



ASHLAND

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Employee Handbook

ABOUT US

Ashland Public Schools is located in Ashland, Massachusetts, approximately 30 miles from Boston. Led by Superintendent James Adams, we educate over 2,900 students who speak more than 20 languages. We have five schools, including a preschool and the highly-rated and recognized Ashland High School.

MISSION

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

VISION

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.



CORE VALUES

Safety: We believe in providing safe and supportive learning environments and facilities, which address the varied social, emotional, and health needs of all students and staff.

Responsibility: We believe in the importance of individual and group accountability to make thoughtful, appropriate decisions that produce positive results for all.

Respect: We believe in the inherent value of all: including oneself, one's peers, and all who are a part of our community and greater global society.

Excellence: We believe as individuals, schools, and a community in the cultivation of an environment in which each member is supported in achieving his/her greatest potential.

Integrity: We believe in making decisions that uphold the values of honesty, decency, and sincerity in all of our actions.

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



Hello,

Welcome to the Ashland Public Schools,

We are delighted to have you as part of Ashland Public Schools, a dynamic and rewarding environment. Our district is committed to every student, every minute, every hour, every day. This mission drives us, and we are confident you will find our district a place of collaboration and teamwork.

I hope you will find this handbook informative and helpful in your role within the district. Though our handbook contains general information and guidelines, it is not comprehensive nor addresses all possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described. We welcome any suggestions you have about the information included in this document. For all policies related to the school district, please click here: [School Committee Policies](#),

Please read through this handbook thoroughly and carefully. We would like to encourage you to speak with your supervisor if you have questions about our policies or guidelines.

We know that our vision as a district doesn't come to life without the very best staff, and we are proud that you have chosen to be a part of our district. Your role is crucial in achieving our vision, and we value your contribution.

I look forward to a great school year and working alongside each of you on behalf of our students and the Ashland community.

Be well,

Jim Adams
Superintendent of Schools



ASHLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Laurie Tosti, Chair
Marc Terry, Vice Chair
Tina Fitanides, Secretary
Marcy Culverwell
Paul Kendall



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I. Welcome to the Ashland Public School District!

An exciting and challenging experience awaits you as an employee of the Ashland Public School District. We are pleased to have you as a member of the staff. Whether an employee works full or part-time, in an administrative, teaching, professional or support category, the skills and commitment we bring to our jobs make an important contribution to our goal of providing excellence in education to the children and families of Ashland.

The Ashland Public Schools is comprised of one preschool, two elementary schools, one middle school, and one comprehensive high school. The school District is governed by a five member [School Committee](#) whose responsibility is to set policies and budgets, and oversee the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for overall administration of the schools and implementation of School Committee policies. An employee of the Ashland Public Schools can expect a fair and equitable salary, competitive benefits and the opportunity to be part of the best that public education has to offer. We are pleased to have you as a member of our team and hope you find the satisfaction gained from doing your job matches the effort you put into your work.

To answer many, but certainly not all, of the questions you may have concerning the District and its policies and practices, we have written this handbook. Please read it thoroughly and keep it available for future reference. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policies. Thus, this is intended as a general source of pertinent information. From time to time, the need may arise to change policies and the District reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies in this handbook. In situations where this handbook conflicts with an applicable collective bargaining agreement provision, the collective bargaining agreement shall rule.

We recognize that new employees, in particular, are bound to have many questions relating to their specific position or responsibilities. Please direct any inquiries you may have to your immediate Supervisor or contact Human Resources (508-881-0156 Ext. 5) for additional information or assistance.



Organizational Values

The Ashland Public Schools live by the following values:

Pride: We will be passionate champions for the Ashland Public Schools.

Integrity: We will be sincere in our adherence to ethical principles and do what is in the best interest of all we serve.

Respect: We will demonstrate an appreciation for the value of all. We will foster an environment that is safe and nurturing for students and staff.

Responsibility: We will take ownership for following through with our mission. We will expect staff, parents, students and community members to be accountable for their contribution to the educational process.

Achievement: We will continually improve.

Communication: We will seek the input of all our stakeholders, sharing information openly and honestly and expect the same of all stakeholders.

Note: Ashland Public Schools is in the process of reviewing the Organizational Values and will update this Handbook once they are complete.

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 when 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.



Diversity Resolution

The Ashland Public Schools celebrate diversity. We are committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for all of our students, staff, parents, and community members without distinction based on race, age, religion, ethnicity, ability, gender, or sexual orientation. Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights will not be tolerated.

The Ashland Public Schools will strive to celebrate diversity and foster inclusive communities where all students can learn and thrive. With equity and justice in mind, we will strive to foster responsive policies, practices, and learning modules that ensure the success of every student. Centering student voice and experiences, Ashland Public Schools prioritizes responsive and inclusive curriculum, policies, and practices that honor the diverse backgrounds and cultures of students.

Mission

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

Administrative Team

The Administrative Team is comprised of the Superintendent and Administrators in the Central Office, as well as building Administrators.

- James Adams, Superintendent of Schools
- Kevin Anderson, Athletic Director
- Christy Arnold, Director of English Learner Education
- Katherine Altman, Asst. Principal, Mindess School
- Tayler Bodio, Extended Day Program Director
- Michael Caira, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum, Instr., and Assessment
- Paul Carpenter, Director of Technology
- Esmeralda Casas, Director of Media and Communications
- Jennifer Taylor, Director of Counseling and Social Emotional Learning
- Sara Davidson, Principal, Pittaway School
- Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
- Erin LaChapelle, Principal, Ashland Middle School
- Jennifer Larrenaga, Principal, Mindess School
- Carolyn Lee, Dean, High School
- Erica Linares, Asst. Principal, Warren School
- Christopher Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations



- Michael Morro, Asst. Principal, Middle School
- Jon Murray, Director of Facilities
- Peter Regan, Principal, Warren School
- Kelley St. Coeur, Principal, High School
- Meaghan Sullivan, Dean, High School
- Regina Wilkinson, Director of Nutrition Services

Ashland Public Schools Locations

Preschool

[William Pittaway School](#)

75 Central Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0160

Kindergarten and Grades 1-2

[Henry Warren School](#)

73 Fruit Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0188

Grades 3-5

[David Mindess School](#)

90 Concord Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0166

Grades 6-8

[Ashland Middle School](#)

87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0167

Central Administration is also located in the Ashland Middle School building and can be contacted at 508-881-0150.

Grades 9-12

[Ashland High School](#)

65 East Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0177



II. General Employment Policies

Basic Employment Expectations

All employees are expected to demonstrate a professional, cooperative, knowledgeable and courteous demeanor in all interactions with students, parents, colleagues and members of the community. Work attire should reflect the professional responsibilities of an employee's position, exhibiting concern for safety, hygiene, neatness, cleanliness and projecting positive role models for students enrolled in the Ashland Public Schools. The use of profane language is prohibited and may be cause for disciplinary action.

At a minimum, it is expected that all employees will follow general and specific work and employment guidelines, carry out instructions and directions appropriately issued by Supervisors or Administrators and perform job responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. Employees are expected to be regular in attendance, arriving on time and adhering to designated starting and ending times for work, breaks, lunch, prep periods, etc. Employees are advised that School Department telephones, supplies, equipment and services (including Internet access and fax machines) are for professional use. Excessive personal calls, or use of supplies, services or equipment for personal reasons are not allowed. Inappropriate use of equipment, supplies or services including electronic access may result in termination.

Theft

The disappearance or suspected theft of any equipment, supplies, food, or money belonging to Ashland Public Schools must be immediately reported by the person discovering the missing items to his or her Supervisor. Once notified, the Supervisor will immediately inform the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations.

If the gravity of the situation of the loss warrants police action, the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations will be responsible for any further action.

Theft of school property is grounds for immediate termination of employment. Note: Items acquired through grants belong to Ashland Public Schools and shall remain when an employee leaves the program for which the items were requested.



Affirmative Action Policy

The Ashland Public School District does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or military status should contact the Superintendent.

Anti-Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy

The Ashland Public Schools seek to promote a workplace and educational environment that is free from discrimination and harassment, whether based on race, color, gender, age, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status or disability. The Ashland Public Schools will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects employment or educational conditions, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on a characteristic protected by law. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above; or verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above. Sexual harassment means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct are made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities or as a basis for employment decisions or such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

An individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment, sexual or otherwise, has a right to file a complaint with the Ashland Public Schools. The complaint may be filed with the individual's immediate Supervisor or the Superintendent of Schools. Additionally, employees who observe incidents of harassment should immediately report such incidents to their immediate Supervisor and the Superintendent of Schools.



All reports of harassment, sexual or otherwise, will be investigated promptly in a confidential manner and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. In addition to filing a complaint with the Ashland Public Schools, employees who believe that they have been subjected to harassment, sexual or otherwise, may file a formal complaint with either the [Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination](#), which is located at One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, Massachusetts (617-994-6000), or [United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, Massachusetts 02203 (617-565-3200).

Ashland Public Schools Policies

The Ashland School Committee has posted its [Policy Manual](#) on the district website. Please familiarize yourself with all district policies. It is expected that all employees follow these policies.

Confidentiality

Ashland Public School employees may have access to sensitive personal or otherwise confidential student or employee information. It is expected that employees will protect others' rights to privacy by not releasing such information to unauthorized individuals. This information must be held in strict confidence and should never be discussed outside the workplace or with employees who have no right to the information. All inquiries for employee information from outside sources should be referred to your Supervisor or to the Human Resource Department for appropriate response. Employees should consult their Supervisors with any questions regarding confidentiality.

Failure to comply with confidentiality requirements may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

This provision is not intended, and should not be construed, to limit or prevent an employee from exercising rights under the National Labor Relations Act or M.G.L. c. 150E Labor Relations: Public Employees.

Smoking in the Workplace

The Ashland Public School District promotes a healthy work environment for its employees. In compliance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H, the buildings and grounds will be designated as a smoke-free environment. Employees, students, and visitors are restricted from using any tobacco product, including smoking or chewing, or vaping within school buildings, the school facilities, on the school grounds, in school vehicles, or on school buses. The Ashland Public School District accepts this law as binding upon its students and employees, as well as visitors to our schools and buildings. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment.



Substance Abuse

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the workplace is prohibited. Violations of this prohibition will result in discharge or other appropriate action consistent with the District's disciplinary processes that may require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

Reporting to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited by the District and will result in immediate corrective action up to and including termination. The District has the responsibility to protect its employees and students from the serious risks of substance abuse that could occur not only to themselves, but also to others. The use of drugs or alcohol affects job performance and creates an unsafe environment for employees.

The term "drug" includes alcohol, illegal substances, over-the-counter medications, and controlled substances that may alter an employee's behavior or judgment.

Violation of the substance abuse policy includes reporting to work under the influence, or the use, possession, manufacture, purchase, transfer, or sale of a controlled or illegal substance on work/school premises. Upon suspicion that an employee may be abusing a substance, an investigation will be conducted and corrective action will follow, if deemed appropriate.

It is an employee's responsibility to report if he or she is taking a prescribed or over-the-counter medication for a prolonged period of time and/or that may alter behavior or judgment. The employee can report the treatment information to the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to avoid being suspected of violating the substance abuse policy. Employees are encouraged to seek voluntary treatment once they realize they have a problem before it reaches the corrective action stage. They may contact the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations for assistance. All voluntary inquiries will remain confidential.

Solicitation and/or Distribution

Solicitation should be discouraged and upon report by one employee that this practice is being disruptive, the employee soliciting will be asked and expected to immediately stop. It will be deemed inappropriate for staff with supervisory responsibility to solicit contributions or sale of products to subordinates.

Unauthorized activities include, but are not limited to, seeking contributions or memberships, selling merchandise, subscriptions, tickets or similar items, and distributing any literature or materials of any nature. Authorization to engage in this practice should be documented by the employee's immediate Supervisor. Details of the authorized conduct (dates, location, restrictions to the permit, etc.) should be addressed in the authorization.



Conflict of Interest

In order to preserve the reputation of the District, employees are expected to devote their best efforts to the interest of the Ashland Public Schools and the conduct of its affairs by maintaining high standards of honesty, integrity, impartiality, and conduct.

A conflict of interest arises when an employee engages in activities that may compromise his or her employment relationship. It is essential that public employees avoid taking official actions which are influenced by potential gain or benefit, or may be perceived as such. It is illegal under state law for a public employee to accept work-related gifts in excess of \$50.00 in value.

Ethics training must take place at a minimum of every two years. All municipal employees must complete an on-line state ethics training program. You will receive information on this requirement when you receive your new hire paperwork. If you have not completed this training, please contact Human Resources (508-881-0156 Ext. 5) to do so.

