to a student's schedule will be made until they meet with the school counselor to determine if those colleges need to be notified of the changes.

Changing Levels

When a student moves between an honors or AP course and a college prep course, an adjustment will be made to ensure that the final grade reflects the student's achievement at the level of the course that will appear on the transcript. This applies to changes made after the end of the drop/add period at the beginning of a course and before the last three weeks at the end of the course. The sending teacher will calculate a grade-to-date and indicate what material has been completed and provide this to the receiving teacher and the department head. The

receiving teacher will use this to help determine the student's grade. Greater weight will be given to the work done in the receiving teacher's course since this course will appear on the transcript, assuming the student completes the course. No record of the sending teacher's grade will be indicated on the transcript assuming the student completes the course. Any concerns should be brought first to the receiving teacher and then to the department head.

Please note that changes between levels cannot always be accommodated and are only approved on a space available basis. No changes can be made during the final three (3) weeks of a semester.

Transferring Schools

If a student is planning to transfer from Amherst Regional High School to another school, the following procedures must be followed:

- A school counselor must be consulted
- A transfer or withdrawal form must be obtained from the Registrar
- Any academic work not completed must be brought up to date prior to the move
- Teachers must verify in writing that all work has been completed
- All school and library books must be returned
- The locker must be emptied
- All bills must be paid before transcripts are sent to another school

Release of School Records

In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g), it is the practice of the Amherst-Pelham Regional Public School District to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to enroll, or already has enrolled in another public-school district, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of the school record that is forwarded to the new school. Please see [Student Records](#) for additional information on student records. Full-Time Enrollment, to be considered full-time enrolled, a student in Amherst Regional High School must be enrolled in a minimum of four (4) blocks each semester, earning a total of 24 credits for the year.

For juniors and seniors, in addition to regularly scheduled courses enrollment might include the following:

- ALP activity
- Course work at one of the Five Colleges or an approved correspondence course
- Working as an aide for a department in the school
- Work study programs

Any activity must be approved in advance by the School Counseling Department Head. Students wishing a reduced course load must present a written request from their parents/guardians in advance to the Assistant Principal. This request should be developed in consultation with the student's guidance counselor.

Students should note that under [MIAA](#) eligibility requirements students with a reduced course load may not be eligible to participate in the interscholastic sports program.

Re-Enrollment of Students Over 18

Regular education students 18 years of age or older must have the permission of the principal to enroll or re-enroll.

Alternative Academic Experiences

Alternative Learning Programs (ALPS)

The Alternative Learning Program (ALP) allows students to earn high school credits for experiences that make sense for their own intellectual development. The ALP should supplement the standard high school curriculum and is designed to replace other electives in the student's schedule. In order to be approved for an ALP, students must demonstrate readiness for independent work and develop a plan of study that is not available to them in the regular ARHS high school curriculum. For example, students may conduct an independent study utilizing the knowledge and expertise of members of the community, take a course at one of the Five Colleges, complete a comprehensive community service project, or work with a faculty advisor or mentor to complete independent research or a project that facilitates deeper learning than can be accomplished through the regular ARHS curriculum.

Under the Alternative Learning Program, there are five categories in which students can design an ALP for high school credit:

Type of ALP	Type of Grade	Credits	Included in GPA?
College Course	Variable based on course	Variable based on course	No
Online/Extension Course	Variable based on course	Variable based on course	No
Community Service	Pass/Fail	1	No
School Service	Pass/Fail	1	No
Independent Study	Pass/Fail	1	No

In order to be approved for an ALP, students must complete the following:

- Complete the ALP Request Form, obtained from their School Counselor, and attach a description outlining the specifics of their plan of study/service

- Students must obtain permission from the faculty or community member supervising their ALP. They should be sure that the expectations for coursework and the criteria for evaluation are clearly outlined and understood by all parties.
- Students enrolling in a college or other course of study outside of ARHS must receive prior approval through the ALP Request Form in order to receive ARHS credit for the course. See more in the section on [College Courses](#).
- Students should have alternate courses in their schedules in the event an ALP is not approved. Once the ALP is approved, the alternate course will be dropped from the student's schedule.
- Students must submit a completed and signed ALP Contract five (5) school days before the start of the semester in which the ALP is being completed (or by the end of the Add/Drop period for the first semester only). ALP Contracts are available through the student's school counselor once the ALP has been approved.

No ALP application will be approved unless the entire application has been completed and signed. Any changes or modifications in the ALP activity must be approved by the assistant principal supervising ALP contracts.

A student who wishes to design more than one ALP in a semester must have special permission from the Assistant Principal supervising ALP contracts. The administration reserves the right to limit the total number of ALP credits and the type of ALP credit earned toward an ARHS diploma.

Work Study - Occupational & Vocational Programs

The Work Study Program consists of three (3) main components:

- **Academic Component:** The student is required to take four major subjects throughout the year. They must also fulfill the Physical Education and Health Requirements.
- **Work Component:** The student is required to begin their paid hours before 3:30pm at least three (3) days a week. They must be able to document these hours, signed off by their work supervisor. Students must work at least seven (7) hours a week to receive two (2) credits per semester.
- **Counselor Component:** The student is required to maintain ongoing contact with their school counselor and to submit monthly time cards with their work supervisor's signature and evaluation review. This counseling component ensures that the work

situation and the academic schedule are meeting the needs of the student, that the student is fulfilling their responsibilities, and that the student is considering their future beyond high school.

For additional information about the Work Study Program, please see the [2024-2025 ARHS Program of Studies](#).

College Courses

Seniors in good academic standing are able to take courses at the local colleges and the University provided those courses are not equivalent to Amherst Regional High School courses and do not conflict with high school responsibilities. Such enrollment must be approved by the Assistant Principal and by officials at the college and/or university. In addition, parents or guardians must agree to provide appropriate transportation and assume the responsibility for the expenses associated with the enrollment.

Credits earned on the college level can be used to satisfy high school graduation requirements if arrangements are made in advance with the Assistant Principal. The number of course credits may vary and should be confirmed in advance. Those courses are not computed in a student's grade point average. Students may obtain an application for college courses only after first meeting with their school counselor.

Expectations for Enrollment

- Students are expected to be enrolled high school students.
- They are required to take a minimum of three (3) classes in high school each semester.
- Students should look for classes that meet in the afternoon and block out appropriate time slots for the term.
- Students will not be allowed to miss part of any of their regularly scheduled high school courses to attend university courses.
- Students must meet all of the graduation requirements in their regular high school program.
- University courses should supplement a high school program. Students may not take courses that are the same as courses offered in the high school.
- During the time periods when the college is not in session and ARHS is, students may not be at ARHS unless by prior arrangement made through the Assistant Principal.

Responsibilities for Enrollment

The privilege of taking college courses indicates that a student is mature enough to take on these certain responsibilities.

Students are responsible for:

- Completing an application for permission from the high school
- Registering for and paying for courses and materials at the college
- Meeting with their school counselor to work out an academic program and schedule and complete ALPs forms to receive credit
- Learning and understanding each college or university's procedures, policies, and costs
- Providing any/all transportation required for the completion of the college course

The School is responsible for:

- Through the school counselor, assisting the student in designing an academic program that makes sense for the student and meets the school's expectations
- Approving applications for students for whom college work is appropriate
- Working with students, colleges, and universities to identify ways for students to take college classes at reduced costs

Availability

The colleges and universities do not guarantee that space will be available in the desired courses. Students must be flexible and work with them to find the best course(s) placements.

- **Amherst College** offers a limited number of spaces free of charge.
- **UMASS and Community Colleges** charge tuition and fees, though family members of employees of the state college and university system get some costs waived.
- We have a unique relationship with **Greenfield Community College** for students who need to complete high school in a different setting.

Withdrawal and Re-Enrollment Procedures for Families on Sabbatical

When a family has finalized its plans for sabbatical leave, the schools ask that the parents or guardians of students notify the school counselor and the registrar.

Several weeks prior to departure, parents should request transfer forms, clearance cards, and information release forms. These forms must be completed, signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the Registrar before the student's last day of attendance.

An explanation of these procedures is available in the registrar's office, and the [2024-2025 Program of Studies](#).

Auditing a Course

The purpose of auditing a class is to learn about a content area of interest without receiving a grade or credit for the course. A student may do this to experience a more challenging curriculum or a new content area without the pressure of a grade. The teacher, counselor, and Assistant Principal must approve an audit before the end of the [Add/Drop](#) period.

Criteria for Auditing

- The course must be in addition to a student's four (4) major academic classes
- The student must have a good attendance record
- The student must obtain the permission of the teacher, counselor, and Assistant Principal before enrolling in the audited course
- Students requesting to take a course for credit will be given priority over those requesting to audit the same course

Expectations for Auditing

- The student must maintain excellent attendance
- The student is must do all work necessary to participate in class, including any reading and/or homework assignments
- The student must participate in class activities
- The student is not required to take tests or be evaluated on other work
- The student will not receive credit
- The student must fulfill any additional expectations outlined by the teacher

Students who meet these expectations will receive a grade of "S" (Satisfactory). Students who fail to meet these expectations will receive a grade of "U" (Unsatisfactory).

SECTION II: CODE OF CONDUCT

Disciplinary Philosophy

Overview

Every student has the right to an education free of physical and psychological disruption. Several dimensions inform ARHS's work to make this a reality for all students: Restorative Justice practices, Equity Advancement, and the laws and regulations governing student discipline, including M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H1/2, 37H3/4, and 603 C.M.R. 53.00 *et. seq.*.

Restorative Justice (RJ)

The Restorative Justice (RJ) program at Amherst Regional High School was created to uphold the Amherst Regional School District and ARHS's commitment to diversity, equity, and community through restorative justice education by challenging traditional approaches to discipline. The central idea of RJ is to work proactively to develop relationships that build communities grounded in mutual respect. When those relationships are fractured, restorative practices (RP) rely on the strength of communication to repair those relationships. An essential part of RP is conferences where all involved parties work together to repair harm.

Massachusetts General Law c. 71, §37H3/4 (as amended by Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022)

Massachusetts General Law c. 71, § 37H3/4 discourages an over-reliance on suspension as a response to students' inappropriate behavior and, instead, encourages schools to develop responses that limit the number of time students are out of class. The Principal or administrator must consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

ARHS is currently working with the Community Responders for Equity, Safety & Service (CRESS) department to create meaningful alternatives to suspensions. This may include opportunities for students to perform community service in lieu of being suspended from school. The adults

at ARHS want to provide students with a range of interventions designed to enable students to reflect on their behavior and develop more productive choices for the future. This work is a coordinated effort, shared by the guidance department, the Dean of Students, ARHS administration, CRESS, and ARHS families. Interventions are a broader, more comprehensive response, ones that could include the assigning of consequences, but are not limited to it. Again, the intent here is to achieve a better balance between holding students accountable for their behavior and supporting them to find ways to make better decisions in the future.

