

**Ashland Middle School
2025-2026
Parent Student Handbook**



**ASHLAND
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Ashland Clockers

Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence

Ashland Middle School
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James Adams
Superintendent

Erin Lachapelle
Principal

Michael Morro
Assistant Principal

Kyra Knox
Special Education Coordinator

School Committee
Laurie Tosti- Chair
Marc Terry- Vice-Chair
Tina Fitantes - Secretary
Marcy Culverwell- Member
Paul Kendall - Member

The information in this handbook is current as of September 2025 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

I am delighted to welcome you and your student(s) to the 2025–2026 school year. My name is Erin Lachapelle, and I am excited to begin my second year as Principal at Ashland Middle School. It has been a privilege to work alongside the dedicated and caring staff at AMS, who strive each day to ensure that all students feel safe, welcomed, included, and engaged in our school community.

As I enter my second year, I remain committed to thoughtful listening, continuous learning, and collaboration to build on our strengths and identify opportunities for growth. We will continue to create opportunities for students, families, and staff to share feedback that informs our shared priorities and goals.

I believe deeply in the potential of every student and will continue to hold them to high expectations, especially when it comes to living out our core values of respect and responsibility. This handbook outlines the expectations that support a positive and safe learning environment for all. At AMS, we focus on recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors while also applying appropriate and consistent consequences when expectations are not met.

I encourage you to review this handbook together as a family to ensure a clear understanding of our values and expectations. By working together, we can help create a successful and rewarding year for every student.

I look forward to continuing this journey with you and making the 2025–2026 school year a positive and enriching experience for all.

Warmly,
Erin Lachapelle
Principal, Ashland Middle School

Table of Contents

TRANSLATION:

Strategic Objectives

Ashland Public Schools Mission Statement

GENERAL INFORMATION:

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

Handbook Scope and Limitations

Statement of Non-Discrimination:

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

ACADEMICS:

DISTRICT POLICIES:

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN:

Due Process Procedures as per 603 CMR 53.10 (Appendix Linked)

Ashland Public Schools School-Wide Education Service Plan

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Hazing

Bullying Prevention Plan:

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

PARENT INFORMATION:

HEALTH SERVICES:

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.

Strategic Objectives

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 • 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	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING • 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	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT • 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	CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMMING • 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
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Ashland Public Schools Mission Statement

We are committed every minute, every hour, every day, to every student.

The Ashland Public Schools strives to be a model district that creates a culture of inclusivity for our diverse students and staff who:

- feel safe and supported,
- are empowered with the academic and social-emotional skills to pursue their chosen path, and
- embrace their roles as positive contributors to local and global communities.

Ashland Middle School Core Values:

Respect & Responsibility

GENERAL INFORMATION:

AMS Daily Schedule 2025-2026

Period 1: 8:20-9:05
Period 2: 9:08-9:53
Advisory: 9:56-10:05
Period 3: 10:08-10:53
Period 4:10:56-11:41
Period 5: 11:41-1:11 Lunch Times: 1st Lunch-11:41-12:11 2nd Lunch-12:11-12:41 3rd Lunch-12:41-1:11
Period 6: 1:14-1:58
Period 7: 2:01-2:45

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

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.
- 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.

Mass Notification/Blackboard Connect Ed

The district employs an emergency phone system which allows the district to communicate with families in an effective and efficient manner. This system is used when school is canceled, delayed or dismissed early. It is also used if an emergency situation arises.

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 the 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.](#)

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Ashland Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

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](#)

ACADEMICS:

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 School,s 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.

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

WF = Withdrawn Failing

WDN = Withdrawn from School M = Medical

P = Passing

I = Incomplete

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](#)

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:

School Committee Policy JIC: Student Discipline

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 that 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.

Due Process Procedures as per [603 CMR 53.10 \(Appendix Linked\)](#)

Prior to the imposition of discipline, a student will be given an opportunity to receive notice of, and respond to, the allegations or charges against them.