Empowered Digital Use Policy

The Ashland Public Schools' computer network including internet and email access is established for limited educational purposes and has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Accordingly, the Ashland School District has the right to place restrictions on the use of the system and to require users to abide by system rules.

Please read the [Empowered Digital Use Policy \(IJNDB\)](#) to understand your responsibilities.

PURPOSE

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

AVAILABILITY

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.



All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, and the school district network is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology, including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

SOURCE: MASC

Adopted: 19 November 2015

Email/Web Etiquette

Email and other on-line services provided through the Ashland Public Schools should be used only for business-related purposes. All users are expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in the content and tone of their email messages and in the accessing of internet sites. Email messages sent through the Ashland Public Schools are public documents and should not be used to convey confidential information. The following are guidelines for effective "Email etiquette":

- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Try to be concise and to the point
- Avoid using all capital letters (it gives the impression you are shouting)
- Do not forward chain letters or unsolicited information
- Only send email to those individuals directly concerned with the subject



- Avoid using email to communicate regarding private or confidential matters; if used, take precautionary steps to assure appropriate dissemination

It is the District's expectation that employees will check their email and voicemail on a regular basis and respond to messages in a timely manner, no later than two school days as per our policy SF 2.1 Response to Communication. Please remember when writing or responding, the Massachusetts Secretary of State has determined that email is a public record.



III. Beginning Employment

Employment Documentation

Upon acceptance of a job offer and prior to beginning work, all newly hired employees must arrange to visit the Business Office to receive an employment packet containing required documentation. The Human Resource Department will review all paperwork and explain benefits eligibility. Actual enrollment, however, is done by the employee through Town Hall.

Employees should be prepared to complete a CORI form and fingerprinting (for more information, see Reference and Background Checks below), to provide proof of U.S. citizenship or eligibility to work in the U.S. and to complete and certify accuracy of the Employment Eligibility and Verification Form (Federal Form I-9). Form I-9 documentation must be provided before beginning employment. Appendix A in this handbook contains a list of acceptable documents. Many of the documents are required to be originals, copies are not accepted, so be sure to review the list carefully.

In addition, pre-employment documentation may include individual, family and beneficiary birth certificates, Social Security cards, U.S. passports and educator licensure/certification. Many of the documents are required to be originals, copies are not accepted.

Teacher and Administrator Licensure/Certification

Teachers and educational administrators are required to possess Massachusetts licensure from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) appropriate to their position and to provide a copy of licensure to the Business Office at the time of employment, updating throughout employment as necessary. All direct service providers (Nurses, Therapists) must maintain their licensure through the appropriate licensing authority. Lack of appropriate licensure may be grounds for termination. Applications for licensure must be made directly to the Massachusetts DESE, as the granting authority.

Reference and Background Checks

The Ashland Public Schools' employment verification process includes Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services (SAFIS) national background checks in addition to personal and professional references, and educational and employment



background checks. Employees may NOT start employment until CORI results and a SAFIS receipt are received by the Ashland Public Schools. All offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory results of these employment screening processes, as well as any others that may be required. The District is required to update CORI records every three years for all employees, and the District will be provided with updated federal reports of convictions linked to one's fingerprints. An unsatisfactory report may result in termination of employment. Employees who are involved in criminal proceedings that may affect employment should assure notification to the Superintendent and take prompt action to allow update of employment records.

Orientation

School/Department Administrators and Supervisors want employees to be successful in their new jobs and are prepared to answer questions new employees may have about specific responsibilities, work hours and general policies and procedures relating to employment in the Ashland Public Schools. You may also contact the Human Resource Department with general questions at 508-881-0156 #5.

New Teacher Orientation

As a new Teacher, the Principal of a school or the Department Administrator will orient employees to their teaching responsibilities and assist them in ordering books, supplies, and other materials.

Ashland sponsors a District-wide orientation meeting for new Teachers prior to the beginning of each school year. Also, new Teacher sessions are sponsored regularly throughout each school year and are valuable sources of information about curricular and educational resources in addition to providing opportunities for sharing and networking with Teachers and Administrators throughout the district.

Teachers who are new to the field of teaching will participate in a Teacher Induction Program. This includes participation in the mentoring program. Each new teacher will be assigned a mentor as they complete the induction requirements as set forth by the DESE for licensure.



IV. Employment Guidelines

Work Schedules

Employees in the Ashland Public Schools work a wide variety of schedules and hours. The work year may be based on a 10-month, 11-month, 12-month or other schedule, and regular work hours may range from less than 10 to 40 hours or more per week depending upon the nature of the position, school and district needs, and collective bargaining agreements. One's Supervisor or Building/Department Administrator will explain the work hours associated with a position in accordance with School Department policies and answer any pertinent questions.

Attendance and Absences

All employees are expected to be regular in attendance. If illness, injury or other situations prevent an employee from coming to work, he/she must notify his/her Supervisor of the absence as far in advance as possible so that appropriate coverage may be arranged. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days, he/she *may be required* to provide written medical documentation to the Superintendent to justify the absence. Employees must review their respective collective bargaining agreements to determine if/when written medical documentation is required. Employees may also contact the Human Resources (508-881-0156 Ext. 5) for more information.

Absences of 10 days or longer require the employee to complete the Certification of Temporary Disability for Ten Working Days or More form, (see Appendix B: Certification of Temporary Disability). This form must be completed by the employee's doctor and returned to the Human Resources.

Additionally, in the event of a Teacher's absence, it is expected that lesson plans and other pertinent materials relating to curriculum and schedules can be easily accessed by the Building Administrator and the Substitute Teacher, and that notice of absence will be made to the Teacher's school and [Frontline Education Absence Management](#) (formerly Aesop), the automated substitute placement and absence management system (1-800-942-3767 or <https://login.frontlineeducation.com/login?signin=aaa8b08846d0d30543838242f6e3b775&productId=ABSMGMT&clientId=ABSMGMT#/login>).

Failure to provide absence notification via [Absence Management \(Aesop\)](#) in a timely manner or to provide requested medical documentation can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.



Substitute Teacher Assignments

Ashland uses an automated system called *Absence Management* (formerly *Aesop*) to place Substitutes in the event of an absence, and employees are given login credentials upon hire. All assignments for Substitutes must be coordinated through this centralized service.

All absences should be reported **as far in advance as possible** via *Absence Management*. Please have your ID number and PIN available, then call **1-800-942-3767** or log in at <https://login.frontlineeducation.com/login?signin=4c20e792af0c7d81fc4c396b821f19ad&productId=ABSMGMT&clientId=ABSMGMT#/login>.

We suggest all employees program this number into their phones for easy access.

While advance notice is always best, unplanned events do occur. The cut-off time to call *Absence Management* (formerly *Aesop*) or enter an absence on-line is up to one hour before your individual school's start time. If you miss this window, you must call your school immediately, then notify Lindsay Duane at Ashland High School. Lindsay is only available for sub placement between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. She will try to locate a last-minute Substitute for you. You may reach Lindsay at 508-881-0177, x: 8282 or lduane@ashland.k12.ma.us.

If you have already started your work day and need to leave unexpectedly, you must see your school secretary before exiting the building. The school secretary will add your absence time into *Absence Management* (formerly *Aesop*).

For questions pertaining to your account, feel free to contact APS *Absence Management* Administrator, Kayla Hurst, at khurst@ashland.k12.ma.us.

School Cancellations

Periodically, certain conditions may necessitate that schools be closed due to inclement weather, such as severe snow storms, or other emergencies. Closings due to inclement weather are announced on radio, local television stations and the [Ashland Public Schools](http://www.ashlandpublicschools.org) website. The Superintendent will also make a Connect-Ed call to staff regarding the cancellation. Certain employees may be required to report to work under severe weather or other emergency conditions. Your Supervisor will advise you if your position falls within this category.



Performance Evaluation

All Ashland Public School employees will receive a performance evaluation completed by their supervisor over the course of the year. Performance evaluation is an important factor in continued employment. If an employee does not agree with a performance evaluation, he/she may submit a written response addressing any relevant issues to the Supervisor and to the Superintendent. The performance evaluation and any written response an employee may submit will be included in the employee's permanent personnel record. Collective bargaining agreements may have specific requirements regarding evaluation. Educators and Administrators will be evaluated by the Educator Evaluation system, as approved by the Ashland Educator Association and the DESE.

Professional Development

All employees are encouraged to engage in continued professional development (PD). Continued education at institutes of higher education or in certain approved organizations can contribute to an employee achieving a higher rate of pay and his/her eligibility for promotion. Workshops are periodically offered by the Ashland Public Schools at no or low cost during designated professional development days or after normal school hours.

Some professional development opportunities are publicized and may be enrolled in via the [Ashland PD website](#) found on the APS home page. Employees should contact the Curriculum Administrative Assistant in the Curriculum Office for username and password information and any other questions they may have regarding professional development.

Staff members must fill out a *Request for Professional Day (Conference, Workshop or Meeting) Form* to obtain approval prior to attending professional events. The form is located in [Google Docs](#). It must be completed and shared with the Building Administrator at least three weeks prior to the event date. All requests must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent. All estimated expenses that are considered reasonable by the Business Office guidelines must be included on this form, including estimated meal and travel costs, to be considered for reimbursement.

Prior to registering for a course that will be used to apply for reimbursement or for a lane change on the salary chart (if applicable), a *Professional Growth Credit Application* must be completed, signed by the Building Administrator, and approved by the Assistant Superintendent. This form is also located in [Google Docs](#). No forms will be accepted for credit of any kind after the course has begun.

If you have registered for a professional development session that requires payment and you cannot attend due to an emergency, contact your Supervisor and ask to see if another staff member can go in your place. We are often financially responsible for your



registration fee and the Town of Ashland has a policy against paying for training sessions unless we can provide proof of attendance. Please make every effort to fill your spot. Thank you!

If you attend a professional development session, please forward proof of attendance to the Business Office upon completion. Proof of attendance is required by the Town of Ashland before we can pay the vendor that delivered the seminar. Acceptable proof includes a certificate of completion, a copy of your badge, agenda or notes taken.

Resignation or Retirement

In the event that an employee resigns employment, he/she is expected to provide a minimum of two weeks' written notice to his/her Supervisor and to the Superintendent. Certain administrative employees have a greater notice requirement under individual contracts. Employees are encouraged to arrange an exit interview with the Superintendent or their Supervisor.

If an employee plans to retire, he/she should send written advance notification to his/her Supervisor, the Superintendent, and also directly contact the Board of the Retirement Plan in which he or she is enrolled well in advance of the anticipated date of retirement to assure that any pension payments and insurance benefits due will be coordinated to avoid gaps in income or insurance coverage.

Safety

The District has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students, and to protect and conserve District equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times
- Immediately report all accidents to their Supervisor
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization

The health and safety of all school staff personnel is of vital importance to the District. The District will seek to provide safe working conditions for all staff members and will provide prompt consideration to those conditions which may present a threat to the health and safety of staff members.



Visitors in the Workplace

All visitors are expected to enter any District facility through the main entrance and sign in. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destinations. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the District premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the Administrator in charge. Regular visits by family and friends during working hours are not appropriate.



V. Compensation

Starting Salary & Salary Increases

Salary is based on the salary range established for each position. Previous experience and level of education may also be factors in determining salary. Salary schedules for positions covered under collective bargaining agreements are provided within such agreements.

Salary increases, including both annual step increases and across-the-board increases, are governed by collective bargaining agreements for unionized employees. Where applicable, verification of education, experience and licensure must be submitted before the start date of employment or within the timelines established within the collective bargaining agreement, if any, for salary credit. Nonunion employees are granted increases at the discretion of the Superintendent and may be granted an increase based on satisfactory performance.

Pay Schedule

Ashland School employees are paid biweekly, by direct deposit through the Town of Ashland. Salary payments are electronically forwarded directly to a bank account or accounts selected by the employee for receipt. All employees receive a payroll advice of their direct deposit(s) each pay day, which are distributed by their respective schools.

Time Sheets/Attendance Records

All employees are required to accurately account for their attendance. For most school-assigned staff, attendance is recorded in the school office and attendance reports are submitted to the Payroll Coordinator after certification by the Building Administrator.

Other staff members submit individual timesheets certified by their Supervisor. If timesheets are not submitted on schedule, an employee may experience delays in receiving pay. The timesheet must provide an accurate accounting of hours worked and absences. Falsification of timesheet information is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.



Direct Deposit

Each new employee must have his/her salary directly deposited to his/her bank account by obtaining a Direct Deposit authorization form from the Human Resource Coordinator.



VI. Payroll Deductions

All payroll deductions are itemized on paycheck stubs or Advice of Deposit forms. To ensure an employee is paid accurately, he/she should promptly complete the applicable Change of Name, Change of Address, and/or W-4 Form for any change in name, address, marital status or number of exemptions and submit the form(s) to the Human Resource Coordinator.