Equity Advancement

Equity advancement refers to ARHS's ongoing work to ensure that both school-wide and classroom climates are safe and inclusive. The foundation of this work is the acknowledgment that bias can privilege some individuals and groups over others. Advancing social justice allows ARHS to create a learning environment that welcomes and supports all members of the school community.

Disciplinary Due Process

Suspensions and expulsions of students shall be imposed in compliance with constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements, including M.G.L. c. 76, §17; M.G.L. c. 76, §21; M.G.L. c. 71, §37H; M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2; and M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 3/4.

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, § 37H ¾

(For ALL offenses except for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff and felony offenses)

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below.

Definitions Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4

Superintendent – the Superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no

more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Short-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½ no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Principal: the primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below.

All school principals and principal's designees and the Superintendent and Superintendent's designees when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for violations of school rules other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses, shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal or

designee shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4(b).

Emergency Removals; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of: (1) the emergency removal; (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the Principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

In-School Suspension, M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ - Removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or

no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 C.M.R. 53.00.

Due Process for In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 C.M.R. 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. Students have the right to appeal an In-School Suspension that will result in their In-School Suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Due Process for Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is

charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress

during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The Principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or in §37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Due Process for Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal

may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and the principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension: M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾: Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent

within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.

Superintendent Appeal Hearing; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension. The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as identified above.

Superintendent's Decision; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District with regard to the long-term suspension.

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2 Offenses

(For offenses involving: dangerous weapons, drugs, assaults on staff and felony offenses)

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - For disciplinary offenses involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of the formal disciplinary hearing.

Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student. Long term suspension/expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of

guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. 71 §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c, 71, §37H

1. 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 and school district by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school and school district by the Principal.

Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at their own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who has been expelled from the Amherst, Pelham, or Amherst-Pelham Regional School District pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel (at his or her own expense) 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.

Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½

Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

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 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.

Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at his or her own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of their 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.

Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent in writing and must notify the Superintendent of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) 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 (3) 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 their behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar

days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or felony delinquency charge or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal 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.

Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at his/her/their own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision, which will include reasons for an expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of their 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.

Superintendent's Appeal/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the long-term suspension/expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. 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 (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the

final decision of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District with regard to the long-term suspension/expulsion.

Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and related regulations, require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections upon the imposition of a discipline sanction that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or which will result in a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for ten (10) school days or less to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her/their program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement," building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
2. No later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district will notify the parent(s) of that decision and provide them with the written notice of procedural safeguards.
3. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in

accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students, except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. The student's IEP Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, may, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.

4. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the misconduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that incident of misconduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others). The student's IEP or Section 504 Team shall review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment. The IEP or Section 504 Team will develop (with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) consent), modifications to or a new 504 Plan, IEP, behavior intervention plan and/or placement as appropriate.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a dangerous weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may, with or without parent/guardian consent, and regardless of the manifestation determination, place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. A parent can also consent to a forty-five (45) school day interim setting.
6. The interim alternative setting must enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and progress toward the goals in the IEP. The interim alternative setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring.

7. At the conclusion of the forty-five (45) school day period, the student shall be returned to his/her/their previous placement unless the parent (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the interim alternative setting or an Order is obtained from the Bureau of Special Education Appeal authorizing the student's continued removal.
8. The parent shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

Note: If, prior to the disciplinary action, the school district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district will make all protections available to the student (e.g., manifestation determination) until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if: (a) the parent had expressed concern in writing; (b) the parent had requested an evaluation; or (c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student's eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. If the suspension imposed terminates prior to the completion of said expedited evaluation, the student shall be allowed to return to school immediately upon the conclusion of the disciplinary exclusion. If the student is found eligible, then he/she/they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Disciplinary Protocols

Overview

The District reserves the right to discipline for conduct not mentioned below in the lists of infractions when such conduct disrupts or interferes with the educational program or infringes on or interferes with the health and safety of any member of the school. Acts that are dangerous, destructive, and/or illegal shall be considered a violation of this Code of Conduct.

Suspension

Suspension is a disciplinary consequence wherein a student's right to attend school is temporarily revoked. Please see Disciplinary Due Process, above, for the definitions of suspension under each discipline statute and regulation.

Snow days or other school cancellations will not count toward serving a suspension.

Students may be given the opportunity to participate as an alternative to suspension activity. These activities include community service in the school or in the local community, and/or a study hall. These activities will occur on Saturday mornings from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM, and will be supervised by members of CRESS.

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

For all suspensions, students will be entitled to the following in terms of the opportunity to make academic progress:

Less Than 10 Consecutive Days - Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his/her/their removal from the classroom or school. Students suspended from school for disciplinary reasons and who miss labs or other

work unique to the classroom experience may be given readings or other independent assignments as a substitute for classroom learning.

More than 10 Consecutive Days - Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services, earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan. Students suspended from school for disciplinary reasons and who miss labs or other work unique to the classroom experience may be given readings or other independent assignments as a substitute for classroom learning.

The school-wide education service plan will be provided to the parent and student at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.

Participation in School Activities

During the term of their suspension, students suspended from school for disciplinary reasons may not be on the grounds of any of the Amherst-Pelham schools unless participating in a scheduled administrative appointment. They may not participate in or attend any school-sponsored activity, including but not limited to:

- Athletic practice or game
- School dances, activities, or events
- Club meetings
- Rehearsals or performances

Responsibilities

In cases involving suspension, the school shall be responsible for the following:

Deans and Administrators

- Follow due process procedures
- Contact parent/guardian regarding disciplinary consequences
- Process referral form and re-entry plan
- Notification of student's guidance counselor, teachers, administrators, liaison, athletic director, or club advisor as necessary regarding the terms of the suspension

- Request that academic assignments be forwarded to the main office for parent/guardian to pick-up
- Schedule a re-entry meeting to include student, parent/guardian, dean, school counselor, and other appropriate staff
- Arrange for translation at meetings for students and/or parents/guardians whose primary language is not English

School Counselors

- Follow up with teachers to verify that assignments have been brought to the main office or Dean's Office
- Notify parent/guardian regarding availability of assignments in cases of external suspension.
- Participate in re-entry meetings

Teachers

- Promptly provide academic assignments to the main office for parent/guardian to pick up in cases of external suspension.

Re-entry Procedures

Upon their return to school, students who have been suspended may be required to have a re-entry meeting before being re-admitted.

Students returning from the suspension may also be required to participate in monitoring meetings, counseling, community service, and/or other activities related to improving behavior and becoming contributing members of the school community.

School Safety & Discipline Report (SSDR)

The School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR) collects information on all drug, violent and criminal offenses that occur on school property, as well as the discipline action (suspensions, removals, expulsions) served by the student offender. Non-drug, non-violent and non-criminal offenses that result in the student offender being removed from class or school are also collected.

School Safety Infractions

Listed below are the infractions that all schools are required to report directly to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The state considers these the most serious of infractions. The state’s reporting requirement includes both the nature of the infraction and the consequence assigned by the school.

[Massachusetts General Law \[Chapter 71, Section 37H\]](#) specifically addresses three of these infractions. During the school day or while on school property or attending a school-sponsored event, students who assault a staff member, possess a weapon, and/or possess a controlled substance may be subject to the following consequences:

- Suspension from school
- Possible long-term suspension or expulsion
- Referral to the ARHS School Counseling department
- Referral to Amherst Police Department

For all other infractions listed here, the school’s response relies on the judgment of the Dean of Students. The Deans have a range of response options at their disposal, including both consequences and interventions.

As noted in the [Philosophy](#) section above, the District’s goal is to maintain a safe and orderly school climate without loss of school time. Intervention options seek to modify behavior without a loss of class time, whereas consequences may or may not involve loss of class time. Suspension and/or expulsion always remains an option, especially for, but not limited to, repeat offenders.

Interventions		
Warnings	Conferences	
● Verbal ● Parent/Guardian contact	● with Counselor ● with Dean of Students ● with Parent/Guardian ● with Administrator	
Consequences		
Loss of Privileges	Restorative Practices	Punishment

● Removal from sports team ● Removal from extra-curricular activities ● Removal from school bus ● Phone confiscation ● Loss of computer privileges	● Apology, verbal and/or written ● School and/or community service ● Mediation/Conflict Resolution ● Restitution	● Community Service ● Restitution ● Suspension ● Expulsion
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List of SSDR Infractions - School Safety

These infractions are listed alphabetically and are not ranked by seriousness. The infractions correspond with how the Educator's Handbook, the district's software that tracks student discipline, is organized. Any action that constitutes an SSDR Infraction is considered a violation of school rules.

Infraction	Definition
Alcohol--Possession and Use	Possession: Having alcoholic beverages in pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc. Use: Drinking alcoholic beverages.
Arson	The unlawful and intentional damage, or attempt to damage, any school property by fire or incendiary device. Includes firecrackers, fireworks, and trash can fires.
Assault of a Staff Member	See MGL, Chpt 71, Section 37H
Bomb Threat	The delivery of a message of possible explosive materials being on campus, near campus, and/or pending explosions.
Bullying	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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. See M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37O. Only administrators or designee will enter Bullying into Educator's Handbook, once an investigation and determination have been completed. To report bullying, students may speak to a Dean, their School Counselor, or any trusted adult at school. They may also fill out the form found on the ARHS website at this link: http://arps.censeoschool.com/public/
Drugs: Possession and Use	Students are in possession of or are using illegal drugs/substances or imitations. ● Marijuana Possession: Possession of marijuana on one's person, in one's pocket(s), bag(s), car, locker, etc. ● Marijuana Use: Smoking, vaping, or otherwise using marijuana. ● Other Illegal Substances Possession: Possession of other illegal substances including prescription medication. ● Other Illegal Substances Use: Illegal use of other substances excluding alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco. See MGL, Chpt 71, Section 37H

Drugs: Intent to Sell or Sale of Illegal Drugs	Students are in possession of illegal drugs with the intent to sell and/or the sale of illegal drugs. See MGL, Chpt 71, Section 37H
Felony or Felony Charges	A student charged with a felony for behavior that occurred on or off school grounds may be subject to long-term suspension and or expulsion if the principal determines that “...the student’s continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.” See MGL, Chpt 71, Section 37H1/2
Fighting	Mutual participation in an offense involving physical violence.
Harassment	Non-Sexual Harassment: means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, disability, or religion that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create or contribute to a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures or other conduct which rises to the level of a hostile environment. A hostile environment is one which unreasonably interfered with an individual’s participation in, denied the individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjected the individual to discrimination under any program or activity of the District. Multiple instances will also prompt bullying investigation. Sexual Harassment: See Title IX Grievance Procedures
Hazing	Student engages in conduct or method of initiation which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of another student. See M.G.L. c. 269 §17
Homicide	
Kidnapping	

Physical Aggression/Attack	Student engages in actions involving physical non-mutual contact where injury may occur (e.g. hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, etc.)
Property Damage/Vandalism	Student participates in an activity that results in the destruction or disfigurement of property.
Robbery Using Force	
Sexual Assault	See Title IX Grievance Procedures
Theft	The unlawful taking of property belonging to a school, a staff member, or a student without threat, violence, or bodily harm.
Threat of Physical Assault	Threat of physical attack; may include bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
Tobacco: Use and Possession	Student is in possession of, or using, tobacco. Use: Smoking, chewing, or otherwise using tobacco (cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes, cigars, pipes, or smokeless tobacco). Possession: Student is in possession of tobacco.

