



ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

2022-2023 Parent & Student Handbook

*Ashland Clockers
Setting New Standards of Academic Excellence*

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

The information in this handbook is current as of its September 2022 publication. Ashland Public Schools reviews and revises its policies and curriculum on a regular basis to meet local and state guidelines.

A Message from Ms. St. Coeur

Dear students, parents, and community,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year at Ashland High School. We are once again starting the year saying “last year was a tough one” but we are excited to return to normalcy. We are starting the year with a focus on resetting expectations and goals, academically, behaviorally, and emotionally. We will continue to work together to provide a safe, supportive environment for our entire learning community. On behalf of all members of the Ashland High School faculty and staff, I welcome you to the start of another great year. At AHS we believe that all of our students can reach their potential as learners and will contribute positively to the Ashland community. An important part of student success is understanding the vision for our graduate, the core values as well as expectations of our school. This handbook provides a guideline for student expectations. Students who live our values of respect, responsibility, integrity, involvement, and achievement on a consistent basis, and learn from their mistakes when they make them, have a successful experience at Ashland High School. Recognizing the positive accomplishments of all students and adults of the community, while also enforcing appropriate consequences when necessary, is a priority and we believe it is how we learn. Please review this handbook as a family, including each appendix, and familiarize yourself with our expectations. If we are all working together in a manner that is reflective of our values, this will be a wonderful school year.

Thank you!

Kelley St. Coeur
Principal

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Ashland Public Schools Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a safe, engaging, and inclusive learning environment, empowering every student to acquire and develop the necessary skills and knowledge to become active, caring, and passionate life-long learners and citizens in an evolving and diverse world.

To accomplish this mission, Ashland Public Schools:

- Will improve student achievement for all students while closing the achievement gaps for our students of color, low-income status, ethnicity, English language learners and students with disabilities through targeted instruction and curriculum.
- Will ensure student success by supporting students, faculty, staff, and parents to develop strategies, skills, and tools necessary to maintain a healthy physical and mental well-being.
- Will create a district environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with parents, businesses, and the entire Ashland community.
- Will support educators in their continual effort to improve instruction and student achievement through targeted professional development, focusing on best practices, use of data, productive collaboration, and sensitivity to the needs of every student.

ACADEMICS

Ashland High School's Educational Principles

All students can learn.

All students learn in different ways and at different rates.

All students deserve and need positive support and respect.

Students learn best when they are active participants in the process and should be encouraged to take risks.

Learning occurs best in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment.

The school community values differences and appreciates diversity.

The school community fosters honesty, integrity, and a strong sense of ethics.

The commitment to education is a shared community responsibility.

Ashland High School Vision Statement

The Ashland Public Schools will provide a challenging education for all students through a common core of knowledge and values in a nurturing and safe environment. All members of the school community will respect the uniqueness and worth of each other, show passion for learning, be technologically current, and have global awareness.

Ashland High School Mission Statement

Ashland High School provides a safe, supportive learning environment by empowering individuals to be respectful, responsible, and active partners as they develop life-long learning skills.

Core Values

Respect
Integrity
Responsibility
Involvement
Achievement

Expectations for Students

Academic Expectations

Through an interactive curriculum, students at Ashland High School will be able to:

- Read and process information efficiently.
- Listen, speak, and write effectively.
- Possess the skills to reflect productively upon their performance.
- Think critically, analytically, and creatively.
- Understand and appreciate the fine and practical arts.
- Problem-solve both individually and as a member of a group.
- Utilize modern technology to effectively communicate and research information.

Social Expectations

Students at Ashland High School will demonstrate:

- Respect for individual differences.
- A commitment to being organized, responsible, productive, and punctual.
- Responsibility for their own behavior.
- A commitment to school through shared decision-making.
- A commitment to community involvement.

- An ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to the use of violence.

Expectations for School and Community

Ashland High School's faculty and staff, as well as the community of Ashland, will provide:

- An atmosphere that promotes and encourages academic achievement, widespread participation in the arts and athletics, and the completion of a high school education.
- A clean, safe, and well-equipped educational facility.
- A productive and supportive learning environment.
- Teaching strategies that address student learning styles.
- A learning environment exhibiting a variety of on-going assessment methods.
- Access to community resources and services within the school setting.
- An opportunity to explore career and educational pathways.
- A partnership between the school and family to improve daily attendance.

We acknowledge that this mission statement must be reviewed regularly by the administration, faculty, school councils, and the student council.