Voluntary Deductions

Employees may authorize payroll deductions for health and life insurance and other voluntarily elected deductions.

Pension Contributions

Employees who qualify for membership in either the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System or the Middlesex Retirement System are required to contribute a percentage of salary to the Plan. The required percentage is determined by an employee's date of entry into the retirement system. The required amount will be deducted each pay period.

Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP)

Employees who do not qualify for membership in either the Teachers Retirement System or the Middlesex Retirement System are required under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations to make a contribution to a Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) as an alternative to Social Security (FICA) contributions. Upon leaving Ashland Public Schools, individuals have the option to withdraw DCP contributions.

Union Dues/Agency Fee

If an employee is hired into a union position, union dues (or an agency fee) may be deducted from his/her pay. Failure to agree to pay these fees can lead to loss of employment. Union dues authorization cards are obtained from union representatives. For further information, contact the appropriate union president.



VII. Employee Benefits

The following section addresses employee benefits, including health, retirement and additional benefits.

Please read this section carefully, noting stated deadlines.

*Failure to enroll in health insurance and other benefit plans or to apply for the health insurance waiver option payment within the **30-day time period allowed** will delay your eligibility for such benefits for as much as a year or until the next open enrollment period, which may be several months away. Life insurance enrollment is typically only available at the time of hire. If you are interested in health insurance coverage and other benefits, you must be sure to contact the HR/Payroll Office at Ashland Town Hall and submit completed forms by the stated deadlines.*

Questions regarding employee benefits should be referred to the Ashland Public Schools Human Resource Department at 508-881-0150 #5.
All plans and rates are subject to change.

Eligibility for Benefits

Certain regularly appointed full-time and part-time employees who work a regular schedule of 20 hours or more per week are eligible to participate in medical, life and dental insurance plans offered through the Town of Ashland.

Temporary employees and those employed under service agreements are not eligible for benefits.

Long-term substitute Teachers may be eligible for medical insurance after completing prescribed periods of employment. Please contact the Human Resource Department for more information.

New Employee Enrollment into Health Insurance Plans

A new employee eligible for health insurance and wishing to have coverage must complete the appropriate enrollment forms and submit them to the HR/Payroll Office at Ashland Town Hall within **10 calendar days** of his/her effective date of hire. Benefits begin on the first of the month following 60 days or two full calendar months, whichever comes first.

If an employee does not enroll within this 10 day time period, he/she will *not* be eligible to enroll in a health insurance plan until the next annual open enrollment period. Therefore, if an employee is interested in health insurance and other



coverage, he/she should take the time to carefully review and promptly submit all employee benefits forms.

If an employee chooses not to enroll in health care coverage, they will be asked to sign a waiver.

For additional information on health insurance enrollment, please contact Susan Huwe @ shuwe@ashlandmass.com, or 508-881-0100, Ext. 7926.

Health Care Plan Options and Costs

Medical Insurance – The District offers a comprehensive medical health care insurance plan to eligible employees. An employee is eligible to enroll if one's regular work schedule is 20 hours or more per week. In order to obtain coverage, new employees must complete and submit enrollment forms to the Town Hall HR/Payroll Office within 30 days from the date of hire. The District makes a substantial contribution toward the cost of each eligible employee's medical coverage. Details and plan summaries on the various medical insurance rate saver plans may be obtained by contacting Human Resources..

Important Notice: Insurance payments are made a month in advance. Therefore, the Town will make arrangements with you regarding the amount required to bring you up-to-date.

After a new employee's original enrollment period, an active employee:

- May not enroll in a health insurance plan unless there is a "qualified event" change resulting in the loss of medical insurance (i.e., death of a spouse, loss of employment of a spouse, divorce, etc.)
- May not change health insurance plans until the next open enrollment season in May, which would become effective July 1.

Coverage for Dependents requires the following documentation for each person listed:

- Spouse – copy of marriage certificate.
- Former spouse – copy of the sections of divorce decree or separation agreement that include absolute date, health insurance language and signatures. If the employee or former spouse remarries, coverage for the former spouse ends as of the date of remarriage.
- Dependent child – copy of certificate of birth, adoption, or appointment as legal guardian. The document must link dependent to employee or employee's spouse.



Health Care Coverage for Individuals and Families

Eligible employees may elect either individual or family coverage. Family coverage provides for spouses and/or dependents until they reach age 26, and dependents of any age that fit the insurance plan's definition of disabled.

An employee may change from individual to family coverage, or add additional members to the plan within 30 days of a birth or adoption of a child, or marriage. The HR/Payroll Office at Ashland Town Hall must be notified within 30 days of such an event to affect a change in coverage outside the open enrollment period.

Continuation of Health Insurance (COBRA)

If employment should parts service with us or an employee or his/her dependent otherwise becomes ineligible to participate in the group health insurance plan, he/she and/or his/her dependents have the right to continued participation in the Town's group health insurance plan under federal COBRA legislation. The employee will be required to pay the full cost of the premium plus an administrative fee. Under COBRA continuation, the Town will no longer contribute to the cost of health insurance premiums. For additional information on this option, please contact the Town of Ashland Health Care Coordinator at Town Hall, 508-881-0120.

Life Insurance

All employees are eligible to be covered by the Town of Ashland Group Life Insurance plan. Plan benefits are payable in the event of death. New employees *must* enroll within 30 days of their appointment date to be eligible for this benefit, or wait until Open Enrollment in May.

Basic Life Insurance - The District offers a \$10,000 Basic Term Life Insurance policy with Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company to all employees working over 20 hours per week. The bi-weekly costs are 26/20 pays at \$1.30/\$1.69. This is a one-time offer available only during the first 30 days of employment; it is not offered again during Open Enrollment.

Voluntary Life Insurance – The District offers additional Term Life Insurance in increments of \$5,000 up to a maximum of \$100,000. Premiums are paid 100% by the employee. This coverage is available without the need for any medical review, and includes Accidental Death & Dismemberment. Affordable group term



rates are available with coverage up to age 75. Spouses may be insured for \$25,000 and unmarried dependents between the ages of six months and 19 years (25 years if a full-time student) are insured for \$10,000. You may only opt to have this insurance if you have signed up for Basic Life Insurance.

For additional information on life insurance plans, please Susan Huwe @ shuwe@ashlandmass.com, or 508-881-0100, Ext. 7926.

Long Term Disability (LTD)

Long Term Disability benefits are currently available to:

- Administrators
- Teachers
- COTA
- Non-Union Employees, Central Office
- Custodians
- Preschool and Extended Day Staff

This benefit is offered to new employees, who are advised to enroll within the first 30 days of employment. After this period, you may enroll anytime, but will be required to provide “evidence of insurability”. Please contact the Human Resources for enrollment details at 508-881-0156 #5.

Retirement Plans

Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System

Eligible Teachers, Nurses, Guidance Counselors, Psychologists and Administrators (employees appointed to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education certified/licensed positions) participate in the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS) pension plan, a State-administered plan. If an employee is eligible for this plan, after completing and submitting the application, he/she will be enrolled at the time he/she completes his or her new hire starting paperwork. Information on the provisions of this plan may be obtained from the MTRS.

Middlesex Retirement System

Other regular full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week may participate in the Middlesex County Retirement System. Participation in this Plan begins on the first day of qualified employment. New employees will be enrolled in the Plan through the Ashland Public Schools’



Business Office. The plan provides a monthly pension benefit to eligible employees who have completed sufficient service upon retirement. This Plan provides provisions for vested minimum retirement as early as age 55 with ten (10) years of creditable service. The amount of pension benefit increases as age and amount of creditable service increases. Disability Retirement benefits are also available for permanently disabled employees who meet certain other qualifications. Detailed information regarding employee contributions, vesting, plan administration, etc., is available through the Middlesex Retirement Board.

Social Security

Town of Ashland employees do not have Social Security taxes withheld from their earnings. Employees retiring with a state pension who also are eligible for Social Security benefits may have their Social Security benefits reduced by Social Security's **windfall elimination provision** (www.ssa.gov/pubs/10045.html) or **government pension offset** (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10007.html>). Since individual circumstances vary, employees should contact their local Social Security office to find out how these regulations may affect their Social Security benefits.

Medicare Taxes

Town of Ashland employees hired on or after 4/1/86 have Medicare taxes withheld from their earnings. Employees hired prior to 4/1/86 who have no break in service during their employment with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are exempt from Medicare tax withholding.

Massachusetts Income Tax

The first \$2,000 in combined State Retirement Plan contributions and Medicare tax are excluded from Massachusetts taxable gross wages. An employee will have less state taxes deducted from the beginning of a calendar year until the \$2,000 threshold is met. After meeting the \$2,000 threshold, the employee will see an increase in the amount withheld for state taxes.

Voluntary Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA)

The Town uses TSA Consulting Group Inc, a third-party administrator, to assist with our Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan (TSA). This allows all employees to invest a portion of their wages on a tax-deferred basis to a supplemental retirement



savings account through payroll deduction. Contributions to a TSA are distributed through TSA Consulting Group to a vendor of your choice from the approved vendor list (Fidelity, AXA, etc.). Employees may generally enroll or change their level of contribution at any time. Transactions may be done electronically via the [TSA Consulting Group](#) website or via correspondence.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation is designed to provide benefits in the event that an individual is injured in connection with his or her employment. In Ashland, Workers' Compensation costs for Town employees are paid entirely by the Town. If an employee is injured during the school day, no matter how minor it may seem, s/he should immediately see the school nurse for assessment and together complete a Supervisor's Report of Accident -- Intake Form. The form will then be reviewed by the employee's Supervisor. The Human Resources Office of the Town of Ashland administers the Workers' Compensation program for all Town departments. Questions concerning Workers' Compensation may be referred to the Human Resources Executive Assistant, Susan Huwe.

Unemployment Compensation

Unemployment Compensation provides temporary income for those who have lost their jobs under certain conditions. For more information about Unemployment Compensation, or to apply for benefits, contact the local office of the [Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#) or Human Resources (508-881-0156 Ext. 5). School employees with a contract and a "reasonable assurance" of employment for the following year are not eligible to collect.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services

Assistance is available to all employees to help them, their families and household members cope with personal or family problems such as alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, divorce or marriage counseling, finances, stress, parent/child or elder issues. Through the EAP, employees are able to access confidential counseling services at their convenience. Counselors will provide employees with information, immediate treatment and/or referral to other sources.

It is the responsibility of each employee to seek help before a condition has an adverse impact on his or her employment. The Ashland Public Schools may require attainment of these services as a condition of employment in lieu of



termination. If a Supervisor seeks to make a referral, they must first discuss the case with the employee.

EAP work/life services are provided by MIIA. You may contact them at 1-800-451-1834 to access counselors, referrals and other resources. This service is free, confidential and available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Home Game Advantage

We are very proud of our Clocker athletic teams, and invite you to join us for home games free of charge. Game schedules are available [here](#).



VIII. Time Off

Holidays

Paid holidays for union employees are specified in one's union contract. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and certain other salaried staff who work on a school calendar basis do not receive separate paid holidays.

Other employees (primarily 12-month employees) are eligible for paid holidays. The Ashland Public Schools generally recognize the following holidays but employees should check their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements to determine which days apply to their employment:

New Year's Day	Indigenous People's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Rosh Hashanah*
Presidents Day	Yom Kippur *
Good Friday*	Veteran's Day
Patriots Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Juneteenth	Day before Christmas*
Independence Day (July 4th)	Christmas Day
Labor Day	Diwali*
Eid el Fitr*	

*Holiday leave applies only when these days are included as non-school day(s) in the school calendar.

In some instances, holidays that fall on a Saturday are observed on the preceding Friday and holidays that fall on a Sunday are observed on the following Monday. Union contracts should be consulted for specific details where applicable.

For employees who are eligible for paid holidays to receive pay for the specific holiday, the holiday must fall within the employee's regular work week. For example, an employee whose regular work year is from September to June would not be eligible for the July 4th holiday; similarly, an employee who normally works a three day schedule consisting of Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays would not be eligible to be paid for Labor Day, which traditionally falls on a Monday.

Employees who are on an unpaid leave of absence or are otherwise absent without pay are not eligible to be paid for holidays.



Personal Days

Regular School Department employees are generally granted personal days each year. These days may be used for matters which cannot be taken care of outside your normal work hours. Employees requesting a Personal Day must submit their request through *Absence Management* and be sure to include a note to explain the purpose of the absence. The absence should be requested as far in advance as possible. The request will be forwarded electronically to the employee's Supervisor and Assistant Superintendent. The employee will receive an email notification indicating the leave request has been approved or denied. If denied, a reason will be given. Personal days may not be taken on Fridays or Mondays preceding or following school vacation periods or holidays.