Weapons: Use and Possession	Student possesses a knife, gun (real or look-alike), or other objects readily capable of causing bodily harm. Knife: The weapon involved was a knife or cutting instrument. Handgun, Rifle, Shotgun: All three are covered under this statute. Gun/Firearm-Other Firearm—The weapon involved was another type of firearm excluding handguns, rifles, and shotguns, but including zip guns, starter guns, and flare guns. Explosive or Incendiary Device—The weapon involved was a bomb, grenade, rocket, missile, mine or other incendiary devices. Other Weapons—The offense involved a weapon other than those described above, such as firecrackers or fireworks. See MGL, Chap 71 , Section 37H
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Non-School Safety Infractions

Below is a list of more common disciplinary infractions. The possible administrative interventions and consequences available to the Dean of Students for these infractions are the same as those listed in the section above.

Infraction	Definition
Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism	Academic honesty infractions including plagiarism, cheating, attempts to cheat and falsification of materials. See Academic Honesty Policy.

Defiance/Insubordination	Insubordination or failure to comply with staff/faculty requests to provide name or otherwise follow instructions.
(Inappropriate) Displays of Affection	Long hugs or kisses
Disrespect	Disregard for someone's feelings, verbal abuse/insults
Disruption	Includes, but is not limited to: play-fighting, tripping, throwing food or other objects, and the use of water guns and water balloons, cafeteria food fights
Dress Code Violation	The dress code guidelines encourage individuals to dress, groom, and conduct themselves so that they can participate in, benefit from and access the educational environment. These guidelines respect the rights of all and are based on MGL, Chapter 71, Section 83 which establishes reasonable standards regarding health, safety, and cleanliness. Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools state that individuals should wear clothing that allows them to participate safely in all school activities including specialized learning spaces, such as the swimming pool, gymnasium, shops, etc. Individuals should wear shoes or sandals held securely on their feet for protection when on school grounds, aboard school buses, and at school events. Amherst, Pelham, and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools state that individuals have the right to freedom of expression through their clothing provided that such right does not cause any disruption or disorder within the school (per MGL, Chapter 71, Section 82) or infringe on the rights of others. Disruption, disorder, and infringement of rights can include clothing that contains: words, symbols, suggestions or portrayals of violence, defamation, illegal

	acts, illegal substances, and/or unacceptable products (such as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs). Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools complies with the Massachusetts CROWN Act and prohibits the adoption or implementation of any policy that prohibits or impairs any hairstyles historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles (including, but not limited to: braids, hair coverings, Bantu knots, locks, twists, and other formations), hair length, hair type, and hair textures. M.G.L. c. 71, §1D; M.G.L. c. 4, §7. The Principal will make final decisions about the implementation of the dress code.
Forgery	
Gang Affiliation Display	
Out of Bounds (Inappropriate Location)	Amherst Regional High School is a closed campus. All students are expected to remain inside of the school building for the duration of the school day, except during lunch when students are authorized to be in the area by the picnic tables to the left of the cafeteria exit. Unless eating outside, during lunch students must remain in the cafeteria. The War Memorial Pool, the playground area, all parking lots, cars, Summit Academy, and the Middle School, including the road leading to it from the high school, are off limits. The roof of the school is also considered off limits. This is the case for both during and after school hours.
Physical Contact	

Possession of Contraband (Lighters, Lasers, Drug Paraphernalia)	Includes but not limited to: Pipe or other items used as a pipe, vapes, rolling papers, and/or machines, scales, small bags or grinders.
Profanity	
Property Misuse	
Skip (Cutting Class)	See Attendance Policy - Unexcused Absences
Tardy to School	See Attendance Policy - Tardies
Technology Violation	Any violation of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in temporary loss or termination of computer use privileges as well as other relevant disciplinary consequences. Possible violations include, but are not limited to: ● Use of computer technology for games, chat, music, and other programs not specifically assigned by a teacher ● Using someone else's account or allowing someone else to use your account ● Changing the configuration of any workstation, installing games or other programs ● Possession of or installation of programs which can be potentially harmful to the computer or the accounts of individuals ● Physical damage to computers ● Use of technology to produce inappropriate, derogatory or harassing material ● Hacking into the PowerSchool account of faculty and staff ● Hacking into or attempting to hack into the school's computer programs. ● Taking pictures or videotaping staff or students without permission ● Posting pictures or videos taken during the school day without permission

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School Climate Infractions

This section includes infractions neither covered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's School Safety and Discipline Report expectations nor found in Educator's Handbook. However, a safe and orderly school climate merits mentioning them here. The possible administrative interventions and consequences available to the Dean of Students for these infractions are the same as those listed in the School Safety Infractions Section.

Infraction	Definition
Inappropriate or Unauthorized Use of Cell Phones	See Phone Policy for details
Videotaping	Taking pictures or videotaping others without express permission of staff and anyone videotaped, includes taking pictures or videotaping violence or other inappropriate or unsafe activities
False fire alarm or false alarm to any Emergency Services	
Possession of pornographic or obscene materials	In hardcopy form or on an electronic device
Driving/Parking	Unauthorized or improper parking, including parking in non-designated or faculty areas, parking in a fire lane, or without a permit. Unauthorized or improper use of motor vehicles, including driving vehicles during school hours and reckless driving. See Parking section for details.
Indecent Exposure	Sexual activity in school, during or after school hours; while on school-sponsored activities.

Identity Theft	Includes but is not limited to: posing for another student's ID picture, gaining access to or using another student's school accounts or passwords.
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Additional Disciplinary and Safety Policies

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, sect. 37O and 603 CMR sect. 49.00, the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts have developed a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Relevant portions are included in this handbook, for the complete text of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, [click here](#). Any and all acts of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation based upon the reporting of bullying to the school administration are prohibited in the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school- sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at another individual(s) (hereinafter target) that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damages the target's property.
- Place the target in reasonable fear of harm or damage to his/her/their property.
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target.
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school or substantially and materially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents/guardians, or others and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designated when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, an online reporting system, a voicemail box, a mailing address, and an email address.

Use of the district's online Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents/guardians; 2) make it available in the principal's office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents/guardians.

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others

The school or district expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

Reports may be made anonymously, using the online Incident Reporting Form without writing the reporter's name, by calling and leaving a voicemail for the principal or assistant principal, and/or by writing an e-mail to the principal or assistant principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but disciplinary action will not be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

Phones and Electronic Devices

Phone Use Policy: Students are expected to be engaged in class without distractions.

Students must put their phones on Airplane mode and place them in the phone caddy BEFORE the bell rings. AirPods or other headphones should be put away. Students can keep their smartwatches unless it becomes a distraction during class. If the teacher determines that a smartwatch is a distraction, the smartwatch must also be put in the caddy for the entire class.

- Once there, the phone must stay in the caddy for the entire class period (Headsets and earbuds must be out of sight unless specified by a student's IEP/504.)
- If you do not put a phone in the caddy, we will confirm you do not have a phone with your family
- If a student violates the phone policy during class, their name will be sent to the Main Office. If it is the 2nd time or more, the student will have to turn their phone in at the Main Office during the next passing period.

Consequences for students using phones during class, or in the hallways during class:

- **1st Time** - The student is sent to the Main Office, and the student's family will be contacted. The student keeps their phone.
- **2nd Time** - Student is sent to the Main Office to turn in their phone until the end of the day when the student can pick up their phone. Their Family/Caregiver will be contacted.
- **3rd Time** - The student is sent to the Main Office to turn in their phone, Family/Caregiver must retrieve the device from the Main Office.

- **4th Time & Beyond** - The student is sent to the Main Office to turn in their phone, Family/Caregiver must retrieve the device. The student may also be suspended or participate in Saturday morning community service as well.
- Electronic devices are not to be used in the classroom at all unless the teacher gives explicit permission to do so.
 - During class time, cell phones may be used for educational purposes. This is at the discretion of the teacher.
- Students may use electronic devices before and after school, in the hallway during passing periods, and during lunch for listening to music only.
 - During these times, use of electronic devices is confined to listening to music with headphones or earbuds.
 - Use of electronic devices is forbidden while class is in session. If a student takes a pass to leave the classroom for any reason, electronic devices must be left in the designated area.
- Use of electronic devices to audio, video, or photograph anyone without their permission, is forbidden.

Acceptable Use Policy

These rules apply to all material posted by students to web pages regardless of the form of posting. This includes text on pages, blogs, comments, replies, and images, spike words in videos, and spoken words in audio files.

- Do not post pictures or videos of yourself or your schoolmates on your website.
- Do Not post text, pictures, videos, or music on your website that is sexually suggestive or obscene.
- Do not post text, pictures, videos, or music on your website that contains ethnic slurs or racist slurs.
- Do not post text, pictures, videos, or music on your website that discriminates against someone based on gender, sexual orientation, religion, handicap, or age.
- Do not post any material that harasses, threatens, or annoys another student, teacher, or staff member.
- Do not post any material that insults, makes fun of, or criticizes another student, teacher, or staff member.
- Do not post any material on your website that advocates the use of weapons, the use of illegal drugs, or the use of alcohol.
- To protect the privacy of students' work, do not give access to blogs.ars.org to individuals who are not registered users of blogs.ars.org, or who have no legitimate reason to view web pages on blogs.ars.org.

Student Expression

Students may exercise their freedom of expression in mature and responsible ways, as long as they do not cause a material disruption to the school. The right to free expression does not include obscene or libelous material or fighting words. Student produced material, and material that is not produced by students but is intended to be distributed, published, or broadcast within the school or on school grounds, must first be submitted to the Principal for approval. Only after the in-school distribution of material that is libelous, obscene, or causes material disruption may the school discipline a student.

Students planning to assemble during non-school time are advised to consult with the Principal for an appropriate time and space. Students do not have a right to assemble while classes are in session.

All displays, bulletin boards, leaflets, and notices for the Morning Announcements must be approved and submitted by a club advisor, a teacher, or a school administrator. Morning Announcements are read during the second period of the day and are also sent out by email.

Emergency announcements are read over the public address system only with the approval of an administrator. Announcements outside of the Morning Announcements will not be made for bake sales or club/class council events.

Seniors - End of Year Responsibilities and Guidelines

Senior Prom

- If weapons, alcohol, or drugs are brought to the prom on either one's person or, in the case of alcohol or drugs, in one's bloodstream, then parents/guardians will be called to remove students from the prom.
- The right to attend other culminating events, exclusive of graduation, will be forfeited. The right to attend graduation may be left to the discretion of administration, depending on the totality of the circumstances.
- As per the Discipline Code, other consequences for the possession or use of weapons, alcohol, or drugs will be assigned.