Academic Ethics

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

The Code of Academic Ethics elicits the following responsibilities of the groups listed:

Responsibilities of students:

- To maintain a personal standard of academic ethics.
- To clearly understand the instructions, classroom management, and rules and expectations of their individual teachers.
- To in no way participate or give the appearance of contributing to any cheating, copying, or plagiarizing.

Responsibilities of teachers:

- To clearly communicate their classroom management policies and expectations.
- To expect and maintain a high standard of academic ethics.
- To deal with any breaches of academic ethics.

Vision of The Graduate

It's Your Time:

Civic responsibility

Lifelong learning

Ownership of actions

Critical and creative thinking

Kindness and empathy

Effective communication and time management

Resilience

Staying positive

Appendix A - Academics

Please reference [Appendix A- Academics](#) for more detailed policy information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Translation of the Parent/Student Handbook

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n0SD8i2fV4N93FrwdpF8eJ6jRARfhe2W2B5KaeDJmy4/edit>

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

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

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

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

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

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

No-school Announcements

No-school announcements are posted to the following live media outlets:

RADIO STATIONS WBZ, WRKO, WCVB

TELEVISION CHANNELS 4, 5, and 7, and Ashland Cable Channel 10.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, no-school and/or early dismissal announcements will be broadcast over the same stations. Please do not call the police or fire departments.

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

Calendar of Events

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

[Click here for the APS Calendar](#)

[Click here for the AHS Calendar](#)

Handbook Scope and Limitations

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

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

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

Security Camera Policy

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

Statement of Non-Discrimination

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

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

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

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

FERPA

Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school. [FERPA Information](#)

DISTRICT POLICIES

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

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

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

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN

Students in the Ashland Public Schools are expected to treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect. The school community is defined as all those people who work or interact in the school. Students, teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, custodians, secretaries, cafeteria workers, parent volunteers, and school visitors are part of this community.

Each person in the school must have the opportunity to grow personally, socially, and intellectually, as well as the opportunity to exercise his/her rights in a positive and constructive way. Thus, all members of the school community have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates a respect for all individuals, their rights, and property.

Each student will be responsible for providing a positive and healthy environment for others by maintaining order, self-discipline, and consideration for the rights and property of others. Each student will bear the responsibility for his or her own conduct whenever students are:

- In school
- On school property
- At school sanctioned events, including athletic games
- On school buses or other school sponsored transportation
- In communication (text or social media) with a school team or club

Behaviors that take place outside of the above mentioned are not under the disciplinary purview of AHS administration. However, when AHS administration is informed of incidents that take place outside of the above mentioned places they will work to support and educate students with regard to how their behaviors outside of school negatively impacts themselves or others.

The Say Something Anonymous Reporting System allows students or parents to submit secure, anonymous safety concerns to help someone who may hurt themselves or others. Students and parents can submit a tip anonymously when they are concerned about a student's safety. If the tip is not coded as "life safety" by the call center AHS administration will not see the tips after 10pm on a weekday or at all on the weekend. Say Something should not be used to report concerns about a house party. If there are concerns about student safety at a party you should call 911.

Students can expect that teachers will have specific expectations, both behavioral and academic, for their individual classes. Click here for our [PBIS matrix of expectations](#). When a student does not adhere to the disciplinary policy, the teacher will discipline the student accordingly. A teacher may have the student remain after school, have the student report before school, and/or communicate with the parent/guardian on the phone, via email, or through the mail.

If the student's behavior does not improve, the teacher may invite the parent/guardian in for a conference. If the student's behavior continues to be a problem or if there should be a serious breach of conduct, the teacher will write a behavior referral and forward it to a dean of students.

Minor infractions usually result in detention(s). Major infractions could result in suspension or other severe disciplinary action.

Ashland High School's rules and regulations are based on a system of progressive discipline. This means that an administrator has the discretion to significantly increase the penalties in the cases of second and third offenses for any of the above listed infractions.

Appendix B - Discipline

Please reference [Appendix B- Discipline](#) for more detailed information.

PROCEDURES FOR DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In general, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the student handbook and the school's code of conduct. In accordance with Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and with federal law IDEA 2004: Section 615 (k), and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. Section 794 (A), the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current placement, with certain procedures to be followed for intended removals of more than 10 school days. Special provisions are outlined below for students with a documented disability who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.

