

**Ashland Middle School
2024-2025
Parent Student Handbook**



**ASHLAND
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence

Ashland Middle School
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
Phone: (508) 881-0167
Absentee Phone: (508) 881-0196
Fax: (508) 881-0169
School Hours: 8:20am-2:45pm
Website: ams.ashland.k12.ma.us

Erin Lachapelle
Principal

Michael Morro
Assistant Principal

James Adams
Superintendent

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

The information in this handbook is current as of September 2024 publication. Ashland Public Schools reviews and revises its policies and curriculum on a regular basis to meet local and state guidelines.

A Message from Mrs. Lachapelle

Welcome to Ashland Middle School! I am delighted to welcome you and your student(s) to the 2024-2025 school year. My name is Erin Lachapelle and I am thrilled to begin my first year as Principal at Ashland Middle School. I am fortunate to work alongside the amazing staff at AMS, who strive each day to make students feel safe, welcomed, included, and engaged in our school community.

As I embark on my first year as Principal, my goal is to engage in thoughtful listening and learning to identify areas of strength and potential growth for our students. There will be opportunities for students, faculty/staff, and parents/guardians to share feedback to help us set priorities for the coming school years.

I believe in the potential of all students and will hold them accountable for living our core values of respect and responsibility each day. This handbook serves as a comprehensive guide to our student expectations. We will use positive reinforcement to instill and praise students for demonstrating our core values. Equally, we recognize the need for appropriate consequences when a student violates policies and procedures that are in place to keep our school community and all of its members safe.

I encourage you to review this handbook as a family to familiarize yourselves with our expectations. Working together to understand our values and expectations will contribute to a successful school year.

I look forward to making this school year a positive experience for all.

Thank you,

Erin Lachapelle

AMS Principal

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic plan, formerly known as the Blueprint for Continuous Student Improvement, drives the district's priorities and objectives. The 2023–2028 strategic plan also informs the creation of our School Improvement Plans. Through our Site Councils and Ashland School Committee, we identify strategic and operational indicators and advocate for the budgetary resources required to successfully meet those goals and objectives.

EQUITY	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMMING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize the academic growth of every student • Provide more equitable access to all levels of curriculum and activities to provide more students with growth opportunities • Promote appreciation of diverse perspectives to foster mutual respect and cultural understanding • Improve upon and utilize fair and unbiased disciplinary practices • Engage all families as partners in the educational process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance student social and emotional well-being • Ensure all students have a sense of belonging and are connected to the school community • Continuously improve school climate & culture • Improve communication of SEL efforts and results to parents and the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe environments for all students and staff • Improve technology infrastructure and its integration into teaching and learning • Prioritize facility enhancement and maintenance over the long term in a cost efficient manner • Enhance advocacy efforts and identify revenue sources to maximize resource opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve student learning, curriculum, and consistency of instruction, aligned to the Portrait of the Graduate, across grades • Create comprehensive & individualized professional development opportunities to be able to meet each student's academic, social, and emotional needs as well as ensure the application of culturally responsive teaching practices • Expand academic and extracurricular offerings to increase student opportunities to explore areas of interest • Create effective, equitable and sustainable systems of collaboration and scheduling to maximize student learning for all

TRANSLATION:

Translation of the Parent/Student Handbook

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

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

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

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

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

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

ACADEMICS:

Ashland's Educational Principles

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

Curriculum

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

Grading System

Grades on report cards are numerical:

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

WP = Withdrawn Passing

P = Passing

WF = Withdrawn Failing

I = Incomplete

WDN = Withdrawn from School M = Medical

A = Audit

Academic Ethics

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

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

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

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

GENERAL INFORMATION:

AMS Bell Schedule

<i>Daily Schedule</i>	
Homeroom	8:20am – 8:24am
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Students should be in school by 8:15 and must be in homeroom by 8:20 - attendance is taken there. Students arriving after 8:20 are considered tardy to school.	
Period 1	8:26am – 9:11am
Period 2	9:13am – 9:58am
Advisory	10:00am – 10:09am
Period 3	10:11am – 10:56am
Period 4	10:58am – 11:43am
Period 5	11:43am – 1:13pm
<i>Lunch Times</i>	
<i>1 – 11:43am - 12:13pm</i>	
<i>2 – 12:13pm - 12:43pm</i>	

<i>3 – 12:43pm - 1:13pm</i>	
Period 6	1:13pm – 1:58pm
Period 7	2:00pm – 2:45pm

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

School Cancellations/Closings

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

Do not call the police or fire departments.