Senior Pranks

Senior Pranks are not endorsed by the school. If they occur, they must meet these guidelines:

- No harm to others
- No damage to property

- No extra clean-up work for custodians
- No disruption to the school routine
- No targeting of specific individuals, either students or staff
- No accessing classrooms or teacher work spaces

If a prank does not follow these parameters, consequences may include being ineligible to attend Prom and/or other Senior Events. Disciplinary consequences not served before the last day of school need to be completed before participation in graduation is permitted.

School Bus Behavior

All school rules described in the Code of Conduct are in effect while students are riding on the bus. Students engaging in inappropriate and/or unsafe behaviors may be suspended from riding the school bus as well as the application of other relevant disciplinary consequences. Any such suspensions will be assigned by a dean or administrator.

Waiting for the Bus

- Be on time for the bus but do not arrive at your bus stop earlier than ten minutes before the time at which the bus usually arrives
- Do not allow younger children who are not yet attending school to accompany you to the bus stop
- Observe all safety precautions while waiting for your bus
- Do not play in the road
- If possible, avoid crossing streets
- Whenever you must cross a street, do so only if you are sure that no moving vehicles are approaching you from either direction
- Do not push, pull or chase any other students
- Avoid trespassing on private property and being noisy
- As your bus approaches, line up at least six feet off the highway and do not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door. Again, avoid pushing others in the line.

Loading on the Bus

- Get on your bus quickly and be seated at once
- Listen carefully and obey the bus driver's instructions

Riding on the Bus

- Do not eat food while you are on the bus
- Do not throw anything while you are on the bus
- Do not extend your arms or any other parts of the body out of the window
- Do not change seats while the bus is moving
- Avoid shouting and other excessive noise that may distract your driver and lead to a serious accident
- Help to keep your bus clean and sanitary
- Be courteous to other students
- Listen carefully and obey any directions issued by the driver

Unloading from the Bus

- Do not leave your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door
- Again, obey any directions issued by the driver
- Leave the bus quickly but in a courteous manner without pushing any other students
- If you must cross a street as you leave the school bus, be sure to walk in front of the bus (never in back) at a distance of at least 12 feet from the bus. If you get too close to the front of the bus, the driver will not be able to see you, and a serious accident could occur

Be sure to observe all safety precautions as you travel from your bus stop to your home.

Miscellaneous Other Discipline and Safety Policies

Infraction	Definition
Athletics	All athletic events are considered school sponsored events, including both home and away games.
Breathalyzer Policy	All students and their guests wishing to attend school events may be required to participate in an alcohol screening test prior to their entry into the event. This is a passive, non-invasive test where no mouthpiece is needed. Students may be asked to blow into the aperture of the instrument

	where a sample of breath is collected for analysis. If alcohol is detected, the student will not be permitted to attend the event and will be detained by on-site school personnel or police officers until a parent/guardian comes for him/her/them and they will be subject to disciplinary consequences described in the ARHS handbook. In the event that a student and/or their guest refuse to participate in the test and/or leave the premises, parents/guardians will be called immediately.
Elevator	Prior permission from the nurse is required for students using the elevator.
Metal Scanner Policy	Any time a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of a dangerous weapon, they may take steps to see that the student undergoes a mobile or hand-held metal detector search. This search shall take place as follows: • The search will be conducted by a school official and at least one other school employee present for the search. • Any items that are found at any time during this process that are in violation of school policy will be confiscated. • The student will be informed that, in accordance with the school safety policy, s/he/they are about to be subject to a handheld metal detector search, and asked if s/he/they have any weapons or other metal objects. • The student will be asked to empty his/her/their pockets and to remove any metal objects. • The metal detector will be run over and across the student's body and clothing in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

	• If the metal detector sounds, indicating a metal object on the student's person, the student will again be asked to remove any metal objects. • The search will proceed until all metal objects have been removed or identified as not being in violation of school policy. Any student refusing to cooperate with any part of this metal detector search process may be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension and/or expulsion, within the discretion of the Principal and/or the Superintendent under applicable law, and shall be so informed. If a weapon is found, the student may be subject to the consequences stated in MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H.
Parking on School Grounds	See Parking for additional information.
Skateboards	Use of skateboards is not allowed on school property between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:00 pm.
Student Visitors	Arrangements for visitors must be made two (2) days in advance with the Principal, and written permission is required from all teachers using the form available in the Main Office. Visitors will not be permitted on Fridays, the day preceding a holiday or school vacation, or during examination periods. Visitors must wear the visitor pass issued by the office at all times. Visitors who arrive without prior permission will be assisted in arranging transportation home.
Valuables	Students should not come to school with valuable jewelry, electronic equipment, large sums of money, or credit cards in their possession. Under no circumstances should valuables be left in gym lockers, even those with locks attached.

	The school cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen items. Students who lose valuable property in school should file a theft report in the Dean's Office. Students may also file a police report with the Town of Amherst Police Department.
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SECTION III: ATHLETICS, CLUBS, and STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Philosophy

School-sponsored activities are very much a part of ARHS's offerings. All students are encouraged to join at least one school organization during their time at ARHS. Except in unusual circumstances, students will not be dismissed from classes prior to the end of the scheduled school day to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletic events.

All rules regarding student behavior apply to the co-curricular program, including behavior on field trips and other school-sponsored events.

Athletics

Core Values and Beliefs

Athletics is a critical element of the high school experience for many students here in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District. Athletics promotes student achievement outside of the classroom and helps participating student-athletes become more well-rounded participants in our school community and our community at-large. It helps student-athletes understand their civic responsibilities as representatives of our school and community, and fosters positive civic engagement, teamwork, leadership skills, and physical and mental well-being. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District takes pride in its athletic programs and the accomplishments of its student-athletes.

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they meet the standards of academic eligibility, school citizenship, and basic physical/health qualifications. Participation in the program, therefore, is a privilege earned by students who meet and maintain these standards. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District provides nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District is, however, generally permitted to establish and utilize skill-based eligibility criteria for participation in extracurricular programs and activities (e.g., school-sponsored athletics) so long as the criteria are rationally related to the purposes and goals of the specific program or activity. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District administrators, in their discretion, may deny or limit a student's access to co-curricular activities as a disciplinary sanction.

Student-Athlete Expectations

Student-athletes must exemplify the core beliefs of the District both in the classroom and in competition. As a student-athlete, they are a student first. Athletics must never take priority over school responsibilities. Successful athletes are those who are able to balance their priorities as a student and teammate, and understand their role within the school, on the field, and in the community.

Amherst-Pelham student-athletes must be committed to upholding and demonstrating the highest ideals of character, including teamwork, integrity, honesty, fairness, and respect. Student-athletes, in a very public way, represent the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District and the community at-large. They must always play by the rules, honor the sport they play, and dignify the effort of their teammates and opponents. Student-athletes who commit themselves to the development of their team, including allowing themselves to be coached, building a strong, positive culture amongst their teammates, and promoting resiliency in times of adversity, will be winners. But being a competitive winner should never equate itself with demeaning an opponent, placing one's individual athletic goals above those of the team, or blaming an official.

While winning is a laudable goal, it should never be attained at the expense of student-athlete safety. The safety and well-being of each student-athlete will be the top priority for the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, including coaches, at all times. We expect each coach will look out for the safety of their student-athletes and we expect each student-athlete to look out for each other and themselves. Student-athletes should feel comfortable advocating for their safety and well-being.

Lastly, athletics should be fun. Enjoy this time with your teammates. We encourage student-athletes to challenge themselves and participate in a variety of sports across different seasons. Athletics is a wonderful way to create lifelong friendships and memories.

MIAA Handbook

All student-athletes are subject to the rules included in the MIAA handbook in addition to the provisions of this Student-Athlete Handbook. A copy of the complete MIAA handbook can be found online at <https://www.miaa.net/>. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to read the MIAA handbook and familiarize themselves with the rules and regulations.

Gender and Participation

ARHS follows the guidelines on gender and participation set forward by the MIAA, summarized below. The full policy can be found in the [2023-2025 MIAA Handbook](#) Section 43.

- No student shall be denied in any implied or explicit manner the opportunity to participate in any interscholastic activity because of gender.
- Separate teams may be established by gender provided the teams receive equal instruction, training, coaching, access to available facilities, equipment, and opportunities to practice and compete. If a school offers a single team in a particular sport, it may not restrict eligibility based on gender unless such a restriction is necessary to comply with Title IX.
- No student shall be excluded from participation on a gender-specific team that is consistent with the student’s bona fide gender identity.
- The school is responsible for verifying that students on gender specific teams are eligible to participate based on the gender listed on their official birth certificate or based on their bona fide gender identity.
- No student is entitled to selection of any particular team or permitted to transfer from one gender-specific team to another team of a different gender during a single sports season.
- The school will make a good faith effort to communicate with opponents as necessary about the gender-specific needs of their team to promote inclusion, for example to ensure that appropriate locker room facilities are available and that announcers use athlete’s correct pronouns.

Sports Program

Sports are an integral part of co-curricular activities in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District. Student involvement in athletics is a privilege, which can be a valuable and rewarding experience. Students have the opportunity to participate in the following sports during the fall, winter, and spring seasons.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cross Country	Basketball	Baseball
Field Hockey	Hockey	Softball
Football	Wrestling	Tennis
Soccer	Alpine	Track & Field

Golf	Indoor Track	Lacrosse
Volleyball	Nordic	Ultimate

Supervision: Safety and Security

Responsibilities of Student Athletes

- Respect the authority of each coach. Coaches are responsible for the well-being of all student-athletes on their team and within their program during the season, and can best achieve this with student-athletes who are considerate and well-behaved.
- Never be in a locker room, weight room, or other school/athletic facility without a coach present. The coach is responsible for ensuring appropriate supervision during team activities.
- Know that coaches are expected to be in the locker room when student-athletes are using the locker room.
- Understand that all coaches and staff will consider student-athlete privacy. Student-athletes seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach or building principal.
- Hazing and bullying will not be tolerated. Any and all instances of bullying will be reported to the Principal or his/her/their designee. Any and all instances of hazing will be reported to the Principal, DCF, and local law enforcement as appropriate. Consequences (ranging from playing time, suspension, termination, criminal complaint) will be determined by the nature and severity of the behavior. The Principal or his/her/their designee may also suspend or terminate a player from a team as a disciplinary consequence whether or not the infraction was related to the team.
- Know that all coaches are mandated reporters and must immediately notify DCF if they suspect that a child is being abused and/or neglected.
- All student-athletes, including team captains, are responsible for reporting any bullying, hazing, and/or any other safety or well-being concern to the coach or Principal or his/her/their designee.
- The physical and emotional well-being of student-athletes is a priority and teammates are expected to look out for each other.
- A strong athletic culture is the best and most preventive antidote against hazing, bullying, and other abusive behaviors. Culture is best communicated by the behavior

and modeling of the coaches. All players, especially team captains, are expected to model decency and to take responsibility for the team's culture and reputation.