Case-by-case determination

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student with a disability who, after disciplinary actions, has been found to have violated the school code of conduct. (IDEA Regulations: 34 CFR Part 300, M.G.L. c71, §§ 37H, 37H½, 37H 3/4)

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days

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

Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension exceeds 10 school days

If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal is considered a change of placement. A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.

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

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

At a manifestation determination meeting, the team will consider:

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

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

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

Special circumstances for exclusion

Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells, or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45

school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension.

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

MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H ½, & 37 ¾

Section 37H

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

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

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

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

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

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student

shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Section 37H1/2

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

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no

later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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

Section 37H3/4

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

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

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

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the

suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

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

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

Bullying Prevention Plan

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

Bullying, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §370, means the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional of a written, oral, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

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

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

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

It is the responsibility of the building principal or his/her designee to make clear to students and staff that bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, or harassment in the school building, on school grounds, on our school buses or school sanctioned transportation, or at school sponsored functions will not be tolerated. The principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for the implementation of bullying prevention and intervention procedures, including investigating all charges of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Please refer to Appendix A which includes a district-wide process, forms, and procedures to support the reporting, response, and investigation of bullying.

Reporting bullying or retaliation: Ashland Public School staff members are required to immediately report to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member witnesses or becomes aware of.

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

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

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The faculty and administration of Ashland High School are committed to offering a quality education to their students. School attendance is crucial to learning and will be closely monitored. Classroom participation and student/teacher interaction are fundamentally important reasons for good school attendance.

Please refer to the [School Committee Policy on Student Absences and Excuses for Attendance](#) for more details.

Please call the attendance line at **508- 881-0177** if your child is going to be absent. For guidelines regarding illness and school attendance, please follow this link: [APS Health Services](#)

The following policies have been adopted to maximize student attendance in school and in class:

- Upon arrival at school, students are to report directly to the cafeteria/clock area.
- All students are expected to be in class on time. A student who is tardy to class will be admitted to class. If the student has an acceptable note or pass from a staff member, the tardiness will be excused. Otherwise, a student will be assigned detention with the teacher.
- A student who is enrolled in a course is expected to be present each time class is in session.
- No student should be absent more than the maximum limits. Students who exceed these limits may incur loss of credit. Year-long courses have a limit of 15 missed classes per year; loss of credit is incurred at the 16th missed class. Semester courses have a limit of 8 missed classes per semester, loss of credit is incurred at the 9th missed class. Any student changing classes during the marking period will have his or her total accumulation of absences in the former class carried over to the new class.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified of student absences in accordance with state law.
- Students deemed truant may be referred to the Attendance Review Panel. G.L. c. 76, § 2 defines truancy as unexcused absences totaling more than seven

(7) full days or fourteen (14) half days in a six (6) month period, and G.L. c. 119, § 21 defines habitual truancy as willful failure to attend school for more than eight (8) full days in a quarter.

- Extenuating issues may be referred to the Attendance Review Panel.

Exceptions

Some missed classes are for legitimate reasons and do not count in calculating the maximum limit. Family vacations during school time are not excused absences. The following circumstances are considered legitimate:

- Absence due to illness or medical appointment, when confirmed in writing by a doctor.
- Death in the family, when confirmed in writing by parent/guardian.
- Observance of religious holidays, when confirmed in writing by parent/guardian.
- Pre-approved, school sponsored field trips.
- Class meetings approved by the administration.
- College conferences and visitations (maximum of three per year), which have received prior approval from the administration and are supported by notes from parent/guardian.
- Other school-related and administration-approved meetings or functions.
- Court subpoenas.
- Registry of Motor Vehicle appointments (i.e., learner's permit or road test).
- Extenuating circumstances as deemed by the Attendance Review Panel and/or administration.

Absence: Calling In

Parents/guardians must call the school (**508-881-0177**) as soon as possible to register with the office the reason for the student's absence. In the event a parent/guardian does not notify the office by the close of school the following day, the student will automatically be deemed truant and will incur the appropriate consequences for truancy. A call must be made within this time frame for each day of absence. The responsibility for this procedure is that of the parent/guardian and the student. No exceptions will be made to this rule.

Attendance to Class: Class Skips

- Once a student arrives at school for the day they may not leave the school grounds, and if they do, the classes that they miss will be considered a skip. An exception to this is if a student with senior or NHS privileges reports for a morning meeting and has a first period study, they may leave the building before the first block class begins.
- Coming to school more than halfway through the first block without a parent calling you in as tardy or without an excused reason is considered a class

skip. The only exception is a first block study if the student has senior or NHS privileges.