Vacation

Many School Department employees work a 40 or 47 week schedule, which includes time off during school vacation weeks and during the summer. Therefore, additional vacation time is not associated with these work schedules. Other employees may be eligible for annual vacation leave based on the nature of their position, length of service, union contract and other factors. Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult their union contract for specific vacation eligibility requirements.

Employees requesting a Vacation Day must submit their request through *Absence Management* and be sure to include a note to explain the purpose of the absence. The absence should be requested as far in advance as possible. The request will be forwarded electronically to the employee's Supervisor and Assistant Superintendent. The employee will receive an email notification indicating the leave request has been approved or denied. If denied, a reason will be given.

Although every effort will be made to grant vacation requests at the time an employee desires, adequate coverage must be maintained to ensure effective and safe operations. Therefore, vacation requests must be approved by the Supervisor and the Superintendent in advance and vacation preference is not guaranteed. For purposes of earning and using vacation time, the work year is July 1 through June 30. Accrual of earned vacation time may vary by union and individual contracts, so employees should review their contract to determine the accrual method applicable to them. Employees may also contact the Human Resource Department for more information.

Vacations are meant to be taken in the year they are earned. An employee may only request unused vacation time be carried over into the following year under



very extenuating or emergency circumstances. Routine carry-over requests will not be approved. Your Supervisor must sign off on all requests for vacation carry-over, subject to approval of the Superintendent. Vacation time that is not used or pre-approved for carry-over will be forfeited as of June 30. Questions concerning vacation eligibility may be referred to the Human Resource Department (508-881-0156 Ext. 5).

Sick Leave

Regular full-time employees and part-time employees are eligible to accrue sick leave. Sick leave is to be used in the event of personal illness or eligible documented personal or family leave, non-job related injury or disability. Sick leave may also be applied to supplement Workers' Compensation payments up to the level of regular pay. Sick leave may be used for doctor's visits which cannot be scheduled outside normal work hours. Please refer to the Family/Medical Leave Policy which follows this section. Sick leave may not be used for reasons other than legitimate health related issues or disability.

Unused sick days may accumulate from year to year, up to maximums specified within union or individual employment contracts. Employees are encouraged to use sick leave days only when medically necessary to allow for the accumulation of sick leave towards income protection in the event of a lengthy illness or disability.

Under certain circumstances, an employee may "buy back" his or her accumulated sick leave days upon retirement within certain limitations. Please refer to applicable union or individual employment contracts for specific requirements.

Sick Leave Banks

Ashland Public Schools currently offer five sick leave banks:

- Teachers
- ESPs
- Central Office/Administrative Assistants
- Extended Day Program
- Custodian/Maintenance Workers

For more information, union employees should contact the building representative, and non-union employees should contact the Human Resource Department (508-881-0156 Ext. 5).



Family/Medical Leave Policy

Eligible employees are able to be granted up to 12 unpaid weeks for family or medical leave under federal law and up to 24 hours unpaid leave for family obligations under state law within a rolling 12-month period. The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) applies to employees who have been employed for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the prior 12 month period and who are seeking leave for the purpose of (i) caring for a son or daughter within the first 12 months after birth, adoption, or placement for adoption or foster care; (ii) caring for a spouse, son, daughter or parent who has a serious health condition; or (iii) because of an employee's own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform his or her job. Thirty days notice is required whenever possible. The FMLA does not preempt state laws that provide more generous family or medical leave.

Under Ashland Public Schools policy, accrued sick leave may be applied to approved leaves to care for a seriously ill family member or if the employee has a serious health condition in accordance with union contracts. Accrued leave, such as paid vacation or personal leave, may be used during any of the types of leave under the FMLA at the election of the employee. It is important to note that FMLA leave is cumulative for all covered purposes; that is, individual sick leave days, medical leave, maternity leave, time off for doctor's visits, time off for the care of a child or family member, etc., counts cumulatively towards the annual entitlement. Restrictions exist on combined FMLA leave eligibility for spouses employed by the same employer and the timing of certain leaves, among other factors. During an approved Family/Medical Leave, either paid or unpaid, your group health and life insurance benefits will be continued under the same terms as when you were working, for a maximum of twelve (12) weeks within a 12-month period.

For additional information on specifics of the Ashland Public Schools Family/Medical Leave policy contact the Human Resource Department (508-881-0156 Ext. 5)..

To request Family Leave, an employee must provide Chris Mathieu, Director of Finance and Operations (cmathieu@ashland.k12.ma.us) with a written request and appropriate medical documentation to support the request.

Parental Leave Policy

Two laws govern parental leave in Massachusetts:

1. Massachusetts Parental Leave Act (MPLA) – state law



2. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) – federal law

MPLA

An Act relative to Parental Leave expands the current maternity leave law

(MMLA) [MGL c.149, s.105D](#)

1. The parental leave law is now gender neutral. Both men and women are entitled to parental leave.
2. Employee is entitled to up to eight weeks of unpaid leave, but Ashland Public Schools allows accrued sick leave days to be applied to the portion of this leave that is documented as medically necessary for the employee.
3. If two employees of the same employer give birth to or adopt the same child, the two employees are entitled to an aggregate of 8 weeks of leave.
4. Eight weeks is consecutive, beginning at birth of the baby or placement of the child. Holiday/Vacation periods do NOT extend the leave.
5. MPLA runs concurrently with FMLA leave. (See section 4 below)
6. In the event that the Ashland Public Schools permits an employee to take an extended parental leave of absence (longer than the 12 weeks allowed by FMLA) the employee may maintain his/her insurance, however he/she is responsible for the entire cost of the health insurance.

FMLA

1. Covers male and female employees upon the birth of their child, or placement of an adopted child.
2. Employee must have been employed by Ashland Public Schools for the previous 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours during this 12 month period.
3. Female and male employees are eligible for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12 month rolling period. Accrued sick leave days may be applied to the portion of the leave that is documented as medically necessary for the employee. For example, most doctors will document up to 8 weeks of medical leave following the birth of a child. The employee may apply accrued sick leave, if available, for these 8 weeks. If the employee wishes to use all 12 weeks of the FMLA available leave then 8 weeks would be paid and 4 weeks would be unpaid. If the employee has a medical reason to extend the leave past the 8 weeks documentation from the doctor would be necessary.



4. Twelve weeks runs concurrently with MPLA leave but does not include periods of time when employees do not regularly work such as, for teachers, during school vacation weeks or during summer break.
5. Special rules apply to employees taking leave in close proximity to the beginning or ending of the school year; to family members of an individual in the armed services; and married couples who both work for Ashland Public Schools. Please contact the Human Resource Department for more information.

Written Notice of Leave

If leave is foreseeable, employees are expected to provide written notice of requested leave as early as possible, and no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of the requested leave. If 30 days notice is not practicable, such as because of a lack of knowledge, a change in circumstances, or a medical emergency, written notice must be given as soon as is practicable.

Insurance Benefits on Leave

Health insurance benefits are maintained throughout an MMLA and/or FMLA leave. During the leave, the employee continues to pay the employee portion of the premiums, while the Ashland Public Schools pays the employer portion of the premiums. In the event that the Ashland Public Schools permits an employee to take an extended parental leave of absence (longer than the 12 weeks) the employee may maintain his/her insurance, however he/she is responsible for the entire cost of the health insurance.

Personal Medical Leave

If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days, he/she *may be required* to provide written medical documentation to the Superintendent of Schools to justify the absence. Employees must review their respective collective bargaining agreements to determine if/when written medical documentation is required. Employees may also contact the Human Resources for more information.

Absences of 10 days or longer require the employee to complete the Certification of Temporary Disability For Ten Working Days or More form, (see Appendix B). This form must be completed by the employee's doctor and returned to the Human Resource Department.



If written medical documentation verifying the need for absence is not received in a timely manner, the absent employee is subject to being placed on unpaid status, and is also subject to being deemed as having resigned employment by abandoning his or her job or having terminated his or her employment. Medical documentation verifying the need for absence from work may also be required to support absence at any time, including, without limitation, in the event of excessive sporadic absence.

Employees may use their accumulated sick leave to be paid during the period of a documented medical FMLA leave due to their own personal illness.

Extended Personal Medical Leave

If an employee's need for leave extends beyond twelve (12) weeks due to his or her own medically documented illness or disability, he or she may request to be granted an extended medical leave following expiration of the 12 weeks. The employee may request to continue to be paid using accumulated sick leave.

Once personal sick leave and any approved Sick Leave Bank days have been exhausted, the leave will be unpaid. While on approved personal medical leave, employees are eligible for group health insurance coverage on the same basis as when they were working, including premium contributions from the Town. If you are on unpaid leave, the Town of Ashland will bill you for any applicable deductions. Requests to extend Personal Medical Leaves of Absence must be made in writing to the Superintendent, with appropriate medical documentation.

Please also see Long Term Disability (LTD) benefits.

Communicable Diseases

Infectious diseases are illnesses caused by specific organisms: viruses, bacteria, fungi or parasites. Infectious diseases that can be spread from one individual to another are called contagious or communicable diseases. The Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) at 105 CMR 300.000 establishes specific reporting and surveillance requirements and outline the isolation and quarantine requirements for contacts of persons infected with certain communicable diseases in school settings. The APS nurses follow all Massachusetts Regulations and Department of Public Health (DPH) Guidelines. Please contact your school if you have been diagnosed with an infectious or communicable disease or if you have any questions or concerns.



The DPH recommends that all adults working in schools (including volunteers and student teachers) have immunity to vaccine-preventable diseases. Staff members without documentation of immunity may be excluded if a vaccine-preventable disease manifests in the school, per CMR and DPH Guidelines. Please see your school nurse for a list of recommended vaccinations.

Employee Leave for Family Obligations Under State Law

Under state law, eligible employees are able to take up to 24 hours leave for family obligations during any fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). This law applies to employees who have been employed for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the prior 12 month period and who are seeking leave for the purpose of participating in school activities directly related to the advancement of the employee's son or daughter, such as a Parent-Teacher conference or interview for a new school; to accompany a son or daughter to a routine medical or dental appointment such as a routine check-up or vaccination; or to accompany an elderly (60 years or more) relative to a routine medical or dental appointment or for other professional services such as interviewing at a nursing home. Leave may be taken in increments of at least one hour for up to 24 hours in a fiscal year. This leave augments leave taken under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, as it is for a different purpose.

This leave is unpaid unless an employee chooses to apply accrued paid vacation, sick or personal time as provided in applicable collective bargaining agreements and school department policy, and except as may be provided for in state law or town ordinance. This leave does not diminish any greater leave that may be provided for in a collective bargaining agreement or other school policy.

Seven days notice in writing is required, whenever foreseeable, to the extent possible. If the need is not foreseeable, the employee must notify his/her immediate Supervisor as soon as is practicable.

Bereavement Leave

Employees are eligible for bereavement leave in the event of a death of a close relative or member of the household. Specific family members and number of days awarded for bereavement leave are listed in collective bargaining agreements and contracts.

Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult these collective bargaining agreements for more detailed information with respect to



bereavement leave. Bereavement leave days are to be taken at the time the event occurs, and cannot be carried over.

Military Leave

When an employee is called to military service (including active duty, active duty training, inactive duty training, full-time National Guard duty or an absence to determine fitness to perform services), the employee must give advance notice to the Superintendent of the military leave.

Written notice of military service may include provision of copies of orders or other written documentation with respect to being called to service. If, however, military necessity precludes providing notice or giving notice is otherwise impossible or unreasonable, the employee may have an appropriate military officer provide such notice.

Employees in the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve who participate in annual two-week active duty or training programs may apply for a paid short-term military leave of absence provided that such service cannot be scheduled during a school vacation period. Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements should consult those collective bargaining agreements for additional information with respect to military leave.

Consistent with the practices of the Town of Ashland, the Ashland Public Schools pay an employee who is on approved military leave the difference between the amount of military pay received from the government and the amount of regular salary for those on approved military leave (with the exception of any employee who is assigned to theatres of combat operations as described below). The employee is required to provide to the Payroll Department documentation of the amount of military pay he or she received from the government so that the appropriate offset can be made.

Under special statute, employees of the Town of Ashland, including employees of the Ashland Public Schools, who are assigned and present in a theatre of combat operations such as Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001 are eligible for the following pay and benefits: continuation of full base salary without any reduction for pay or allowances received from the U.S. government during the period of military leave; up to five (5) calendar days of pre-deployment paid leave for those required to be on such military leave for 90 days or more, such leave not to be deducted from personal, sick, vacation, or other leave, or be deducted from creditable service for retirement purposes; no loss of seniority during period of leave; no loss of accrued vacation, sick, or personal leave during such period of



military leave; and no loss of service credit towards retirement during such period of military leave.

Jury Duty

Jury duty leave is provided to those employees who are requested to serve jury duty. The District will provide payment for the difference between the employee's normal earnings and the earnings received from the court so the employee does not incur a loss in earnings.