Locker Room

The goal of the Athletic Department is to provide a safe environment for all of our student-athletes both in the facilities at each school within the District as well as at any/all off-site venues. The coaching staff shares responsibility for their team's activities and behaviors in the locker room and will discuss proper locker room behavior and protocol at the beginning of each season.

Only student-athletes whose teams are currently playing or are in season shall be permitted access and use of the locker rooms after school hours. Students may not access the locker room during the School Day unless as part of their regularly scheduled physical education courses. Locker room doors should never be propped open for any reason and will be supervised by a supervising staff member whenever the locker room is in use. Student sports lockers are subject to the [Student Locker](#) policy. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in discipline.

Team Rules

Team rules should be developed to ensure a common experience for each team member within the parameters and scope of the rules of the MIAA, the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, and the Amherst-Pelham Athletic Department. Team members, with the guidance and monitoring of the coaching staff, may construct a social contract to be followed for the sports season. This contract allows each team to define how they wish to act and be evaluated. All team rules will be clearly communicated to student-athletes.

Amherst-Pelham coaches will work to support team rules that emphasize student-athletes to be both competitors and upstanding members of the community off the field. Matters that affect only the team and its day-to-day operation are generally handled within the team structure under the guidance of the coach. Severe disciplinary actions, such as dismissal from the team or prolonged suspension, must be reported to the Athletic Director for the purposes of record keeping, consistency, and appropriateness. Please keep in mind, irrespective of team rules and team decisions, the Principal or his/her/their designee may also suspend or terminate a player from a team as a disciplinary consequence.

Transportation To and From Contests

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most “away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to and from these contests using the school provided transportation for student-athletes. Exceptions to this policy will be made in extenuating circumstances (i.e., family emergency). A student may travel home with a parent/guardian if the coach and Athletic Department are notified in writing. A coach should always accompany student-athletes on the bus to and from contests.

Attendance in School

To be considered in attendance for the day (and be eligible for co-curricular activities, including practices and games) a student must be present in school before 9:25 a.m. (high school) and remain for the rest of the day. Exceptions may be made, such as college visits, family emergencies, or medical appointments. These all require a note and must be cleared by the Director of Athletics in advance, whenever possible. If a student athlete is dismissed by the school nurse due to illness, they are ineligible to participate in athletics that day. If a contest is scheduled on a weekend day or over a school vacation, the student must be in attendance the preceding Friday in order to participate.

A student who is suspended out-of-school may not participate in a game, practice, event, or meeting held on that day.

Any exception to this rule can be made only by the administration or based on an individualized determination by the student’s special education team or 504 team.

Concussion Policy

Head injuries will be assessed in accordance with the [Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Concussion Policy](#) and the protocol detailed within.

Levels of Competition

Sub-Varsity Teams

The purpose of the athletic program is to develop athletes to their greatest potential and ensure ample participation. Not only is the goal to grow their athletic ability, but to develop good citizens of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District and the community at-large. The number of program participants must allow the coach to ensure reasonable participation.

Sub-varsity (junior varsity and freshmen) are geared towards growth of the fundamental skills needed to succeed at a more competitive level. In order to help all athletes develop in our programs, the following guidance will be followed:

- Coaches will attempt to give all student-athletes adequate playing time, but they also consider commitment, attitude, effort, and game situations.
- At the Junior Varsity level, playing time may not be equal.
- At the Freshmen level, every effort will be made to provide equitable playing time.
- The success of our sub-varsity programs is based on the growth of the student-athletes, not on the wins and losses record.
- Student attendance and effort at practices may affect playing time.
- Student-athlete timeliness is imperative to the success of the team, and it is expected that athletes make a commitment to arrive at all practices and games on time.

Varsity Teams

Varsity athletes are competing at the highest level possible in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District. Highest level is defined not only by athletic ability but also attitude and commitment to the program. Players, coaches, parents, and staff members are committed to the success of our varsity programs on and off the field, on the court, on the track, at the pool, or rink. To reach that goal, teams must compete to win as many contests as possible. In order to do this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive, and most skilled team members; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These student-athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward when needed. They have to practice as hard as they can to help make the teams as competitive as they can be. They also have to constantly strive to move up to a “starting” role. Our varsity athletes are chosen to represent Amherst-Pelham, both as athletes, and as high-standing members of the community.

Varsity athletes are expected to:

- Make a full and sincere commitment to the team experience and be in attendance and on time daily.
- Be committed to the team regardless of their playing time and/or assigned position.
- Work towards the common goal of achieving the highest level of competitiveness.
- Support the success and development of all teammates, both on and off the field.

- Set a good example for other student-athletes and exhibit the highest moral conduct on and off the field.

Tryouts

Participation in athletics is a privilege; students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her/their expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that they can meet them. Students cut from one team may find opportunity with a non-cut sport providing there is space on that team. Students cut from a team may request an explanation from the coach as to the reasons for the cut. To the degree practicable coaches will maintain evaluative data from the tryouts that supports their tryout decisions

All students, including those with disabilities, must be given an equal opportunity to participate in athletics. This includes tryouts. Students must be provided with reasonable modifications and necessary aids and services to ensure their equal opportunity, unless it can be shown that doing so would be a fundamental alteration to the program.

Not all students are guaranteed a spot on the team. ARHS is generally permitted to establish and utilize skill-based eligibility criteria for participation in extracurricular programs and activities (e.g., school-sponsored athletics) so long as the criteria are rationally related to the purposes and goals of the specific program or activity.

Playing Time

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emphasis is put on "playing time" during contests. If a student has questions as to their "playing time" they are encouraged to discuss it with the coach at an appropriate time. See Communication with Parents/Guardians. In the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, being a member of a team does not guarantee an equitable amount of "playing time."

Attendance at Practices and Games

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or game if the student is not absent from school. The coaches in our program expect

their athletes to be present at all team-related activities and may suspend a team member from contests for absences or tardies. Students are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic, family or religious reasons but prior notification and approval whenever possible is strongly recommended.

Team Captains

It is a coaching decision as to how many team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program. Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, athletic department, or school rules.

Expectations of Team Captains

Captains, due to their position as role models for their teammates and visible representatives of our school in the community, are expected to demonstrate behavior, both in school and in the community, which is beyond reproach. If captains receive an out of school suspension or if their behavior in the community is brought to the attention of school authorities and determined to be detrimental to the standard of their position of leadership, the Athletic Director, in conjunction with the appropriate coach, may render a decision to remove the captain from that position for the remainder of the year.

A team captain must be academically eligible during all semesters in his/her/their Junior and Senior year. Failure to be academically eligible at any time within their Junior or Senior year will result in loss of their captain status and/or prohibit them from being a candidate for a team captain during the next season.

Captains must also not have any MIAA violations for Chemical Health or Bona fide Team Rules anytime within their Junior or Senior Year.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

It is the expectation of the coach to meet with the parents/guardians of student-athletes at the start of the season. These meetings can be organized at the discretion of the coach and can be

held, but not limited to, after practice, after a game or in the evening. Coaches should work to create opportunities for all parents/guardians to have access to these meetings and may decide to run these more than once to meet the needs of scheduling constraints on families.

It is expected that all varsity coaches will meet before the season with the parents of the team captains of their respective teams. The parent group and coach will work together to support the goals of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District athletics and the MIAA for each student athlete. The coach and the parent group will work with the administration to publicly communicate and build recognition for each student athlete.

Our goal is to establish a chain of communication where the student-athletes are empowered to advocate for themselves, and take ownership of their experiences. For that reason, in the case of a conflict, the following protocol should be followed for student-athletes and parents/guardians:

- Step 1: Student communicates with their coach.
- Step 2: Student and their parent/guardian communicate with their coach.
- Step 3: Student and their parent/guardian communicate with the Athletic Director.
- Step 4: Student and their parent/guardian communicate with the Principal or his/her/their designee.

The athletic arena is highly emotional and often stressful. Because of this, conflicts and issues between a student-athlete and his/her/their coach may arise. It is imperative that any conflict and/or issue be addressed immediately and as directly as possible with the coach so that it can be addressed and hopefully resolved. If a concern should arise, the student-athlete should make every effort to resolve their concern by meeting with the coach. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student-athlete and parent may approach the coach to discuss the issue. The coach should be contacted to set up an appointment at an appropriate time. The coach should not be contacted at the conclusion of a game or practice. If after this meeting the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student-athlete and/or parent, the student-athlete and their parent may approach the Athletic Director to mediate the situation. In rare cases, the principal or his/her/their designee may become involved if the issue has larger implications. All complaints or grievances that may fall under another specific grievance procedure (i.e. Civil Rights or Title IX) will be addressed following that procedure.

Communication Regarding Significant Behaviors

In the event that an athlete is seeking to report any significant behavior, conflict or concerning matter to any school employee, the following communication chain should be followed immediately upon receipt of student-athlete complaint: Assistant Coach reports to the Head Coach and the Head Coach communicates in writing to the Athletic Director and Principal. It is important to note that a student may report any significant behavior, conflict, or concerning matter to any of the personnel named above at any time. Any school personnel outside of the athletic department who receives a complaint should immediately report it to the building principal and the Athletic Director. Training will be provided to coaches regarding the handling of significant behaviors.

Irrespective of the communication procedures above, all school staff, including coaches, must fulfill their responsibilities as a mandated reporter when required to do so under Massachusetts law.

Electronic Communication with Students

A coach should not be electronically communicating (text, email, social media) with any student-athlete one-on-one. Sending out a text or email blitz to everyone on the team can be an effective way to instantly communicate with the team, however, coaches should not, except in emergency situations, engage in a one-on-one discussion via text, email, social media, or other electronic means. All contact and messages by coaches with team members should be sent to all team members or to team captains, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the athletic director, school principal or appropriate administrator. Contact should never be to an individual student only.

Coaches are required to allow the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District access to any and all electronic communications with students and should expect such sharing of communications to be routine. The use of Team apps is permissible only with the approval of the Athletic Director. Coaches must allow the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District to have access to the content of the app, including all communications with students.

Media

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District uses images and/or videos (“media”) of students and student work to showcase educational activities and programs (including athletics), as well

as to inform the community of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District experience. Photographs, videos, and/or the name of student-athletes may be included in publications (print or digital), news releases, and/or on District websites and/or social media accounts.

The District may also publish the image, weight, and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

Parents are permitted to opt their child out of the District using this information or media in any public display or presentation. If a coach is planning on using media to showcase their athletic program, they are required to consult with the Principal or his/her/their designee prior to any publication to ensure that opted-out student-athletes are not included.

However, such opt-out does not include the ability to opt-out of photographs or video of team events that are open to the public (e.g., a baseball or softball game). Moreover, the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not control the disclosure or use of photographs or videos taken by participants at events that are open to parents, community members, and/or the news media. Student photos and names from athletic events may be published by news media, regardless of whether a parent has opted the student out.