1. Emergency Removal

Emergency removal of a student on a temporary basis is within the principal's authority when, in their judgment, the student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property and there is no adequate alternative to alleviate that danger. However, the principal or designee shall do the following:

- Make adequate provisions for the student's safety and transportation before removing him/her from school on an emergency basis.
- Make immediate reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for it.
- Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian.
- Provide an opportunity for a hearing before the principal, with the parent/guardian in attendance, within two school days of the emergency removal (unless the parties agree to an extension of time).
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and a written notice of the hearing no later than the following school day.

0. Short-Term Suspension

A short-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less. Before a suspension of ten days or less takes place, the student shall receive oral and written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian in English and the family's primary language stating:

- The basis for the charge;
- The potential length of suspension and consequences;
- The opportunity for hearing to dispute/present explanation of facts and mitigating circumstances;
- The date, time and location of hearing; and
- The right to interpreter services if needed.

After the hearing takes place, the principal/principal's designee will issue a written determination of the suspension to both the student and the parent/guardian, including the key facts and conclusions reached, and length and effective date of the suspension, a date of return to school, and the opportunity to make up assignments and other needed schoolwork. Suspensions issued pursuant to G.L. c. 71, 37H3/4 will also include written determinations regarding the use of alternative remedies.

0. Long-Term Suspension

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. 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. Before a suspension of ten days or more takes place, the student shall receive oral and written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian in English and the family's primary language stating:

- The basis for the charge;
- The potential length of suspension and consequences;
- The opportunity for hearing to dispute/present explanation of facts and mitigating circumstances;
- The date, time and location of hearing;
- The right to interpreter services if needed;
- The opportunity before hearing to review student's record and documents relied on by administration;
- The right to counsel/representation at own expense;
- The right to produce witnesses;
- The right to cross-examine school's witnesses; and
- The right to request audio recording of the hearing and to obtain a copy.

After the hearing takes place, the principal/principal's designee will issue a written determination of the suspension to both the student and the parent/guardian, including the key facts and conclusions reached, and length and effective date of the suspension, a date of return to school, the opportunity to make up assignments and other needed schoolwork and applicable processes to request an appeal to the Superintendent. Suspensions issued pursuant to G.L. c. 71, 37H3/4 will also include written determinations regarding alternative remedies.

0. Expulsion

An expulsion is the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½. Before expulsion occurs, the student shall receive oral and written notice to the student and the student's parent/guardian in English and the family's primary language stating:

- The basis for the charge;
- The potential length of expulsion and consequences;
- The opportunity for hearing to dispute/present explanation of facts and mitigating circumstances;
- The date, time and location of hearing;
- The right to interpreter services if needed;
- The opportunity before hearing to review student's record and documents relied on by administration;
- The right to counsel/representation at own expense;
- The right to produce witnesses;
- The right to cross-examine school's witnesses; and
- The right to request audio recording of the hearing and to obtain a copy.

After the hearing takes place, the principal/principal's designee will issue a written determination of the expulsion to both the student and the parent/guardian, including the key facts and conclusions reached, and length and effective date of the expulsion, any date of return to school, and the opportunity to make up assignments and other needed schoolwork.

0. In-School Suspension

An in-school suspension is the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten 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 days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year,

shall not be considered a short-term suspension under state regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process and appeal purposes.

procedures for in-house suspension

1. the principal/principal's designee use of in-house suspension as an alternative to a short-term suspension
2. the principal/principal's designee responsibility to inform the student of the disciplinary charge and to provide the student the opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances
3. if the principal/principal's designee determines that the student committed the offense, address the requirements to inform the student of the length of the suspension which may not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year
4. the principal/principal's designee responsibility to orally inform the parent of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction and the length of the in-school suspension
5. the principal/principal's designee responsibility to invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior
6. the need to schedule the parent/guardian meeting for the day of the suspension or as soon as possible, and the need for the principal to document at least two attempts to reach the parent for the purpose of orally informing the parent
7. the need for the principal/principal's designee to send written notice to the student and the parent/guardian about the in-school suspension, inviting the parent to a meeting if such meeting has not occurred, which must be delivered on the day of the suspension

0. Appeals

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H
 - A student may only appeal expulsions issued under this section. An expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the same rights afforded to them in their principal's hearing. 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.
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2
 - Following a principal's decision to remove a student based on the issuance of a felony complaint or felony delinquency complaint, the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal unless mutually agreed to be held on another date. At the hearing, the student shall have the same rights afforded to them in their principal's hearing. 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the school district.
 - Following a principal's decision to remove a student based on a student being convicted of a felony/felony delinquency or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt, the student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion unless mutually agreed to be held on another date. At the

hearing, the student shall have the same rights afforded to them in their principal's hearing. 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion.