This leave does not cover an employee who is called to court on a subpoena or summons. Personal days may be used for this purpose.

Employees who receive a jury duty notice, subpoena or summons should report it to their Supervisor immediately so that arrangements can be made to cover their work, if necessary.

Employees are required to provide a copy of the payment received from the court to their Supervisor and the APS Payroll Coordinator. The difference will be paid in the employee's next regular paycheck.

There may be times when an employee will be released from jury duty during the middle of the workday. If this happens, the employee should call his or her Supervisor to determine if he or she should report to work for the remainder of the day.

Unpaid Personal Leaves of Absence

Unpaid personal leaves of absence for individual educational or other valid reasons may be requested and are subject to approval by the Superintendent. Such leaves may not exceed one (1) year except as otherwise specified in union contracts. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within the deadlines specified in union contracts. Additional information can be obtained from the Human Resource Department (508-881-0156 Ext. 5).

This leave does not diminish any greater leave that may be provided for in a collective bargaining agreement or other school policy. Seven days notice in writing is required, whenever foreseeable, to the extent possible. If the need is not foreseeable, the employee must notify his/her immediate Supervisor as soon as practicable.



IX. General Information

Ashland School Policies

The Ashland School Committee has posted its [Policy Manual](#) on the district website. Please familiarize yourself with all District policies. It is expected that all employees will follow these policies.

Buildings and Grounds

All buildings and schoolyards should be kept clean at all times. With input from the Head Custodian and/or Director of Facilities, Building Administrators are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of custodians, using the appropriate evaluation form. Daily schedules for custodial work will be set up by the Director of Facilities and should be reviewed regularly by the Building Administrator. Building Administrators should check regularly to make sure all parts of the building and grounds are kept in a clean and presentable condition at all times.

Cafeterias and Nutrition Services

We welcome you to enjoy the district's best benefit: we house the BEST restaurants in Ashland, for taste, quality and price! We serve both breakfast and lunch when school is in session. Our philosophy is to promote healthy eating for students and staff alike, therefore preparing the majority of our meals from scratch, always using wholesome ingredients. Adult lunch price is \$4.25, tax included.

While you are welcome to purchase the offerings from our student menus (<http://www.ashland.k12.ma.us/nutrition-services>), you may also pre-order lunch in the morning (by 9:30 AM) and the cafeteria staff will prepare your meal to your specifications; for example, no tomatoes? No problem! Turkey on a salad instead of on a sandwich? Happy to make it!. You can order deli sandwiches and salads any day and your order will be ready for you so you don't have to wait in the serving line. Please go to the district website (<http://www.ashland.k12.ma.us/>) and hover over the "Staff" tab. The lunch ordering link is the first on the drop down. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Nutrition Services office, or the Nutrition Manager in your school.

Pittaway: Eric Dreze x 8078
Warren: Alyson Fernandez x 8058
Mindess: Crystal Paynter x 8057

edreze@ashland.k12.ma.us
afernandez@ashland.k12.ma.us
cpaynter@ashland.k12.ma.us



Middle School: Andrea Lareau x 8039
High School: Heidi Kampersal x 8021

alareau@ashland.k12.ma.us
hkampersal@ashland.k12.ma.us

You may purchase meals with cash or check for each purchase, although we recommend signing up for a point of sale (POS) account and putting money on your account. Once your account is set up, simply enter your ID number into a PIN pad at the cash register and your account will be debited. This helps the lines move more quickly than paying with cash. Please call Nutrition Services if you do not know your PIN number.

To set up a point of sale (POS) NutriKids lunch account, follow these steps:

1. **Account Setup:** Your NutriKids lunch account is not created automatically. To set it up, send us your employee number, which is located in the upper left corner of your paycheck.
2. **Funding Your Account:** Once your account is created, you need to add funds before you can place orders online. Please note that **no charging** is allowed.
3. **Adding Funds:** Due to free meals for all students, the lines are long, and no money is accepted at the register. You can add money to your account in the following ways:
 - Online: Visit [MySchoolBucks](#) to add funds.
 - In-Person: Pay by cash or check at your school. Bring your payment to the kitchen manager in the morning or before lunch service.
4. **MySchoolBucks Account:**
 - Register for an account at [MySchoolBucks](#).
 - Sign up for low-balance email notifications.
 - Enable auto-pay to ensure your account never reaches \$0.
 - Download the free mobile app for Android, iPhone, and iPad.

Please feel free to contact Nutrition Services with any comments or suggestions.

Dir. of Nutrition Services: Regina Wilkinson x4032 rwilkinson@ashland.k12.ma.us
Administrative Assistant: Paula Caffrey x4033 pcaffrey@ashland.k12.ma.us

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Employees are asked to use cell phones and other electronic devices appropriately, particularly in the school environment. Phones should be off or set to receive silent messages during instructional times.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All Teachers, School Nurses, Administrators, and Guidance personnel are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. A detailed definition of an abused or neglected child is given in [Appendix C: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting](#).



Teachers and other staff should report suspicion of child abuse orally to the Building Administrator. After investigation, the Building Administrator or his/her designee will report the incident to the Superintendent and to the Department of Children and Families. A written report, on the appropriate form (51A), shall be filed with the Department of Children and Families within 48 hours of the initial call.

Civil Rights Laws/District Coordinator Information

All programs, activities and employment opportunities provided by the Ashland Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. Questions regarding implementation of these practices should be addressed to the appropriate coordinator listed below.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Statute prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This statute ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation in programs or activities receiving federal funds (or the benefits of) on account of their membership in one of these protected categories (42 USC S2000d). This statute has been interpreted to prohibit the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

Coordinator: Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0155



Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, the federal law that prohibits most workplace harassment and discrimination, covers all private employers, state and local governments, and educational institutions with 15 or more employees. In addition to prohibiting discrimination against workers because of race, color, national origin, religion, and sex, those protections have been extended to include barring against discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, sex stereotyping, and sexual harassment of employees.

Coordinators:

Michael A. Caira, Jr., Asst. Superintendent
75 Central Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0150

Kelley St. Coeur, Principal
Ashland High School
65 East Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0177

Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

This federal statute prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunities to an individual based on certain protected classifications including national origin. It specifically prohibits denying equal educational opportunities by failing to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. [20 USC S1203 (f)]

Coordinator: Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0155

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX requires that schools adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination and have a grievance procedure



through which students can complain of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. State law requires Massachusetts employers have a policy against sexual harassment. (M.G.L. Ch.151B, S3A)

Coordinators:

Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
Student-Centered
Ashland Middle School
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0155

Christy Arnold, Director of English Language Education
Faculty-Centered
Ashland Middle School
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0150

MA General Laws Chapter 76, Section 5

This state law provides that "Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides. 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."

Coordinator: Michael Caira, Asst. Superintendent
75 Central Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0150

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The regulations implementing Section 504 require that public schools provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in the recipient's



jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap. (34 CFR 104.33)

Coordinator: Jennifer Taylor, Director of Counseling and Social-Emotional Learning
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0150

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

Title I is designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. Staff should know that special education students are not deemed ineligible for Title I services because they receive special education services. Also, school districts must ensure that Title I funds are not being misused (e.g. referring an ESL student to a Title I program in order to meet the student's language needs rather than providing an ESL program/class).

Coordinator: Michael Caira, Jr., Asst. Superintendent
75 Central Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0175

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The regulations implementing the ADA provide that: "A public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this part, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance with this part or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by this part. The public entity must make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) designated pursuant to this paragraph." [34 CFR 35.107 (a)]

Coordinator: Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0155



McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires that school districts immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the document usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or attend school where they are temporarily residing.

Coordinator: Brittany Hawkins, Director of Student Services
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
508-881-0155

Non-Discrimination

All students and staff are to be treated equally without regard to sex, race, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation, as required by Title IX, Section 504, and Chapter 622 regulations. Teachers should avoid using instructional materials which depict stereotypically sexist or racially biased situations. Teachers are expected to compensate for any bias which they may encounter in their classrooms.

The following grievance procedures have been established for employees who wish to register complaints concerning their civil rights:

Level One: An employee who has a complaint shall meet with his/her immediate Supervisor or Building Administrator within fifteen (15) school days of the event giving rise to the complaint or within fifteen (15) school days of the time when the employee should have reasonably known of its occurrence. The employee shall state the nature of the grievance and the remedies sought. The Supervisor/Building Administrator shall investigate and submit a resolution of the issue to the grievant within fifteen (15) school days.

Level Two: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, or if no decision has been rendered within fifteen (15) school days, said grievant may file, within fifteen (15) school days, a formal complaint, in writing, to the Director of Student Services as the district's Civil Rights Coordinator. The written complaint shall include the nature of the grievance, the names of involved parties or witnesses and remedies sought. The Director of Student Services will fully investigate the complaint and submit a report of the findings, within fifteen (15) days of the filing of the grievance. The report shall include a decision relative to resolution and be disseminated to the claimant,



other parties named in the grievance, the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee.

Level Three: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, or if no decision has been rendered within fifteen (15) school days, said grievant may file, within fifteen (15) school days, an appeal, in writing, to the Superintendent of Schools. The appeal to the Superintendent shall contain the details of the grievance, the decision rendered at Level Two and remedies sought. Within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the appeal, the Superintendent will render a decision, in writing, as to the disposition of the appeal.

Level Four: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Three, or if no decision has been rendered within fifteen (15) school days, said grievant may file, within fifteen (15) school days, an appeal, in writing, to the Ashland School Committee. The written appeal shall set forth the details of the grievance, the decision rendered at Level Three and remedies sought. Within thirty (30) days of submission of the written appeal, the School Committee will meet with the grievant in an effort to settle the grievance.

Computer Network Access

All personnel of the Ashland Public Schools have access to local and district computer networks. All school personnel who access district technology resources must comply with the Ashland Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy in the [Policy Manual](#).

Computer Network Password Security

All passwords must be kept confidential and changed frequently. Never disclose your password or leave your password in an unsecured location (a desk drawer or under your keyboard).

Consideration for the Observance of Religious Holidays

Out of respect for diversity and the need to be sensitive to the religious practices of our students, every effort should be made to avoid scheduling important school activities on major religious holidays. In the event this is not possible, a student must be given a reasonable method to compensate for missed opportunities and reasonable time to complete missed assignments.



CORI Requirements

All employees and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children are required by state law to complete an authorization form for the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) screening.

Display of Materials

Materials and decorations in a school must be displayed in a manner consistent with state regulations. These regulations are available in all school offices.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ([20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99](#)) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Email Accounts

All personnel of the Ashland Public Schools have access to an email account. To create a new account, please contact your Supervisor. Please remember that emails are public records.

Equipment

No equipment may be taken from a building without written permission from the Building Administrator. No chairs, stands, or other property may be loaned to individuals or groups without permission of the Superintendent.

Evacuation/Safety Drills

Every student in all schools shall be advised of the evacuation/safety drill procedure or shall take part in an evacuation drill within three days after entering school. The head of the fire department, or his/her designee, shall visit each school at least four times each year for the purpose of conducting evacuation drills and questioning the Teachers and Supervisors. These drills shall be conducted without advance warning to the school personnel other than the



person in charge of the school at the time. A dated log of all evacuation drills will be kept in the school office. After regular exit routes are well known, it is essential to block one of the regular exits now and then so that alternate routes may be found and used calmly.

ID Badges

All employees are required to visibly wear an ID Badge at all times while in the school or on school grounds.

Mileage Reimbursement

Personnel traveling between school buildings in the course of their work day must complete a mileage reimbursement sheet (available in the Business Office) accounting for exact mileage for each day.

Reimbursement will be at the mileage reimbursement rate as established by the Town of Ashland. This reimbursement constitutes full reimbursement for the costs of operating the vehicle including gasoline, oil, insurance and repairs. Employees who use their personal automobile for business travel must maintain adequate liability insurance coverage. The employee will not be reimbursed for the cost of insurance.

Ashland Public Schools will not reimburse other expenses including but not limited to: driving or parking violations, fines, gasoline, automobile repairs, vehicle damage or insurance deductibles as a result of an accident, break down, tow or resultant meals and lodging.

Personnel submitting mileage reimbursement sheets for conference/workshop attendance must have prior approval (via a *Request for Professional Day* form) and submit a mileage reimbursement sheet (available in the Business Office), accounting for exact mileage for the travel. Travel to and from conferences/workshops will be from the employee's house to the meeting place minus the employee's regular mileage from their home to their school. For example, if the mileage to a conference from an employee's home is 50 miles but the employee would normally travel 30 miles to their school, the reimbursement will be for 20 miles each way.

Reimbursement sheets must be signed by the employee's Supervisor and be sent to the Business Office for processing.