Out-of-Season Sports Participation

Participation in out-of-season clinics, leagues, or other related sport activities is strictly up to the discretion of the student-athlete and their parents. While such participation may improve a student's knowledge and skill, it is the student's decision to become involved in such activities. Participation in such activities will have no bearing on a student-athlete's participation on an Amherst-Pelham Regional School District athletic team. The Athletic Department encourages all students to take full advantage of the activities offered and become involved in more than one sport.

According to MIAA rules, "Neither a coach nor any other representative of the school may require an athlete to participate in a sport or training program outside of the MIAA defined sport season." School-sponsored voluntary conditioning sessions supervised by coaches, which are open equally to all students in the school, and are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity, may be conducted, provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so. A "candidate" is defined as a varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in the high school program at some interscholastic level the previous year and has eligibility remaining, a

middle school student “selected” to play in an out-of-season program, or an eighth-grade student in a 9-12 high school or a sixth-grade student in a 7-12 high school.

Coaches are prohibited from communicating with their student-athletes about their attendance or participation in a specific out-of-season activity. Coaches may attend out-of-season sport competitions involving student-athletes on their team. Coaches may also be involved in the out-of-season activity of another sport during the summer. Coaches may offer private lessons, or may coach for another organization, provided candidates are not required to participate, the lessons/organization are available to all candidates, no candidate is given special consideration, school funds are not used, and candidates make up less than 50% of participants (e.g. no more than two basketball candidates can be on the court at once). Coaches should avoid any out-of-season sport camp that offers enticements. Coaches are prohibited from subsidizing out-of-season activities, this includes providing transportation.

Please see MIAA Rule 40 and Rule 41 for a more comprehensive overview of out-of-season participation.

Non-Discrimination

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or parenting status, homelessness, immigration status, or age. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District believes that interscholastic athletic and co-curricular participation are valuable to student’s physical, intellectual, social, and/or character development and accordingly, we value inclusion. The District is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or parenting status, homelessness, immigration status, or age.

Additionally, [Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 5](#), which also protects students from discrimination based on sex, was expanded to protect students based on gender identification. As a result of this law, and consistent with the interpretive guidance offered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, students are entitled to be accepted by their schools as the gender with which they identify across all school programs. This means that athletic opportunities must be afforded to students in accordance with their identified gender, not necessarily their birth-assigned gender.

Participation of Students with Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Accordingly, “[n]o otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” 29 U.S.C. § 794(a). Title II of the American with Disabilities Act provides similar protections.

As they pertain to extracurricular activities, including athletics (interscholastic, club, and/or intramural), both laws provide that qualified students with disabilities must be afforded an equal opportunity to participate with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate, given their needs. This does not mean that everyone is guaranteed a spot on the team. Schools are permitted to require a level of skill to participate in a competitive program. Even if the school offers separate and different athletic opportunities for students with disabilities (e.g., allied or unified sports), students with disabilities still must be allowed the opportunity to compete for teams that are not separate and different. Schools are required to make reasonable modifications to ensure the opportunity to participate, unless the school can show that it would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, or the modification would create an undue financial or administrative burden. Even if a specific modification would constitute a fundamental alteration, the school district would still be required to determine if other modifications might be available that would permit the student’s participation.

Academic Eligibility

Amherst-Pelham Regional School District

Participating in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District athletic program is a privilege. A student may not participate in the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District athletic program if the student has failed any course as of the date of their report card. The Fall Season will be based on the spring semester report cards. The Winter Season will be based on the fall progress reports. The Spring Season will be based on the fall semester report card. Note that dismissal from winter sports may occur in the middle of the season.

The MIAA sets a minimum academic eligibility standard which can be exceeded by the District. For the complete MIAA Rule 58 – Academic Eligibility, please see below.

Academic Eligibility

- Student must be enrolled at ARHS
- Must be Academically eligible to participate in a school sport
- For additional details about eligibility, please reference the [MIAA Handbook](#) Section 58.

Chemical Health Policy (MIAA Rules for Alcohol, Tobacco Products, Smoking and Illegal Drugs)

All ARHS athletes are required to follow the MIAA Chemical Health Policy. From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, vape pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; drug paraphernalia; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer,” inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by their doctor.

For additional details about this policy and the penalties for violating this policy, please reference the [MIAA Handbook](#) Section 62.

Bullying & Hazing Policy

Hazing

The Amherst-Pelham Regional Public District will not tolerate any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Section 17-19 sets the minimum requirements for addressing hazing, as set forth below:

Defining the Crime of Hazing (M.G.L., c. 269 § 17)

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Failure to Report Hazing (M.G.L., c. 269 § 18)

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall to the extent that they can do so without danger or peril to themselves or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Duty to Issue a Copy of the Hazing Law to Teams (MGL, c. 269, § 19)

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such

group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such reports of Bullying and Cyberbullying.

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan may be found online here and relevant portions may be found in Section II of this handbook (Code of Conduct). The plan covers all school-sponsored activities including athletics. It is the policy of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District to provide a learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying (similar policies exist and define discriminatory harassment and hazing). Coaches are explicitly prohibited from bullying any student and should take caution to guard against any bullying amongst their student-athletes. Coaches must also immediately report any suspected instance of bullying to the Principal or his/her/their designee.

Bullying is defined as 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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage

to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

Retaliation

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District will not tolerate retaliation against a person who reports hazing, bullying or cyber-bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or cyberbullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or cyber-bullying. This includes any retaliation meted out within the context of athletics.

“Retaliation” is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student or member of school staff who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. If harassment (unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or religion) is alleged, the school will utilize the district’s applicable harassment procedures to investigate.

Clubs and Activities

National Honor Society

National Honor Society (NHS) is a national organization that emphasizes scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Juniors and Seniors with a cumulative average in all subjects of B+ (or a GPA of 3.3) are eligible to apply for membership in the NHS.

Eligible students receive the following information from their school counselor or the NHS advisor.

- Letter of introduction
- Eligibility Questionnaire
- Performance Criteria Standards for scholarship, leadership, service, and character as written in the [National Honor Society Handbook](#)
- Notification of information session regarding completion of eligibility questionnaire and deadline dates
- The Academic Honesty policy

Information about NHS eligibility will also be sent to parents/guardians of eligible students.

Application

Students complete the eligibility questionnaire indicating their interest in membership in the National Honor Society. Parents and faculty members also have an opportunity to provide written statements of support. An appointed Faculty Council reviews all the pertinent information to determine whether each eligible student meets the criteria for membership.

Clubs

One of the school goals is to provide opportunities for all students that nurture their intellectual, social, and physical development. To this end, the school offers a range of student-and staff-led after school clubs.

All students are welcome and encouraged to participate in any club. Class Councils are made up of students who have volunteered to run and have been elected by their peers to represent their class. While all students are encouraged to run for Class Council leadership positions, only those elected may participate in Council meetings and activities.

An updated list of clubs and activities will be available on the ARHS website www.arps.org/ARHS/ once school begins.

SECTION IV: HEALTH

Nurse's Office Services and Staff

The Nurse's Office is staffed by a certified school nurse and a registered nurse, or licensed practical nurse. A school physician is available for consultation by telephone. Services include:

- First aid response and care
- Sick child assistance
- Nursing care for students with medical needs
- Medication administration
- Individual and class health education
- Short-term illness/health-related Counseling
- Linkage to and coordination of care with community services, health insurance, and health care providers
- Communicable disease control
- Compliance with immunization requirements
- [Health screenings](#) as required
- Environmental health and safety

Health Screenings: Vision, Hearing, BMI, and Postural

Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires periodic screenings for vision, hearing, postural, and height and weight (BMI - body mass index). Any student or parent/guardian may request a screening if there are concerns. Parents/guardians will be notified if further evaluation is recommended. Ninth grade students are screened for scoliosis and other postural abnormalities. Tenth grade students receive vision, hearing, and BMI screenings. Parents/guardians may choose to opt-out of their student from any screening by providing a written note to the School Nurse.

Additional Screening Information

Ninth grade students will also participate in the drug and alcohol-related SBIRT [Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment] screening in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 § 97. SBIRT focuses on prevention, early detection, risk assessment, brief counseling, and referral intervention that can be utilized in the school setting. This validated verbal screening tool will enable school nurses and counselors to detect risk for substance use-related problems and to address them at an early stage in adolescents. Any statement, response or disclosure made by a

pupil during a verbal substance use disorder screening shall be considered confidential information and shall not be disclosed by a person receiving the statement, response or disclosure to any other person without the prior written consent of the pupil, parent or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or a disclosure is otherwise required by state law; provided, however, that the screening shall be implemented in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to student confidentiality.

A student or the student's parent or guardian may opt out of the screening by written notification at any time prior to or during the screening.

Visiting the Nurse's Office During the School Day

Students must obtain a pass from a teacher to go to the Nurse's Office. Once there, the Nurse will perform an assessment and provide care as needed to determine when a student may return to class or if the student needs to be dismissed. If students need to be dismissed due to illness or injury, parent/guardian permission is required. Students who do not present to the Nurse's Office or leave without obtaining parent/guardian permission will be marked as unexcused for all classes missed.

It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up their student and transport them to an appropriate facility if further medical attention is required. If emergency medical service is summoned, every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians using the emergency contact numbers they provide.

Emergency Contact Information

At the beginning of the year, emergency contact information cards are distributed to each student. It is essential that the information requested on this card be completed accurately and kept up to date. There must be a way of reaching parents, guardians, or local alternates promptly should illness or accident occur at school. Please be sure that the local alternate that you list is willing and able to serve in this capacity. If the local alternates are students, please attach their class schedule to the emergency card with all appropriate telephone numbers.

Health Policies and Requirements

Physical Examination

To comply with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts laws and the Regional School District policies, students are required to receive physical examinations prior to entry into the tenth grade or prior to transferring from another school district at any grade. The physical examination must be conducted by a licensed medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Documentation of the examination should be submitted to the health room prior to coming to school. It should include the date the exam was done, a statement regarding the general assessment of health, unusual finding or chronic health problems, treatments or medication administrations to be carried out in school, and any limitations to usual school activities.

Sports Examinations

A physical examination form with sport participation clearance must be submitted to the nurse's office in order to participate in any extracurricular physical activity (including try-outs for a team). A sports physical terminates 13 months subsequent to administering and must be renewed immediately to maintain eligibility. Physical examinations must be performed by a registered physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner.

Immunization Requirements

Massachusetts State Law requires that all students provide documentation indicating that they are properly immunized before entering school. Students who have a medical or religious exemption to any or all immunizations must submit written documentation on an annual basis. Medical exemptions must be written by the health care provider. Any student with medical or religious exemptions may be subject to exclusion from school if there is an outbreak of the specific disease. All immunization requirements for school attendance are set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Medication Policy

ARHS follows all requirements of Massachusetts regulations on the [Administration of Medication in Schools](#), 105 C.M.R. 210.00 *et. seq.* Students using medications during the school day (prescription and over-the-counter) are required to bring them to the health room. They should be in their original containers, accompanied by parent/guardian consent for the school

nurse to administer the medication, and a medication order written by a licensed healthcare provider.