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4
 - A student may only appeal a long-term suspension issued under this section. A suspended student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal unless mutually agreed to be held on another date; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the same rights afforded to them in their principal's hearing. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

Infractions and Consequences

- 1) Offenses Covered by G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2
 - a) Possession/Distribution of Controlled Substances- Any student found on school premises, on a school bus or at school-sponsored or school-related events, distributing or possession of a controlled substance as defined by law, may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.
 - b) Assault of Principal/Assistant Principal/Teacher/Teacher's Aide/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 may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.
 - c) Possession of a Dangerous Weapon- A student in possession of any kind of dangerous weapon or object which has the potential of causing bodily harm on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.
 - d) Felony Charges and Convictions- A student who is the subject of an issued felony complaint or felony delinquency complaint may be removed from school until the adjudication of the criminal charges. 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 complaint may be subject to expulsion.
- 2) Offenses Covered by G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4-
 - a) For all of the offenses listed in the below linked Code of Conduct to which suspension is listed as a consequence, the decision maker 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 review our Code of Conduct, Dress Code, and Cell Phone Procedures. These matters would fall under the offenses for this section.

Incidents that 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.

Ashland Public Schools School-Wide Education Service Plan

(1) 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, and make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work, as needed, to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

- (a) These services may include: online learning, in-person tutorial, enrollment in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), or other individualized plan matched to student needs.
- (b) These services will be based on and provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students. To ensure this occurs, APS staff (ex., School Counselors) will communicate with education providers throughout the student's enrollment.
- (c) It is the responsibility of APS to facilitate and verify the enrollment of the student in the service, upon selection of an educational service by the student and the parent/guardian.

(3) Each school has a process for developing school-wide education service plans for education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. Each plan is individualized to the needs of each student and is developed in collaboration with the Student Services Department and classroom teachers, as applicable. Students and their parents will be notified of the process for developing and arranging such services at the time of suspension/expulsion. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under **M.G.L.**

c 69, §§ 1D and 1F. Parents should contact the APS Student Services Department at bhawkins@ashland.k12.ma.us or 881-0155, who will liaise with the school principal, and parents are to develop an individualized education service plan.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

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

Case-by-case determination

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

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days

Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities. Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement.

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the district.

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.
2. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene within 10 days of the decision to suspend 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."
3. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer:
 - a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and
 - b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days.
 - a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function, or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or
 - b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others.In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.
5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews it and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise or the hearing officer orders a new placement.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

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.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student 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; or
 - 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 evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Hazing

School Committee Policy JICFA-E-Hazing

No student, employee, or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school-sponsored event, regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal, including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants, and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Principal, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school, but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

Bullying Prevention Plan:

Please see the entire [Ashland Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.](#)
[School Committee Policy JICFB: Bullying Prevention](#)

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:

[School Committee Policy: JH-Student Absences and Excuses](#)

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, meetings, etc. All visitors must have a valid CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) conducted by the Ashland Public Schools and have their identification scanned by the Raptor Visitor Management System. For the safety and security of all students, staff, and visitors, the Ashland Public School uses the Raptor Visitor Management System. All visitors are required to present a valid government-issued ID when entering the school. The Raptor system quickly scans and verifies identification, helping us ensure that only approved visitors gain access to the building. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our school community safe. Visitors must enter and exit the building at the main entrance and sign in inside the front office. Visitors must wear a visitor's badge and check in with the administrative assistant to inform where one is headed. 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 Visitors' Log to indicate that you are no longer in the building and kindly return the visitor's badge to the counter in the main office.

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.