Skipping Consequences

- First skip from class: Teacher puts in iPass discipline referral. 1 hour office detention assigned by Dean. Parents will be emailed and teachers will be copied on email. A zero will be given for the class cut and no opportunity to make up the work due or completed in class the day of the skip.
- Second skip from same class: Teacher puts in iPass discipline referral. 2 hour extended detention assigned by Dean. Parents will be emailed and teachers will be copied on email. A zero will be given for the class cut with no opportunity to make up the work due or completed in class the day of the skip.
- Third and subsequent skip from same class: Teacher puts in iPass discipline referral. Third and subsequent class skips will result in more severe consequences including multiple extended detentions and/or suspension. Three skips from the same class will potentially result in loss of graduation credit for that class. A parent/guardian, student, and administrator conference will be scheduled. The student will receive a zero for any work missed.

Dismissals from School

If a student knows they are being dismissed they should bring a note to the main office in the morning, and they will receive a dismissal pass. At the time of dismissal they will be allowed to leave the building, and parents can wait in their car. If a student does not bring a handwritten note in the morning, parents must sign out a student in the main office upon departure. No student will be dismissed without a parent or guardian's signature unless that student is a senior and is exercising his or her senior privilege to be dismissed during a last-period study. Those seniors exercising this privilege must file the [appropriate documentation](#) and must sign out in the main office. Members of the junior class who are members of the National Honor Society may also exercise this right. Dismissals for medical reasons must be cleared through the nurse who will contact a parent/guardian.

Tardiness to School

Students who are not present at the start of 1st period will be considered tardy. Students who are tardy to the same class three times will have those tardies considered as one absence. Students not physically present in class by 8:20 A.M. are tardy and must report immediately to the main office for a tardy slip. Upon tardy arrival to school, after being issued a late pass to class from the main office, students will be allotted a three minute passing time to arrive at their regularly scheduled class. If the tardy is excused, an excused tardy pass must be presented

to the teacher(s) of each class missed. If a full class is missed, the student must present the teacher with the pass the following day in order to get credit for work that was due. Students may NOT use car problems as an excuse for lateness.

Excused tardies are limited to the following (extenuating circumstances may be discussed with the student's dean):

- Documented medical/dental appointment
- Documented legal/registry appointments
- Funerals
- Religious observances

Students who arrive at school after the scheduled start time will be issued one tardy tally.

Students are allowed five (5) unexcused tardy tallies per semester.

At the **6th tally**, a 1 hour detention will be assigned

At the **9th tally**, a 2 hour detention will be assigned

At the **12th tally**, a 3 hour detention will be assigned

If a student reaches **15 tallies** an individualized attendance contract will be created with the Dean, student, and parent/guardian. Alternatives to consequences issued to students for arriving late to school may be discussed with a dean in an effort to improve upon frequent tardiness offenses, such as community service projects or personalized educational projects/opportunities.

Parents and coaches/club advisors will be emailed to advise of the assigned office detention. Practices, games, rehearsals, and club meetings are not an excuse to not attend detention.

Students who are tardy must still turn in work due for the class missed that day. Students are also responsible for work assigned that day in class even if they were not present. Students may turn in assignments to the office to be placed in a teacher's mailbox.

Students missing class are expected to follow the same policy as an unexcused absence for making up missed work.

Appendix C - Attendance

Please reference [Appendix C- Attendance](#) for more detailed information.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Bus Rules

The following bus rules apply to all school related trips, including field trips, class trips, late runs, athletic trips, and daily transportation.

While on the bus, students should keep hands and heads inside the bus at all times. Loud talking and laughing divert the driver's attention, making safe driving difficult. Horseplay, inappropriate language, smoking, playing music, and getting out of one's seat while the bus is in motion are not permitted at any time.

Parking

The student privilege of parking cars at the high school shall be restricted to students who have paid the annual parking fee. The parking rate shall be set annually by the School Committee upon recommendation of the superintendent.

[Student Parking Agreement](#)

- Parking passes shall be issued through the principal's office and must be displayed on the rear view mirror.
- Current bus passes may be placed in the driver side window for temporary parking privileges.
- Current bus passes may be turned in to the high school office in exchange for parking pass, and the student should no longer be riding the school bus.
- Parking passes may be revoked in accordance with guidelines established by the principal and specified in the student handbook. Guidelines will include reasons a parking pass may be revoked and the necessary process for reinstatement.