Under limited circumstances, students may carry medications with them. These medications include “epinephrine auto-injectors,” (i.e. EpiPen or Auvi-Q), inhalers, and diabetes care supplies. This also requires written permission from the parent/guardian, health care provider, and nurse at school.

The nurse at school cannot dispense medications unless the student’s family provides them. We do not keep stock supplies of medication, except for emergency medications. Please see the nurse at school for consent and order forms and for clarification of these policies.

Other Health Policies

Condom Availability

In 1993, the Regional School Committee voted to make condoms available to students in the health office. Educational material on the use of condoms is available. Counseling and health education is available by school health personnel as needed or requested by the student. These services are provided confidentially.

Elevator Pass

Students that request permission to use the elevator must submit a written request from their parent/guardian or health care provider. This request must contain the reason for elevator use and the length of time the pass is needed. Elevator passes are issued by the nurse.

Physical Education Excuses

Written medical excuses are required for those students who cannot participate in physical education classes. A parental/guardian note will suffice for a one-week absence. If the student is to be excused for more than one week, a note from a licensed healthcare provider (MD, NP, PA) is required. This note must include diagnosis and length of expected absence.

SECTION V: USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES and SAFETY

Emergency Procedures

Fire Drill Procedures

At the sound of a fire drill bell or horn, students will stand at once, by their seats and wait for the teacher's instructions to file out. Courtyard exits should not be used unless other exits are blocked. Teachers will leave the room last. All windows and doors should be checked.

Students should walk quickly but not run and maintain single file lines. The first students through each exit should hold the doors until everyone has passed. Custodians will check rooms for stragglers.

In the event of a fire drill during the passing period, students should proceed without pushing to the nearest exit. Teachers are authorized to reroute students to the nearest safe exit and to break windows in an emergency situation to facilitate an exit from the building.

Shelter in Place

Shelter in Place procedures are used when there is a potential threat – either internal or external - to the safety of the students and staff. Shelter In Place requires that everyone – students and adults, alike – are behind a locked door. During a shelter in place, school business should go forward. The only stipulation is that no one is allowed out from behind their locked door.

Lockdown

Lockdowns are procedures that are used when there is an immediate threat, either internal or external, to the safety of students and staff. Everyone must be behind a locked door and seated on the floor opposite the windows during a lockdown. In the event that a lockdown is called during a passing period, students should proceed to the closest classroom and not to their next scheduled class.

Parents/Guardians should NOT come to the school building during any emergency procedures. In case of an early dismissal due to one of these events, families will receive notification from the school, not individual students.

Closed Campus

Amherst Regional High School is a closed campus. All students are expected to remain inside of the school building for the duration of the school day. Students may not have food delivered from off-campus or leave campus to pick up food, however parents/guardians may drop off food in the Main Office, which students may pick up during their lunch period. For the sake of clarity the following are also considered out of bounds:

- War Memorial Pool and playground area
- All parking lots and cars
- Summit Academy
- Amherst Regional Middle School, including the road leading to it from the high school

Cafeteria and Lunch

Students are expected to remain in the Cafeteria or the outdoor seating area just outside the Cafeteria for the entirety of their lunch period. Other expectations for the lunch block and cafeteria are as follows:

- Students may only eat in the cafeteria or the area outside immediately to the left of the Cafeteria exit. Keep all food, trays, and utensils within these designated areas.
- Students may not eat in the library, classrooms, bathrooms, or other hallways.
- Students are expected to clean up after they eat
- Students are expected to be respectful of others eating with their actions and their words.
- Students must remain in the cafeteria, rotunda, or designated outdoor eating area until the end of the lunch period. Students found in other hallways during their lunch period without a pass from a teacher will be written up for being out of bounds.

Student Lockers

Students are provided with lockers to store books, clothing, and personal belongings during the school day and while participating in extracurricular activities after school. Lockers should be kept locked. Articles that have been found in the building or on school grounds will be taken to the Lost and Found.

Lockers are the property of the Amherst Regional High School. Students are hereby given notice that they have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers; student lockers are accessible to school officials and may be subject to search at the discretion of school officials. When

searching a locker, the student who has been assigned the locker may be given the opportunity to be present. Contraband found in the course of a search of a student's locker will be confiscated and turned over to the Amherst Police Department. Disposition of contraband is the responsibility of the police.

These policies apply to both hallway and sports lockers equally.

Search and Seizure

Searches may be conducted by authorized school personnel when, under ordinary circumstances, there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search will turn up evidence that a student has violated either the rules of the school or the law. All measures adopted in conducting searches of students, their possessions, their vehicles on school property, while under school supervision or in attendance at a school function will be limited in scope by the objectives of the search in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction being investigated. As required by law, authorized personnel will adhere to the protection of the 4th Amendment of the United States Constitution.

The Principal, Assistant Principals, and faculty chaperones are the only persons authorized to conduct searches of students, their possessions (including backpacks, gym bags, handbags, etc.), school lockers, or their vehicles parked on school property or at school functions. In the case of physical search of students, a teacher, administrator or the school nurse of the same gender will conduct the search when possible.

"Reasonable grounds" for search is defined as inferences drawn from circumstances, patterns of behavior, suspicious acts, moving around and about the school without proper authority, unauthorized absence from class or school, being present where unauthorized or illegal activities are known to occur with some regularity, any number of events which suggest violations of school rules or illegal activities; third party information which identifies a student(s) as participant(s) in rule violations or illegal activity; and violation of rules listed in the student handbook.

As stated above, students are hereby given notice that they have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers; student lockers are accessible to school officials and may be subject to search at the discretion of school officials.

Contraband is defined as any material of an unauthorized or illegal nature (such as tobacco products, vaping products and paraphernalia; drug paraphernalia; drugs, illicit and prescribed;

alcohol; weapons; explosives and such similar items) not authorized to be brought to or kept in school on a person, in a locker, or vehicle or any other place on school grounds.

Personal possessions such as fireworks, stink bombs, disguises, water pistols, or dangerous items of attire, which could cause potential disruption or injury to students, faculty or school staff, their possessions, or the school facility or grounds, are contraband. As a condition of entry into any school event, for student safety, all belongings and vehicles are subject to search for contraband.

Contraband seized as a result of routine locker or backpack/bag inspection will be turned over to the police if the material seized is of an illegal or dangerous nature. Parents will be notified of the seizure as soon as possible after the seizure. **VEHICLES PARKED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO SEARCH.**

Student Parking

Use of student parking at ARHS is a privilege, not a right. Parking for students is limited to the number of spaces available. Seniors will be given priority status, followed by juniors whose academic programs include courses taken at area colleges and internships that occur during the school day. Consideration will be given to students who are directly involved in after-school home care, responsible for supporting their family through a job, living independently and self-supportive, and students participating in the school choice program.

The following are the rules and policies regarding student parking. Students must abide by all school rules regarding parking and driving on school grounds. Violations will result in disciplinary action.

Parking Permits

- All vehicles parked on school grounds must have a parking permit clearly displayed. Permits must be displayed on the rear-view mirror with the permit number facing the windshield. Cars without permits may be towed without warning.
- Parking permits are \$75 per year and are not transferable.
- Students should immediately report lost or stolen parking permits to the Dean's Office.

Authorized and Unauthorized Parking Areas

- The parking lot is off-limits during the school day. Students may not go out to their cars during the school day.
- Students may park in the student parking section of the main parking lot or in the allocated spaces along the road next to the track. Student parking spaces are marked with white lines. Additionally, when there are no snow banks, students may park along the path facing the football field so long as they do not park on or block the sidewalk.
- Students may NOT park in the following areas:
 - Visitor parking (first row of the parking lot facing the building)
 - Faculty parking spaces marked with yellow lines
 - Along the back of the main parking lot
 - Either of the side lots
 - Bus drop off/pick up zone
 - Fire lanes
- Vehicles parked in unauthorized areas, regardless of permit, are subject to towing without notice.

Driving on Campus

- Reckless driving will result in loss of parking privileges and may be reported to the Amherst Police Department.
- Students driving off school grounds without proper dismissal and/or transporting other students without proper dismissals will lose parking privileges for 10 or more days. The parking permit fee will not be refunded.

Lost, Damaged, or Towed Cars

- The school is not responsible for loss or damage to cars. Please report loss/damage directly to the Police Department. Students with six or more tardies will lose parking privileges for 30 days.
- Cars towed are taken to North Amherst Motors, 78 Sunderland Road, Amherst, MA 01002. Call 413-549-7368 for retrieval and storage fees.

Motor Vehicle Idling

Prolonged idling of motor vehicles is prohibited by Massachusetts law on school grounds or within 100 feet of school property. M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B.

Library

The library and its resources are open to all ARHS students from Monday-Friday 8:45 am-4:00 pm. For a comprehensive list of library services, resources, and policies please visit the [ARHS Library website](#).

Visiting the Library During the School Day

During the school day, students must have a pass from their current academic teacher to visit the library. No passes are required before or after school or during lunch, however, the library reserves the right to close to individual students, student groups, or classes at any time due to availability.

All students visiting the library on a pass or during lunch must sign in at the front desk with their name and reason for visiting the library. No exceptions will be made.

Behavioral Policy

Students are expected to follow all school rules while in the library, whether they are with a class or on their own. They are expected to treat the library, its materials and resources, and all students and staff with respect. Students who are not able to meet these expectations will be asked to leave and may face more serious disciplinary consequences if warranted.

Food and Drink

No food or drink except bottled water are permitted in the library at any time unless in the designated circle couch area. Students are expected to pick up after themselves and to leave the library cleaner than they found it.

Use of Computers

Computers may be used to complete academic work. Students are expected to adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy while on school devices or wifi. Any other use of computers, either library desktops or personal devices, may result in being asked to leave the library.

Circulation

Checking Out Library Materials

- Students may check out up to five (5) books at a time.
- Books circulate for three (3) weeks unless on reserve for a class project.
- All library materials except those marked as reference or special collections may be checked out.
- All library materials must be returned or renewed by the end of the school year or the student and their family will be issued a “lost items” bill.

Overdue Library Materials

- Library materials belong to our entire community. Students are expected to make every effort to return or renew loaned items to the library in a timely manner.
- Students who fail to return their library materials will be issued a succession of library overdue notices in school. After three (3) in school notices, parents or guardians will be notified.
- Students who believe they have received a library overdue notice in error are responsible for informing the library staff as soon as possible.
- The ARHS library does not charge fines for overdue library materials.

Lost or Damaged Library Materials

- If a library loan fails to be returned or renewed after twelve months or the end of the student’s senior year, whichever occurs first, the material will be declared lost and the student billed for its replacement cost.
- Students and their parents/guardians may replace the item directly or pay the replacement fee.
- In the event that replacing the item creates an undue financial hardship for the student and their parents/guardians, special consideration will be given.

The same shall apply to damaged library materials.