Calendar of Events

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

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

Handbook Scope and Limitations

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

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

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

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DISTRICT POLICIES:

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

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

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

Security Camera Policy:

Ashland Middle School uses security cameras to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Consistent with School Committee Policy ECAF, students identified on security cameras in violation of District policies will be subject to disciplinary action. Access to security camera footage is limited in accordance with School Committee policy and state and federal laws and regulations

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN:

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

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

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

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

All school rules concerning student discipline and consequences are intended to follow applicable laws and regulations. Students who break school rules will face various consequences depending on the type and severity of the infraction. Consequences include but are not limited to separation from the group, loss of privileges, school detention, conference with the principal and parents, and in-school or out-of-school suspension. Students will always be given the opportunity to express their views to the principal prior to any disciplinary action. The principal or their designee has sole authority to determine the type and duration of any consequence, including limiting student

participation in class if the principal deems the student's presence to be a negative impact on the educational environment of the class or school.

a. Offenses Covered by G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H½

If school administrators have a reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of a controlled substance, a student and their personal belongings may be subject to a search. The search can include the student's clothing, locker and personal belongings. A search can include scanning students with a portable "wand" style metal detector and screening by the nurse to determine if a student is under the influence.

Any student found on school premises, on a school bus or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games and field trips, distributing or in possession of a controlled substance, as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C, may be subject to discipline. Parents will be contacted, and the police department will be provided with a complete report and confiscated substances.

Any student found to have possessed or distributed a controlled substance as defined above while on school premises, on a school bus or at school-sponsored or school-related events may be subject to discipline under M.G.L., c. 71, § 37H.

i. Assault of Principal/Assistant
Principal/Teacher/Paraprofessional/Other Educational Staff

A student who commits an assault of a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to discipline. Students should note that the definition of "assault" may include not only harmful or offensive contact, but also threatening such contact. Parents will be contacted, and the police department will be provided with a complete report of the assault. A parent/guardian/student re-entry meeting to school is mandatory if the student is suspended, rather than expelled.

ii. Possession of Dangerous Weapon

Possession of any kind of dangerous weapon or object, including but not limited to a gun or knife, which has the potential for causing bodily harm is strictly forbidden in the school building, on school grounds, on school buses or at any school-sponsored activity. If a student is observed in possession of any type of weapon, simulated weapon or dangerous object, these items will be confiscated and immediate parental and police notification will follow. A student in possession of a dangerous weapon on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to discipline. A parent/guardian/student re-entry meeting to school is required if the student is suspended.

iii. Felony Charge/Felony Conviction

A student who is the subject of an issued felony charge or an issued felony delinquency complaint may be subject to discipline 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. A student who is convicted of a felony or who is adjudicated of/admits guilt in court with respect to such felony or felony delinquency is subject to 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.

b. Offenses Covered by G.L. c. 71, § 37H ³/₄

For all of the offenses listed below for which suspension/expulsion is stated as a consequence, the following rules apply to such suspensions/expulsions. The decision-maker, whether a Principal/designee or the Superintendent on appeal, shall 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. Alternative remedies may include but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

The sole exceptions to the foregoing requirements are: (1) where specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive; or (2) 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.

Please check these links for our [Code of Conduct](#), [Dress Code](#), and [Cell Phone Policy](#). These matters would fall under the offenses for this section.

Incidents which may trigger violations of the District's nondiscrimination/harassment policies may have a longer investigatory timeframe to comply with legal requirements. However, students may access supportive measures during the investigation process as required by law and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately and avoid retaliatory behavior while investigations are ongoing.

- Please note. As stated earlier, this is a general guideline for discipline in the schools. The principal and/or the principal's designee has the right to adapt or modify this chart on a case by case basis.

Students removed from the school setting for more than ten (10) school days shall have the opportunity to make academic progress through the services offered by the District's educational services plan.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

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

Case-by case determination

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student with a disability who after disciplinary actions has been found to have violated the school code of conduct. (IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR Part 300, M.G.L. c71, §§ 37H, 37H¹/₂)

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days

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

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

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

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

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

At a manifestation determination meeting, the Team will consider:

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

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

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

Special circumstances for exclusion

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

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

Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504). Until issues are resolved, the student remains in his or her current placement.

Bullying Prevention Plan:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

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

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

TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

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

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

PARENT INFORMATION:

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

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

HEALTH SERVICES:

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

Illness and Clinical Guidelines

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

The nurse is available throughout the school day for students and staff who are injured or become ill in school. Note that the nurse's office is not meant for students who are experiencing common fatigue.