Meal Reimbursement

Personnel must have meal reimbursement approved on their *Request for Professional Day (Conference, Workshop or Meeting) Form* (found in [AshlandPD](#)). Meal reimbursement will be allowed for breakfast and/or dinners when the employee has been approved for an overnight conference, workshop or meeting. Reimbursement for lunches will be allowed for conferences, workshops or meetings that do not have lunches included as part of the conference, workshop or meeting.

All meal reimbursements require an itemized receipt showing the date and time of purchase, what was purchased, and the amount paid. There will be no exceptions to this requirement. Meals will be reimbursed up to the amount paid by the employee up to the following limits:

Breakfast: reimbursement up to \$10.00
Lunch: reimbursement up to \$20.00
Dinner: reimbursement up to \$30.00

If reimbursement is requested for two or more meals in the same day, the combined reimbursement limits may be used in total. For example, if you are requesting reimbursement for both lunch and dinner on the same day, the total of both meals will be reimbursed up to \$50.00 with no limits per meal.

Money or Valuables

Money and valuables of any description should not be left in a desk or closet in any school. If valuables cannot be placed in a school vault or safe overnight, they should be taken home.

Physical Restraint

The Ashland Public Schools comply with the provisions of [603 CMR Sec 46.00](#) dealing with restraint of students in the public schools. All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the school's restraint policy during the All Staff Meeting at the start of each school year. Monthly training sessions will be held for employees hired after the start of the school year.

Professional Attire



All faculty and employees of the Ashland Public Schools serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees shall dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs, and the impressionable youth they serve.

Reuse, Reduce, Recycle

The Town of Ashland participates in a single-stream recycling program. Please place clean recyclable materials in the blue recycling containers in individual rooms or in the large blue barrels throughout the buildings. Paper, plastic and aluminum can all be recycled together.

In addition, please consider contributing to the following green program to help our planet, teach our students good stewardship, and raise funds for our schools:

Planet Aid: When cleaning out closets, please bring clothing, other textiles, shoes and plush toys to the yellow Planet Aid collection bins at each school and the Cedar Street Fire Station. Torn or stained but otherwise clean items can be reused as factory rags so nothing winds up in the landfill. Your castoffs go to those in need both locally and in the most impoverished communities on the planet, and the schools receive seven cents per pound. All donations are tax deductible. For a tax receipt, please send an e-mail to info@planetaid.org with your Name (first and last), Address, Date and Location where you donated.

SCHOOL SAFETY ANONYMOUS TIP LINE

1-844-5-SAYNOW (1-844-572-9669)
WWW.SAYSOMETHING.NET

The safety of students, staff and families is a priority for the Ashland Public Schools. However, no community is safe from the threats of violence, drugs and bullying that endanger public schools nationwide. Each year in schools and communities across the United States, there are millions of youth who hurt themselves or others through verbal, physical and digital means. These behaviors can cause youth to experience emotional trauma and physical injury, mental health or wellness issues, stress or anxiety, and/or feelings of being unsafe. Too often the outcome results in self-harm, suicide or homicide. We have partnered with Sandy Hook Promise to bring their program and anonymous tip line to Ashland Public Schools.



Say Something Anonymous Reporting System (SS-ARS) provides an app, website and 24/7 crisis telephone hotline for youth and adults to submit anonymous tips. It features nationally certified, 24/7 Crisis Center with multi-lingual counselors trained in suicide and crisis management to receive and disposition all tips received via app, website and telephone hotline. The system provides in-person system set-up and training of ALL students, school personnel and law enforcement.

Student Handbooks

Each year, parents and/or students shall sign a form contained within the Student Handbook stating they have read the Student Handbook. All handbooks are available on the respective schools' websites, accessible from the [APS website](#).

Student Safety

Teachers and other staff members are reminded that a primary concern is the continuous well-being and safety of children in our charge. In today's litigious times, caution must be applied to guard against potential personal liability. All staff members should observe, but not be limited to the following:

1. Assume your assigned teaching or other responsibilities punctually.
2. **Never leave pupils unattended.** Teachers must be in the classroom or greeting students at the door upon entrance.
3. Provide alert supervision at all times.
4. Report immediately to the Building Administrator any dangerous or potentially dangerous conditions. Follow up verbal reports in writing.

Telephone Calls

School telephones should not be used by teachers or pupils for private calls except for emergencies.

Universal Health Precautions

All staff members will have access to a Universal Precautions Kit to be kept readily available containing gloves and gauze pads to be used in case of emergency. If staff members need a replenishment of these materials, they



should see the school nurse. It is recommended that these be attached to your bulletin board for easy access.

Unsolicited Salesmen and Solicitors

Unsolicited salesmen and solicitors should not be admitted into a building either in or out of school hours without written permission from the Superintendent.

Visitors to Buildings

All visitors to any school building must report to the office and obtain an identification badge. If you see someone in the building without a badge, whom you do not recognize, call the office at once.

Website

The district website can be found at <http://www.ashland.k12.ma.us/>. The following highlights our on-line content, please check frequently for updates.

Home

[Vision and Mission Statements](#)

[Sign-up for School & District Newsletters](#): Allows you to sign up for or remove yourself from email distribution lists for each school, School Committee, Student Services, Athletics, Decisions at Every Turn Coalition, and Community Education. We encourage all members of the school community to sign up for applicable newsletters to stay abreast of the activities in the district. You may find inspiration in the activities of those in other buildings or departments, as well as in your own.

[Calendars](#): This page features a .pdf file with high-level school dates including the first and last days of school, early release days, teacher professional days, holidays and vacations. A master Events Calendar is also provided to highlight what is happening district-wide. You can also link to the individual school calendars for more detail.

[Career Opportunities](#): Lists current openings in the district for faculty and staff including part-time opportunities.



[Ashland District Profile \(DESE\)](#): Provides a link to the Ashland Public Schools District Profile page on the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website.

[DESE District Report Card](#): Provides a link to the Report Card for the Ashland Public Schools on the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website.

[Staff Directory](#): Allows you to look up faculty and staff email addresses; if you are unsure of the correct spelling, search by Job Title or School Location.

[Contact Us](#): Feel free to send a non-time-critical email to the Superintendent or Administrators to ask questions or offer input, or share kudos for a job well done by someone in the district.

School Committee

[Policy Manual](#): Access the [Ashland School Committee Policy Manual](#) which provides the high-level policies that govern our district; also listed are meeting dates, agendas, minutes, contact information for School Committee members, and links to partnering state and federal agencies.

[School Committee Goals](#): Access the latest goals for the District by the School Committee..

[Agendas](#): Provides links to Agendas for School Committee meetings.

[Minutes](#): Provides links to Minutes of School Committee meetings.

[Video](#): Provides links to Videos of School Committee meetings.

[Twitter](#): Access the School Committee Twitter feed.

Schools

A link is provided to each of our schools as well as information on [hours of operation](#), including early release dismissal times for each building.

Departments



[Administration](#): Provides links to the central office administrative team which provides leadership and management of district issues. Feel free to contact the offices of the Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Director of Student Services; Director of Finance and Operations; Director of Technology and Operations; Building and Grounds Supervisor; and the Director of Nutrition Services.

[Athletics](#): Locate updates, schedules and forms for Ashland Middle School and Ashland High School sports, as well as our philosophy on student athletes, and coaching opportunities.

[Budget Information](#): Provides current and prior fiscal year budget reports and presentations.

[Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment](#): Provides information on K-12 curriculum standards, current philosophies and programs, professional development and more.

[Facilities](#): Provides information on Facility usage and department employment opportunities.

[Fundraising](#): Provides the district policy and procedures for hosting fundraisers, as well as a master fundraising calendar to assist organizations in timing their efforts for maximum success.

[Health Services](#): Lists the district physician and school nurses, and medical policies and procedures.

[Nutrition Services](#): Provides information on current menus, pricing, point of sale system, free and reduced meals and online payments.

[Student Services](#): Provides information to engage the Special Education and Student Services teams.

[Technology](#): Provides the district's technology mission statement, information on reporting IT issues through SchoolDude or to the Help Desk, and a listing of web-hosted applications.

Parents

[Registration for New Students](#): Find forms and school contact information for registering new pupils.



[Bus Information](#): Provides current bus routes, parent information and multi-lingual forms.

[Ashland Extended Day Program](#): EDP is a self-supporting program offering enrichment experiences to K-6 children needing supervised care when school is not in session.

[Meal Payments/MySchoolBucks](#): Login to view and update student account balances for meal plans.

[Accidental Medical Insurance Brochure](#): Information outlining optional Medical Insurance Accident Coverage Program for full-time K-12 registered students as well as staff.

[iParent/Student Login \(AHS/AMS only\)](#): Access the High School and Middle School parent and student portal for iPass, the district's on-line scheduling and grading system.

[School Closing FAQs](#): See how decisions are made and where to find out if school will be closed or delayed in emergency situations or inclement weather.

Staff

[Staff Lunch Order Form](#): This Nutrition Services online order form allows you to pre-order your lunch in the morning and have it ready for pickup by lunchtime.

[School Email Portal](#): Brings you to the sign-in page for your school Google mail account.

[SchoolDude](#): Allows you to manage Maintenance or Technology support requests. Our organizational account number is 281448512, and you will be asked to enter your personal systems login credentials.

[iPass](#): Brings you to the district's administration software for student demographics, grades, assessments, attendance and more.

[eSped](#): Provides software to create and deliver IEPs, transition plans, progress reports and more.

[Absence Management Login](#): Takes you to the absence system login page.

[TeachPoint](#): Brings you to the login screen for educator evaluation software tools.



[Professional Development](#): Tracks PDP's and PD activity within the District.

[SAFIS](#): Provides information and procedures to comply with the Massachusetts law that requires fingerprint-based criminal history record checks for all public and private school employees, transportation providers, substitute teachers, field study students and for designated volunteers and employees of school vendors.

[APS Application for Change in Payroll Status](#): Complete this form to submit a lane change request.

Employee Handbook: Provides a link to the electronic version of this handbook.

[Mandatory Trainings](#): Staff must complete online training on subjects such as Ethics, Bullying, Civil Rights, Harassment, Restraint and more. Mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

[New Teacher Mentoring](#): Learn how in-house peer mentoring contributes to new teacher(s) success at Ashland Public Schools.

[Small Necessities Leave Certification](#): Complete this form in addition to requesting time off through Frontline to utilize the Small Necessities Leave Act, [Mass General Law c 149, s 52D](#).

Community

[Community Education](#): Provides extra-curricular fee-based classes for students and adults, from Zumba to private music lessons, driver's education to SAT prep, and much more.

[Facility Rental Sign-up](#): Useful for those wishing to see availability of a school room or field to reserve/rent a facility.

[Ashland K-12 PTO](#) works within the community to raise funds for enrichment programs and school grants; hosts social events that bring together students, families, and faculty to promote friendship and good will; and to show staff appreciation.



[Ashland Parent Advisory Council](#), also known as ASHPAC, works towards the understanding, respect, support and appropriate education for all children with special needs and/or disabilities in our community. ASHPAC meets regularly to share current information, and holds fundraisers to bring in guest lecturers and sponsor scholarships.

[Ashland Education Foundation, Inc.](#) aims to broaden community support for education through local and corporate fundraising, promote excellence by encouraging educators to take innovative approaches to education through teacher grants, and serve as a conduit for foundation, corporate and individual donors through an annual gala and capital campaign.

[Clocker Club](#) is our non-profit all sports booster organization made up of students, parents, teachers, coaches and interested community members who raise funds to support athletic programs at Ashland High School.

[Ashland Music Association](#) aims to arouse and maintain an enthusiastic interest in grade 5-12 band and chorus, fundraise to bring financial support to the music programs, and lend a hand with logistics at performances to free music teachers to focus on the performers.

[Decisions at Every Turn Coalition](#) is a community-based group with stakeholders from many organizations throughout Ashland. The group is dedicated to creating a safe and healthy Ashland by working as a community to prevent, reduce, and solve the problems that can lead to youth substance abuse.

[Town of Ashland](#): Link to information on the Town's home page. Did you know you can sign up to receive time-sensitive notices from the Town too? Click [here](#) to subscribe.

[Mindess School Building Project](#): Website used to chronicle the workflow process of building a new elementary school in Ashland to replace the current non-ADA compliant and deteriorating David A. Mindess School.



X. Teaching and Learning

504 Accommodation Plans

Each school has one or more building administrators who are designated as 504 Compliance Officers. At the beginning of the school year, the Compliance Officer will provide each classroom Teacher with a copy of the 504 Accommodation Plan for any student in their class for whom there is a current plan. During the school year, if a Teacher or other member of the professional staff identifies a student who may be eligible for accommodations, a referral form should be completed and submitted to the Building Administrator or a 504 Compliance Officer in the building. Questions that cannot be answered at the building level should be addressed to the Director of Student Services who is the District 504 Coordinator.