School Murals

Murals on the walls of the school should represent general standards of decency, positive attitudes toward diversity, and the general will of the school community. Murals should at all times and in all ways reflect the interest of the community in a positive way. Murals that

advocate intolerance, and gratuitous violence or that violate state laws on harassment or hazing will not be considered as falling within these guidelines. The size, location, and nature of new murals will be determined by a mural committee appointed by the principal.

SECTION VI: STUDENT SERVICES & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Student Records

Student records and other personally identifiable information pertaining to students are protected from improper disclosure under state and federal laws and regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), M.G.L. c. 71, and 603 CMR 23.00. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to Student Records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the School receives a request for access.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The contact information for the Office that administers FERPA is:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

Massachusetts Student Record Regulations

The Massachusetts Student Record regulations (and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)) apply to educational records maintained by a school on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty (60) years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of major parent and student rights regarding their student records:

Inspection of Record - A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student within ten (10) days of the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/student requests copies of a student record, the District may charge the parents/student for said copies at the District rate. The eligible student or parent shall have the right upon request to meet with professional qualified school personnel to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.

Confidentiality of Record - With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

Amendment of Record - The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, with limited exceptions under state and federal law, the parent and student have the right to request that information of the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

Directory Information - Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying their school building office in writing by the end of September of each school year.

Destruction of Records - The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

Transfer of Records – In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g), it is the practice of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to enroll, or already has enrolled in another public-school district, if the

disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of the school record that is forwarded to the new school.

Non-Custodial Parents - Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public-school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first-class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c.71, §34H, 603 CMR 23.07.

Third Party Access - Authorized school personnel to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Complaints - A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Problem Resolution System, 135 Santilli Highway, MA 02149, (781) 338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice or would

like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Student Records Regulations, please contact the building principal.

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE): political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following: any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use: protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents/guardian to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. Specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement include: the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE; and any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

The District will provide parents/guardians, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, a notification of the surveys and activities and provide an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Student Privacy Policy Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Residency and School Choice

The ARHS is open to those students who qualify as residents under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in accordance with the prevailing common rule. A pupil who lives within the system permanently, or with no present intention of removal, whether with a guardian, one who stands in loco parentis, or an emancipated minor is entitled to all school privileges as a resident of the system. ARHS also participates in the School Choice program, authorized by the School Committee annually. The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Brief summaries of the laws designed to provide equal educational opportunities to students with disabilities and to inform parents and students of their rights are included in this Handbook. Anyone wishing additional information may contact the Student Services Office.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public

education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and M.G.L. c. 71B, some students with disabilities may be eligible for services if they require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to: speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Students may be referred to the Special Education Department for an evaluation of eligibility for special education services. Within five (5) school days of such a referral, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the student will be forwarded to the parent(s). Within forty-five (45) school days of receipt of the parent(s)' consent, an evaluation will be conducted, and a Team meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is found eligible for special education services, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities, please contact the school guidance counselor or the Director of Student Services.

The 504 Compliance Officer is:

Doreen Reid
Director of Student Services
Amherst, Pelham and Amherst Regional Public Schools
170 Chestnut Street
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002
413-362-1834
Reidd@arps.org

Observations of Education Programs

Observations of a student's current and/or proposed special education program may be conducted by a parent/guardian or his/her/their designee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71B § 3. Parents must request an observation five (5) days in advance and can submit the request to the Director of Student Services and building Principal. Observers may be required to sign a non-disclosure form to protect student confidentiality.

Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §32A, the School Committee has adopted a policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

Each year, parents/guardians will be provided a brief written description of the curriculum covered by the policy in any of our schools. Parents/guardians may exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issued, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment. To the extent practicable, instructional materials for said curricula will be made available to the parents/guardians for their review.

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

To facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection, and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents or guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The district believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families resulting from frequent moves required by parents' or guardians' military deployment.

Services for English Learners

All students, as they enroll in Amherst Public Schools, Pelham Public Schools, and Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, are required to complete a Home Language Survey. If a language in addition to English is spoken at home, or if a student's first language is not English, the student will be assessed for English language proficiency. Students scoring below expectations on the English language proficiency testing and recommended for EL services will receive EL support services during the school day. Students receiving EL support are required to participate in state-wide assessments. If parents elect to exclude their child from EL services, they must check the box marked, "No" on the Permission for Services form or contact the principal in person, via telephone or email. Students will exit the EL Program after passing statewide testing, and based on the results of standardized testing, classroom performance and teacher recommendation.

Unhoused/Homeless Students: Rights and Services

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. A child who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for Title I services and the Free and Reduced Lunch program.

The goals of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act are:

- (1) To ensure that each child or youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths;
- (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths;
- (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment;
- (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who

lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth living in the following situations:

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human;
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Homeless Education Liaison

ARHS provides various types of support for students and their families experiencing homelessness in order to help them attend school consistently. Eligible families may be living in shelters or may not have their own lease because they are temporarily staying with family members or acquaintances due to economic hardship or similar reason. Contact the district's Homeless Education Coordinator, [Dr. Marta Guevara Director of Student and Family Engagement] at guevaram@arps.org or 413-362-1859 for more details.

Enrollment and Dispute Resolution

Students identified as experiencing homelessness have a right to remain in their school of origin or to attend the school where they are temporarily residing. Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they become permanently housed, with transportation if needed through the end of the school year (June).

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District will immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment – such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with

the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. The District's liaison for homelessness will assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

Should a parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disagree with the school placement decision of the liaison for homelessness, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth has the right to appeal. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth will be provided with written notification in the language of the home of the placement decision and the paperwork to complete the appeal process. While the placement decision is under appeal, the student will be allowed to attend the school of the parent/guardian's or unaccompanied youth's choice and receive transportation (according to the District transportation policy) while the dispute is under review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Students in Foster Care

Irrespective of the location of a foster care placement, students in foster care will continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which the student resides in foster care. Enrollment of students in the district where they reside in foster care will take place immediately upon such a determination.

The district has designated a point of contact for students in foster care. The district and the point of contact will collaborate with DCF to ensure that students can access transportation and the other services to which they may be entitled.

Best Interest Determination

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the district will ensure that a child remains in his or her school of origin while the disputes are being resolved to minimize disruptions and reduce the number of moves between schools.

Transportation

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

Immediate Enrollment

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be immediately enrolled in district in which he or she resides in foster care. During enrollment of students in foster care, DCF representatives will present the district with a form that indicating that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

Mandatory Reporting of Abuse or Neglect – M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A

Any school official or employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes the child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, will immediately report or cause a report to be made to the building principal or his/her/their designee, who will then

become responsible for making a report to the Department of Children and Families as required by law.

Physical Restraint

Pursuant to 603 CMR 46.00, Amherst-Pelham Regional School District follows the policy of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee and state regulations regarding the use of physical restraint to protect students and maintain an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning. ARSD follows procedures to carry out School Committee Policy, consistent with 603 CMR 46.00 *et.seq.*

ARSD recognizes that on occasion physical restraint is required to protect the safety of school community members from serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint may be used only as an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall not be used: (a) as a means of discipline or punishment; (b) when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting; (c) as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or (d) as a standard response for any individual student.

No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include the use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort. Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Nothing in Amherst-Pelham Regional School District policy, or the applicable regulations, prohibits: (a) the right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (b) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (c) the exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A.

Student Handbook Summary Sign-Off Sheet

You are responsible for understanding and following the rules, policies, and procedures set forth in the Student Handbook in its entirety.

*This sign off sheet summarizes some of those policies for you and your parents/guardians. You and a parent/guardian must read carefully before signing and returning the completed final signature page to your Homeroom Teacher no later than **Friday 8/30/2024**.*

Attendance Policies

Students are expected to come to class on time every day.

- A student earns an **absence** when:
 - They are not present in class
 - They miss 20+ minutes of class during the period (marked as a Q)
 - They earn three marks of tardy (e.g. 6 tardies in a class = 2 absences)
- 10+ absences in a semester class OR 5+ absences in a quarter class = **LOSS OF CREDIT**
 - **Excused** absences may count toward this limit
 - Students who have lost credit must schedule an **Attendance Meeting**. This can lead to the restoration of credit, particularly if there are extenuating circumstances.
- A student who has an **unexcused absence** from a class may earn a zero on all classwork that day, including tests

Phone Use Policy

Students are expected to be engaged in class without distractions.

- Students must put their phones in the **phone caddy** BEFORE the bell rings.
 - Once there, the phone must stay in the caddy for the entire class period
- Consequences for students **using phones during class**, or in the hallways during class:
 - First offense: family contact
 - Second offense and beyond: **PHONE WILL BE CONFISCATED**

Time Out Of Class

Students should be out of class for as little as possible.

- When students can leave class:
 - Only **one student may be out of class** at a time
 - Students may not leave class during the **first 5 minutes or the last 10 minutes**
- While in the hallway, **all students must carry a hall pass**
 - Any adult may ask to see your hall pass at any time
 - If an adult asks your name, you must tell them

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to do their own work.

- Plagiarism, including copying from other students, copying sources on the internet, or the use of artificial intelligence (AI), is considered **a very serious offense**.
 - First offense: zero on the assignment, family contact, loss of honor roll eligibility, potential additional consequences including suspension, depending on severity of the plagiarism
 - Second offense and beyond: same as above, PLUS notification to colleges

Flex Block

Flex Block is an important part of the day which students must attend.

- Flex Block **attendance is taken every day**.
 - Students must stay in the same Flex Block for the whole period
 - Skipping Flex Block is equivalent to skipping class
 - A grade of S or U will be issued for Flex Block and appear on transcripts
- Seniors are **exempt from attending Flex Block during the 4th quarter only**. This exemption is conditional on signing up for the Flex Block Senior Exemption and:
 - Having a B- or above in all classes

- Meeting attendance requirements of no more than five total absences in Semester 2

Discipline

We believe in restorative practices and work to ensure a safe, welcoming, and effective learning environment for all students.

- Students are expected to:
 - Engage in Restorative Justice processes and proactively work to rebuild and repair relationships when harm is caused to individuals and/or property.
 - Take responsibility for their actions and words.
 - Comply with ALL disciplinary processes, procedures, and decisions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Signature Page

This handbook is distributed at the beginning of every academic year to every student at Amherst-Pelham Regional High School. It is the presumption of the administration and the school system that a parent and student will read and understand the handbook in its entirety. Even if a parent or student does not return the sign/off acknowledgement form at the end of this handbook, such presumption is made.

Please return this completed signature page to your Homeroom Teacher no later than Friday, August 30, 2024. This form will be kept on file for the entire school year.

Student Signature

I, _____ (Print Name of Student) affirm that I have received a copy of the ARHS Student Handbook, and I have read and understand the above ARHS Student Handbook. I hereby agree that I will follow the rules, policies and procedures set forth in the Handbook.

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

I, _____ (Print Name of Parent/Guardian) affirm that I have received a copy of the ARHS Student Handbook, and I have read, understand it, and have reviewed it with my student. I hereby agree that I will support my student in following the rules, policies and procedures set forth in the Handbook.

Signature of Parent / Guardian: _____ Date: _____