Appendix D - Transportation

Please reference [Appendix D- Transportation](#) for more detailed policy information.

PARENT INFORMATION

Ashland High School Regulations

Ashland High School is an accredited, comprehensive high school that includes grades 9 through 12. The Ashland Public Schools are committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all employees and applicants, students, parents, and members of the school community, including those parties who contract to perform work for the Ashland Public Schools, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability in all aspects of employment and education. The members of the school community, including administration, faculty, staff, students, and volunteers working in the school, while they work and study, are subject to school authorities. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are the result of a cooperative effort on the part of the students, faculty, parents, a school committee designee, and administration. Explanations and/or suggestions about policies should be referred to the principal or a dean of students.

Ashland High School is operated under the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the regulations of the School Committee. The following rules and regulations are established to provide for the safety and rights of each individual. These rules apply to all school sponsored activities. Our basic rule is to respect the rights of others at all times.

Extra-curricular Activities Consent and Release

Students participating in voluntary extra-curricular activities, including but not limited to intramural or interscholastic athletics, are required to return a signed release of liability to the administrator/supervisor of the event/activity prior to engaging in the activity, event, or, in the case of athletics/sports, to the Athletic Director prior to the commencement of the specific athletic/sport's season recognized by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association ("MIAA"). As these activities are voluntary, the student's participation in an event, activity, or athletic/sports season is conditioned upon receipt of the signed and returned release of liability form. Massachusetts law permits use of such releases for school-related voluntary extra-curricular activities, including but not limited to athletics/sports. Release forms will be distributed by the Athletic Director and/or by the administrator overseeing activities.

The student's participation in any extra-curricular activity, including but not limited to intra-mural or interscholastic athletics/sports of any nature, is conditioned on

compliance with all applicable laws, district policies (including but not limited to policies relative to student conduct and discipline, bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination), all MIAA policies, and district values and behavioral expectations. In the interest of student safety and compliance with these laws, policies, values, and expectations, coaches and/or other school staff will routinely monitor locker/dressing/changing room activities. Such monitoring may include physical presence by coaches or other staff in locker/dressing/changing rooms. While monitoring students in locker/dressing/changing rooms, all coaches and staff will give appropriate consideration to student privacy. Students seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available, and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach or building principal/designee.

Accreditation Statement

Ashland High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. (NEASC), a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering post-graduate instruction.

Accreditation of an institution by the NEASC indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer group review process. An accredited school or college is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the NEASC is not partial, but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of the quality of every course or program offered, or to the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation by the NEASC should be directed to the NEASC, 209 Burlington Road, Bedford, Massachusetts 01730, (781) 271-0022.

Organization and Communication/ Flow of Communication

The first level for communicating a concern is to contact the specific teacher. Should the matter require additional attention, the courteous and proper sequence for contact is the following:

Second level: Department liaison

Third: Guidance counselor

Fourth: Grade level dean of students
Fifth: Principal
Sixth: Superintendent
Seventh: Ashland School Committee

Department Liaisons

English: Aleisha Egan
Mathematics: Michael Shennett
Science: Colleen Sherman
Social Studies: Janet Twomey
Unified Arts: Chad McGowan
World Languages: Lisa Dunn
Guidance: Cory McGann
Special Education Team Chairperson: Joshua Sanford

School Site Council

The School Site Council is an elected committee of individuals charged with identifying annual school goals, developing a plan for improvement, and assessing school progress. Current members of the School Site Council are the principal, who shall serve as the co-chair, and representatives consisting of five students, three teachers, three parents, and one community member. This council meets once a month.

HEALTH SERVICES

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

Illness

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

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

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

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

Fever

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

Strep Throat

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

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

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

Head Lice

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

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

Medication

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

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

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

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

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

Health Record (Physical Exams and Immunizations)

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

State Mandated Requirements (Physical Exams and Screenings)

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

Management of Life-Threatening Allergies

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

Ashland Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with LTA. The goal is to minimize the risk to students with LTA. The guidelines established include building-based plans, the implementation of individual care plans, and training programs for personnel.

Specific responsibilities for the student, parent, and school personnel are listed in the policy.

Chronic Illness Policy

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

Please click here for more health related information on APS website - [APS Health Services](#)