Curriculum Guides

Our standards-based curriculum can be found in each school. Power standard work and/or curriculum guides have been developed or are in the process of being developed. Please consult the Building Administrator for more information. The [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#) can be found on the DESE website.

Discipline

Classroom management is an important facet of school life. Students are held to an established code of conduct which is outlined for every grade configuration in the Student Handbook. Parents are required to review these policies on an annual basis. All handbooks are available on the respective schools' websites, accessible from the [APS website](#).

Blueprint for Continuous Student Improvement

The [Blueprint for Continuous Student Improvement](#) is available online and in each Building Administrator's office. The improvement priorities are:

- Equity in Student Growth and Closing of Achievement Gaps
- Improvement of Student, Faculty, and Staff Well-Being
- Partnerships with Families and Community
- Educator Excellence



Exemption from Activities Due to Religious or Other Beliefs

Upon parental request, a Building Administrator may exempt a child from participation in certain school activities due to conflict with religious or personal beliefs. The Building Administrator will notify Teachers when an exemption request has been approved.

Grants Management

When applying for grants, please inform your supervisor and the Grants Coordinator, JodiRene Miller (508-881-0156). If your project involves technology, discuss with the Technology Director before applying to ensure we can support it. Notify the Grants Coordinator upon award so your grant can be accepted by School Committee. Note: all items acquired through a grant belong to Ashland Public Schools and are to remain when an employee leaves the program for which the items were requested.

Medication Administration to Students

In accordance with DPH regulations concerning a student's self-administration of a prescription medication, no school district shall prohibit students from possessing and self-administering prescription inhalers for asthma, prescription enzymes supplements for cystic fibrosis, glucose monitoring test and insulin delivery system for students with diabetes, or epinephrine to treat life threatening allergies. All medication must be dispensed by the School Nurse.

Based on Standing Orders from the School Doctor with Parent Consent, students may receive Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Tums and/or Lozenges from the School Nurse.

Home Schooling

Parents who opt to educate their children at home must contact the appropriate Building Administrator of the grade level of the student. Paperwork will be sent to the parents annually and must be filled out and returned for approval by the Building Administrator.



Home Tutoring

The Building Administrator should be notified of all students who require home/hospital tutoring as provided under [M.G.L. Chapter 71B, Chapter 766](#).

Homeless Students

Students living in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, on the street, in an abandoned building or trailer or doubled-up with friends or relatives are deemed homeless by the Department of Education. These students have the right to immediately enroll in school, choose to stay in their old school even if they are living in a different district, get transportation to and from school, qualify for free lunch and receive the same services as all other students. If you believe one of your students is homeless or is a ward of the state, contact the District Homeless Student Liaison.

See also [McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act](#).

Kindergarten Entrance Age

The Building Administrator should verify by birth certificate that each pupil entering kindergarten will be five years of age on or before August 31.

Life Threatening Allergy Policy

Please see our policy on managing [Life Threatening Allergies](#). Reasonable accommodations must be provided regarding education and education related benefits to all students.

Nutrition and Curriculum

Our Director of Nutrition Services is excited to work with you when there is an opportunity for nutrition and curriculum to intersect. For example, if your science classes are studying hybrid techniques, we may be able to have hybrid fruit (such as pluots) available in the cafeteria; if you're studying the Incas, we can serve quinoa. Let us know the staple food of the era you are studying and we will do our best to incorporate it into the menu, or have samples for your grade. Keep in mind that menus are developed a month in advance, so the earlier you contact Nutrition Services the more likely we can collaborate.

Maybe you'd like to plant a garden to study science or farming; our Director of



Nutrition would be happy to help you plan the project and then cook and serve the harvest! In addition, there is curriculum for easily integrating nutrition into the core curriculum. Contact the Nutrition Services office for more information. All ideas are welcome and encouraged!

If Students Won't Be in the Cafeteria for Lunch

If you will be taking your students on a field trip or doing a special project where your students will not be eating in the cafeteria on a given day, please notify both the Director of Nutrition and your school's Nutrition Manager as soon as you plan your event, and least one week in advance so they can adjust their food orders accordingly. This will keep us from overspending, over preparing, and wasting good food.

In addition, **you must be sure that students who are eligible for free or reduced meals have access to meals without identifying them.** The Nutrition Services Office is not allowed to give out eligibility information. If you are going on a field trip and requesting students bring a sack lunch, these students may not be able to comply and may be too embarrassed to say so. If you will be having such an event, you must tell **all students** that they can pre-order a lunch in the cafeteria and they can pick it up the morning of the event. These orders must be placed at least three days in advance. This alleviates you from having to make lists and makes it easier for students to be fed without anxiety. It also allows students who pay for meals to get a sack lunch from school. Please do not ask staff to prepare sack lunches for all your students who receive benefits as they are not allowed to do this.

Opening Exercises

The daily salute to the flag shall be part of the opening exercises in all schools. Public Law 829: states..."that the pledge of allegiance to the flag, 'I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all,' be rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart."

Opening exercises may also include patriotic poems and songs.

They shall include a moment of silence per General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 71:

"At the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools, the Teacher in charge of the room in which each such class is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration, shall be



observed for personal thoughts and during any such period silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in."

Plan Books, Seating Charts and Records of Assessment

Plan books and seating charts must be kept current and readily available by all Ashland Teachers. Plan books include commercially available planning books, loose leaf notebooks, or other folders acceptable to the Building Administrator. Plan books should be specific enough to enable a Substitute Teacher to carry on effectively for a week in your absence. Lesson plans need to be prepared in advance and readily available for review. Plan books should include:

- Knowledge of the learning standards
- Learning activities
- Instructional materials used
- Assessment – flow of learning over time

All Teachers are required to keep seating charts and records of assessment. Student performance should be measured and recorded with sufficient frequency for each subject to justify the term grade placed on the report card.

Planning for a Substitute Teacher

Please have a Substitute Teacher folder available at all times with the daily lesson plans, seating charts, students with medical needs (diabetes-allergies-etc.), IEP/504 plan information, methods used for classroom and individual student behavioral management, fire and emergency plans, and other information established by your Building Administrator.

Principles of Effective Teaching

- a. Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment
- b. Teaching All Students
- c. Family and Community Engagement
- d. Professional Culture

Teacher evaluation is based on the application of these principles.



Professional Activities Procedure

Any staff member wishing to attend a professional development event (conference, workshop, meeting) or a field trip must submit a [Request for Professional Day Form](#) with pertinent information (source of funding, title, date(s), location of the conference, and the participant's name) to the Building Administrator for review. Approval will be granted by the Principal and then submitted to the Business Office. The Assistant Superintendent will review and approve. You should not assume the conference/workshop has been approved until you receive confirmation via e-mail.

Staff requesting reimbursement for personal expenses must submit original receipts with a previously approved purchase order.

Following the conference, staff must submit a certificate of completion or other proof of attendance (copy of certificate, name badge, agenda or personal notes taken). We must have this on file for audit purposes, and the Business Office cannot pay the vendor until proof of attendance is received.

Professional Development Days

August 26, 2024 and August 27, 2024, and November 5, 2024 are the three professional development days designated for this school year.

March 14, 2025 and May 16, 2025 are scheduled early release days for additional professional development.

Professional Development Plans – Recertification Regulations

In accordance with G.L.C.71, 38G, educators working in a Massachusetts public school must obtain approval of their professional development plans from their Supervisors by the timelines set out in 603CMR 44.06(2), and 44.07(2).

Report Cards - Grades K to 12

A report card should be taken home by K-12 students to be reviewed with parents/guardians. At Mindess, report cards are to be signed by the parent or guardian at the close of each term except the last term. At Ashland High School, report cards are accessible on-line. Parents and guardians should set up an account on [iParent](#) for access.



Communication with parents is always important, especially when students are having academic difficulties. Written reports should be sent home frequently in grades K-12 for students who are failing one or more subjects. Written reports should be signed by parent or guardian, returned, and kept on file by the Teacher. They should be sent to the Building Administrator at the close of the school year or when requested. Educators must be aware of the [School Committee policy](#) for struggling students, *IKACC, Shared Responsibility for High School Students who are Struggling Academically*.

Special Education Services

When there is concern with a student's skill acquisition, tiered interventions and supports should be utilized and progress monitored. The teacher in consultation with the Response to Intervention (RtI) team may refer a student for special education evaluation when data from the tiered supports reveals a lack of anticipated progress.

Parents also have the right to request an evaluation. Referrals are processed by the team chairperson in the building in partnership with building administration. Once consent is obtained for testing, a full evaluation is completed, and a team meeting is conducted. Students are found eligible for special education services and supports through the team process. Eligible students receive special education and/or support services in the least restrictive environment to ensure access to the general education curriculum. These services are delineated on each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). A copy of the most recent IEP shall be kept in the student's cumulative record. Staff is responsible for knowing its content.

All students have the civil right to access the curriculum regardless of their age, race, gender, religion or sexual orientation or disability or national origin under Title IX section 504 and Chapter 622 regulations.

See also [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#).

Tests and Other Materials Placed in the Student's Record

All standardized tests, test records and other materials placed in the students' folders should be filed carefully, and should not be discarded except with the Building Administrator's approval. During the time a student is enrolled in a school, the Building Administrator and his/her designee will periodically review and destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record provided that the eligible student and his/her parent are



notified in writing and are given an opportunity to receive the information or a copy of it prior to its destruction. A copy of such notice shall be placed in the temporary record (cumulative folder). Records may be requested by the court system at any time.

Translation of Written Materials

To assure equal access to information disseminated in the school district, all written materials including forms, notices, handbooks, and applications, will be made available in the native language of families for whom the first language is not English. If you have a short notice or memo that needs to be translated, you should use one of the on-line translators (<http://www.freetranslation.com/> for example). If more extensive translation is required, contact your Building Administrator.



XI. Office Procedures

Absence of Pupils

Questionable absences should be referred to the Building Administrator's office. The Building Administrator or his/her designee has the responsibility of verifying student absences.

Please see our School Committee Policy on [Attendance](#).

Dismissals

Students should not be dismissed from school before the normal end of instructional time without a dismissal slip from the parent or guardian. Only an administrator or the school nurse can authorize the dismissal of a student.

Health Records and Mandated Screenings

1. A complete health record must be kept for each pupil.
2. The secretary must notify the building nurse when a student transfers from APS. The student's Health Record will be placed in a separate envelope to maintain confidentiality and will be sent with the Education file to the student's next school.
3. State mandated health requirements include the following: Physical exams are required in grades Preschool, K, 4, 7, and 10. Vision screening occurs annually in grades Preschool-5, 7 and 10. Hearing screening occurs annually in grades Preschool-3, 7 and 10. Postural screening occurs annually in grades 5 through 9. Body Mass Index (BMI) screening occurs annually in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. Parents who choose to waive BMI screening must submit a written request to the school nurse.

A written referral will be mailed home to parents/guardians for all students who do not pass a vision, hearing or postural screening. Please see your school nurse if you are concerned about any student's vision or hearing. Annual physical exams are required for all students who participate in APS sports.



Immunizations

Massachusetts General Law, c 76, ss 15 and 15c and related amendments and regulations (105 CMR 220.000) require school children to be immunized in order to attend school. Every student must present a copy of a current record of immunizations and current physical exam before enrolling in APS. Immunization requirements may change from year to year, depending on a child's age and/or grade level.

Students who do not submit written physician's documentation of immunizations by October 1st of the specified school year will be excluded from school until such documentation is provided. Any student "whose parent or guardian states in writing that immunization conflicts with his sincere religious beliefs" or who is homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act may be exempted from these requirements.

Entering New Student Information

Special care should be taken when entering information about a new student into the school computer system, particularly the student's date of birth. The Building Administrator or designee should fill out the Student Temporary Record for students admitted after the first day of school.

Purchases

All purchases must be made through the requisition and purchase order process. Staff requesting reimbursement must submit original receipts with the prior approved purchase order. Sales taxes incurred in a purchase by an individual cannot be reimbursed. More detailed instructions are available in the Business Office, 508-881-0156.

School-related organizations e.g., parent councils, clubs, etc. may not use the town's tax exemption number for checking or savings accounts. Groups seeking such status must apply directly to the Internal Revenue Service for a tax exempt number.

School Records

The Building Administrator is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records. The permanent record (transcript) shall contain minimum data necessary to reflect the student's educational progress including name, address,



date of birth, grade level, course titles and grades. The transcript (middle/high) or permanent record card (primary) is retained in the building when a student leaves for a period of at least sixty years.

The temporary record (cumulative file) shall consist of all information in the student record that is not contained in the transcript including testing data, registration documents and court documentation. The temporary record is retained no longer than seven years after the student graduates or leaves the school district.