Those who wish to see the nurse during the school day must inform their teacher prior to visiting the health office. If the nurse is not in her office, the student must report to the main office so that the nurse may be located and notified. If a student misuses the nurse's office, administration and parents/guardians will be informed.

Because optimal learning requires good health, Ashland Public Schools enforces the following clinical guidelines:

Bacterial Conjunctivitis (also known as "Pink Eye")

The child must have 24 hours of antibiotic treatment before returning to school.

Diarrhea/Vomiting

A child with diarrhea and/or vomiting should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of anti-vomiting or anti-diarrheal medication.

Fever

If a child is not feeling well before school, the parent should check his/her temperature. A child should not be sent to school with a fever. A child with a temperature of 100° F (37.7° C) or higher will be sent home from school. Children must remain home for the next full school day, and may return to school only once they have been fever free *without fever-reducing medication* for 24 hours.

Head Lice

Ashland Public Schools supports the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Association of School Nurses in the management of head lice in the school setting. If a child at school is found to have live lice, the student may be sent home immediately for treatment at the discretion of the building nurse. The student must be treated and free of live lice prior to returning to school. When the child returns, the building nurse will assess the student's hair for evidence of treatment. If the nurse deems it appropriate, a parent will be asked to accompany the child to school for this assessment.

Note that, in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics and the CDC, Ashland Public Schools does not participate in whole classroom screenings, exclusion for nits, or notification to anyone other than parents/guardians of students with head lice.

View our [APS Lice Brochure](#).

Impetigo

A child must be on prescription medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Weeping sores should be lightly covered with a dressing until they are crusted over and dried up completely.

Strep Throat

A child must remain out of school until the strep test/ throat culture results are known. If the result is positive, the child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

Students Requiring Crutches or Braces

Students who become injured and require crutches or hard splints/braces/casts must have a physician's letter stating the reason for the need of the equipment and for how long the equipment will be required. Students who are utilizing durable medical equipment should sit out from physical activity (both PE class and recess) at school until the brace or crutches are no longer required, and a clearance letter for participation in physical activity is provided by the physician.

Guidelines for handling other conditions are at the discretion of the school nurse.

Transportation

If a student becomes ill or injured on school property, it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to provide transportation and further care for the child. Students may not be sent home without parental approval. In an emergency situation, the school nurse will call 911 and the student will be transported to the nearest hospital. In this circumstance, an APS staff member will accompany the child to the hospital.

Medication

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

The Licensed Provider Order and Parent/Guardian Consent for Medication Administration form must be completed and on file in the health office before any medication is administered to a student. The child's physician must complete the first portion of the form and a parent/guardian must complete the second part. Please note that *both sections of this form must be renewed yearly.*

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

The district's medication policy and all necessary forms can be found on the APS website in the Health Services section under [Documents & Forms](#).

State Mandated Requirements

Physical Exams and Immunizations

Students who are new to Ashland Public Schools are required to submit a current physical exam form and up-to-date immunization record. Further, documentation of lead screening is required for entrance to preschool and kindergarten. For kindergarten students, documentation of vision screening completed in the previous 12 months is also required (note that this is often included on a student's annual physical exam form). Meanwhile, *all* students must submit updated physical exam forms upon entering kindergarten and again in grades 4, 7, and 10. Students who are not compliant with up-to-date physical exams and/or immunizations will be excluded from school until appropriate documentation is provided.

Each student has an individual health record on file in the school health office. Please submit any new physical exams or immunization records to the school nurse.

In-School Health Screenings

Massachusetts requires school health offices to conduct the following types of health screenings:

- **Vision screening** occurs annually in grades PK, K-5, 7, and 10

- **Hearing screening** occurs annually in grades PK, K-3, 7, and 10
- **Postural screening** occurs annually in grades 5-9
- **Body Mass Index (BMI) screening** occurs in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10
- **SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment)** occurs annually in grades 7 and 9

All students are expected to participate in these mandated health screenings. Note that parents/guardians may submit a written request to the school nurse asking that their child not participate in BMI, postural, and/or SBIRT screenings.

Management of Life-Threatening Allergies

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

While Ashland Public Schools cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment for all students with LTA, the district actively strives to minimize risk to these students. We have established guidelines that include building-based plans, the implementation of individual care plans, and training programs for personnel. For specific information on how our Nutrition Services department works with families to ensure the safety of children with allergies, please see the [Nutrition Services section](#) of the APS website.

Please click here to access the [Health Services section](#) of the APS website.

When you are finished reviewing, please download, sign and return the [AMS Handbook Signature](#) Page to AMS by September 27, 2024.