Service and Repair Requests

All requests for repair or service on equipment must be made through [SchoolDude](#), accessible via the Staff menu on the Ashland Public Schools website. Once a person has made a request for repair of equipment through the Maintenance Department or IT Department, the Building Administrator is sent a copy of each request and must approve the request before a repair is made. No repairs will be made without a SchoolDude request.



Employee Acknowledgement

To Be Returned to the Building Administrator or Immediate Supervisor

I have reviewed, understand, and will abide by the regulations and policies contained in the Employee Handbook 2024-2025 and those of the Ashland Public Schools' School Committee found in the [Policy Manual](#) posted on the [Ashland Public Schools](#) website.

The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in district policies may supersede, modify, or render obsolete the information summarized in this handbook. As the district provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

I understand that no modifications to contractual relationships or alterations of at-will employment relationships are intended by this handbook.

I understand that I have an obligation to inform my Supervisor and the Human Resources of any changes in personal information, such as phone number, address, etc. I also accept responsibility for contacting my Supervisor or Human Resources if I have questions or concerns or need further explanation.

Name of Employee _____

Signature of Employee _____

Date _____ School/Department _____

Ashland Public Schools
87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721
Tel.: 508-881-0150
Fax: 508-881-0161
www.ashland.k12.ma.us

AA/EEO Employer



Appendix A: List of Acceptable Documents

LISTS OF ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTS

All documents must be **UNEXPIRED**

Employees may present one selection from List A
or a combination of one selection from List B and one selection from List C.

LIST A Documents that Establish Both Identity and Employment Authorization	OR	LIST B Documents that Establish Identity AND	LIST C Documents that Establish Employment Authorization
1. U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card		1. Driver's license or ID card issued by a State or outlying possession of the United States provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address	1. A Social Security Account Number card, unless the card includes one of the following restrictions: (1) NOT VALID FOR EMPLOYMENT (2) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH INS AUTHORIZATION (3) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION
2. Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551)		2. ID card issued by federal, state or local government agencies or entities, provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address	2. Certification of Birth Abroad issued by the Department of State (Form FS-545)
3. Foreign passport that contains a temporary I-551 stamp or temporary I-551 printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa		3. School ID card with a photograph	3. Certification of Report of Birth issued by the Department of State (Form DS-1350)
4. Employment Authorization Document that contains a photograph (Form I-766)		4. Voter's registration card	4. Original or certified copy of birth certificate issued by a State, county, municipal authority, or territory of the United States bearing an official seal
5. For a nonimmigrant alien authorized to work for a specific employer because of his or her status: a. Foreign passport; and b. Form I-94 or Form I-94A that has the following: (1) The same name as the passport and (2) An endorsement of the alien's nonimmigrant status as long as that period of endorsement has not yet expired and the proposed employment is not in conflict with any restrictions or limitations identified on the form.		5. U.S. Military card or draft record	5. Native American tribal document
		6. Military dependent's ID card	6. U.S. Citizen ID Card (Form I-197)
		7. U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Card	7. Identification Card for Use of Resident Citizen in the United States (Form I-179)
		8. Native American tribal document	8. Employment authorization document issued by the Department of Homeland Security
		9. Driver's license issued by a Canadian government authority	
		For persons under age 18 who are unable to present a document listed above:	
		10. School record or report card	
		11. Clinic, doctor, or hospital record	
		12. Day-care or nursery school record	
6. Passport from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) or the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) with Form I-94 or Form I-94A indicating nonimmigrant admission under the Compact of Free Association Between the United States and the FSM or RMI			

Illustrations of many of these documents appear in Part 8 of the Handbook for Employers (M-274).

Refer to Section 2 of the instructions, titled "Employer or Authorized Representative Review and Verification," for more information about acceptable receipts.



Appendix B: Certification of Temporary Disability

Town of Ashland Ashland Public Schools

87 West Union Street
Ashland, MA 01721

Phone: 508-881-0156
FAX: 508-881-0158

CERTIFICATION OF TEMPORARY DISABILITY FOR TEN WORKING DAYS OR MORE

____ Preliminary ____ Interim ____ Final

I, _____, do hereby certify as follows:

(print or type name of attending physician)

1. I am the attending physician for: _____

(Employee's name)

2. I examined him/her on the following dates:

3. From the period beginning on _____ and ending

(Date)

on _____,

(Date)

(Employee's name)

will be disabled to the extent of being unable to perform his/her duties as an employee of the Ashland Public Schools.

4. I base my opinion of his/her disability on the following facts: *(Please include a concise summary of the employee's condition that is indicative of the claimed disability.)*

(Signature of attending physician)

(Date)

(Phone number)

disablcert.02.2010



Appendix C: Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

A Guide for Mandated Reporting

Introduction

Under Massachusetts law, the Department of Child and Family Services (DCF), is the state agency that receives all reports of suspected abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18. State law requires professionals whose work brings them in contact with children to notify DCF if they suspect that a child has been - or is at risk of being - abused or neglected. DCF depends on reports from professionals and other concerned individuals to learn about children who may need protection. The Department receives reports on more than 100,000 children each year.

The Department's primary mission is to protect children who have been abused or neglected in a family setting. DCF seeks to ensure that each child has a safe, nurturing, permanent home. The Department also provides a range of preventive services to support and strengthen families with children at risk of abuse or neglect.

References to Massachusetts law in this Guide are citations from Chapter 119, sections 51 A-E.

Who is a mandated reporter?

Massachusetts law defines the following professionals as mandated reporters:

- physicians, medical interns, hospital personnel engaged in the examination, care or treatment of persons, medical examiners,
- psychologists, emergency medical technicians, dentists, nurses, chiropractors, podiatrists, optometrists, osteopaths,
- public or private school Teachers,
- educational administrators, guidance or family counselors,
- day care and child care workers, including any person paid to care for, or work with, a child in any public or private facility, or home or program funded or licensed by the Commonwealth, which provides day care or residential services. This includes child care resource and referral agencies, as well as voucher management agencies, family day care and child care food programs,
- probation officers, clerks magistrate of the district courts, parole officers,
- social workers,
- foster parents,
- firefighters or police officers,
- Office of Child Care Services licensors,
- school attendance officers, allied mental health and licensed human services professionals,
- drug and alcoholism counselors,
- psychiatrists, and clinical social workers.

Mandated Reporters who are staff members of medical or other public or private institutions, schools or facilities, must either notify the Department directly or notify the person in charge of the institution, school or facility, or his/her designee, who then



becomes responsible for filing the report. Should the person in charge/designee advise against filing, the staff member retains the right to contact DSS directly.

As a mandated reporter, what are my responsibilities?

Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Child and Family when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse or neglect. You should report any physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse; or any indication of neglect, including malnutrition; or any instance in which a child is determined to be physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth.

A written report must be submitted to DCF within 48 hours after the oral report has been made. Please note that any mandated reporter who fails to make required oral and written reports can be punished by a fine of up to \$1,000.

During the screening and investigation of a 51A report, any mandated reporter who has information which he/she believes might aid the Department in determining whether a child has been abused or neglected shall, upon request by DCF, disclose the relevant information to the Department. Under the law, mandated reporters are protected from liability in any civil or criminal action and from any discriminatory or retaliatory actions by an employer.

Who is a caretaker?

A 'Caretaker' can be a child's parent, step-parent, guardian, or any household member entrusted with the responsibility for a child's health or welfare. In addition, any other person entrusted with the responsibility for a child's health or welfare, both in and out of the child's home, regardless of age, is considered a caretaker. Examples may include relatives from outside the home, Teachers or school staff in a school setting, workers at day care and child care centers (including babysitters), foster parents, staff at a group care facility, or persons charged with caring for children in any other comparable setting.

How are abuse and neglect defined?

Under the Department of Child and Family Services regulations (110 CMR, section 2.00):

Abuse means: The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, physical or emotional injury; or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

Neglect means: Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate



economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

Physical Injury means: Death; or fracture of a bone, a subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending upon such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to a drug or drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.

Emotional Injury means: An impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

How do I make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect? When must I file it?

When you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, you should immediately telephone the DCF Area Office serving the child's residence and ask for the Protective Screening Unit. You will find a directory of the DCF Area Offices at the back of this Guide. Offices are staffed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. To make a report at any other time, including after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays, please call the Child-At-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200.

As a mandated reporter you are also required by law to mail or fax a written report to the Department within 48 hours after making the oral report. The form for filing this report can be obtained from your local DCF Area Office.

Your report should include:

- All identifying information you have about the child and parent or other caretaker, if known;
- The nature and extent of the suspected abuse or neglect, including any evidence or knowledge of prior injury, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect;
- The circumstances under which you first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect;
- What action, if any, has been taken thus far to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the child;
- Any other information you believe might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury and/or person responsible.

Hospital personnel should take photographs of any trauma that is visible on the child and mail or deliver the photographs to DCF with the written report.

As a mandated reporter, you are required by law to also provide DCF with your name, address and telephone number.

We recommend that you inform the family that you have referred them to DCF for help, but do not do so if you think it would increase the risk to the child.



If you have any questions about whether or not to report a situation, please do not hesitate to contact your local DCF Area Office.

What happens after DCF receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect?

There are several possibilities, depending on the allegations reported and other case-specific circumstances:

If the Department determines there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, a social worker is assigned to investigate the report. The investigation, called a 51 S, includes a home visit during which the social worker meets and talks with the child and the care-taker. If DCF determines that the situation is an emergency, the investigation is completed within 24 hours after the report is designated as an emergency. Investigations of all other reports are completed within 10 days.

If the Department determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that an incident of abuse or neglect by a caretaker did occur, the report is supported and the Department provides the family with services to reduce the risk of harm to the child. If the report is unsupported but the family appears to be in need of services, the Department may offer the family services on a voluntary basis. DCF will notify the mandated reporter, in writing, of its decision.

Referrals to the District Attorney

It is important to note that if the Department determines a child has been sexually abused or sexually exploited, has suffered serious physical abuse or injury, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, DCF must notify the District Attorney, who has the authority to file criminal charges, as well as local law enforcement authorities for the county where the child resides and where the offense occurred.

Where can I obtain more information about child abuse and neglect?

You can obtain more information about child abuse and neglect by calling the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) Services Library at 617-748-2373.

Other Useful Numbers

The Department has an Ombudsman's Office, available from 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each work day, to assist you. Please call 617-748-2444.

Child-At-Risk Hotline: 1-800-792-5200

Foster/Adoptive Care Recruitment Line: 1-800-KIDS-508

Kid's Net Connections: 1-800-486-3730

(Foster/Adoptive Helpline)

DCF Website: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dcf/>

Parental Stress Line: 1-800-632-8188

DCF Area Office, please ask for the Protective Screening Unit:

Framingham 508-424-0100



APPENDIX D: Educator Evaluation Table

Educator Evaluation Dates 2024/2025

**Please note this table is slightly different from the table in the contract book. Please use this table as your reference.*

Activity:	Contract Language:	Dates:
Explain the evaluation process	First Faculty Mtg	8/26, 8/27 by building
Meeting & Self Assessment and Goal Setting	Last Friday in September	Completed by 9/27/24
Evaluator meets w/ Ed to establish plans	First Friday after Indigenous People's Day	Completed by 10/18/24
Evaluator completed Ed Plans	Last Friday in October	Completed by 10/25/24
Evaluator should complete first obs	November 15	Completed by 11/15/24
Educators on 1 yr plan submit evidence on goals; standards 3 and 4	5 school days after December Break	Due by 1/10/25
Evaluator should complete mid-cycle Formative Assessment Reports for one-year educator plans	February 1st	Completed by 1/31/25
Evaluator holds Formative Assessment Mtgs if requested by either party	February 15	Completed by 2/14/25
All educators must submit evidence on standards 3 & 4; goals	Friday after April break	Due by 5/2/25
Evaluator completes Summative Evaluation Report	Second Friday in May	*Completed by 5/16/25 extension agreed upon by Admin and AEA
Evaluator meets with Educators whose overall is Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory	Within 10 school days of completion of Summative.	Completed by 6/2/25 (dependent upon delivery of summative)
Educator signs Summative Evaluation Report and adds response.	By second Friday in June	By 6/13/25



Educators w/ PTS on Two Year Plans

Evaluator completes unannounced observation	Any time during the 2 year cycle
Evaluator completes Formative Evaluation Report	June 1 of Year 1
Evaluator conducts Formative Eval Mtg	June 1 of Year 1
Evaluator Completes Summative Eval Report	Second Friday in May of Year 2
Evaluator conducts Summative Eval Mtg.	Within 10 school days of completion of Summative in Year 2
Evaluator and Educator sign Summative Report	Second Friday in June of Year 2