

2024-2025

The Amherst-Regional Public Schools

The Amherst Public Schools, Amherst-Pelham
Regional Public Schools & Pelham Public School

DISTRICT HANDBOOK PAGES

Disclaimer: This handbook is not an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of District rules and policies put forth by the School Committees of Amherst Public Schools, Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools, and Pelham Public Schools

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Statement of Non-Discrimination

“The School Committees’ policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, and the general public with whom it does business. The Amherst-Pelham Regional District, the Amherst Public Schools, and the Pelham Elementary School do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, homelessness, political party, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment by its programs and activities.”

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

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, Amherst Public Schools, and Pelham Public Schools’ policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from, retaliated against, or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of the school district, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law. Please see [Amherst Regional School Committee, Policy AC for the complete text of the District’s Non-discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

Handbook Accessibility

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

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

Translation Request

If you need documents translated, please contact William Jimenez at (413) 362-1832.

Si usted necesita traducción de documentos, favor comunicarse con William Jimenez, al (413) 362-1832.

한국어로 번역된 서류가 필요하시면 William Jimenez (413) 362-1832에게 연락하여 주십시오.

如果您需要翻译成中国的文件 请联络 William Jimenez 托雷斯在曼萨诺 (413) 362-1832

Se voce precisa de algum documento a ser traduzido, por favor entre em contato com William Jimenez (413) 362-1832.

Contact Information

School Building Administrators

School	Name	Title	Telephone
Crocker Farm School	Derek Shea	Principal	362-1665
	Alicia Lopez	Assistant Principal	362-1665
Fort River School	Tamera Sullivan-Daly	Principal	362-1217
	Julio Fernandez	Assistant Principal	362-1213
Wildwood School	Allison Estes	Principal	362-1413
	Diane Chamberlain	Assistant Principal	362-1413
Pelham School	Micki Darling	Principal	362-1100
Amherst Regional Middle School	Michael Sullivan	Interim Principal	362-1960
	Juan Rodriguez	Assistant Principal	362-1844
Amherst Regional High School	Talib Sadiq	Principal	362-1706
	Miki Gromacki	Assistant Principal	362-1715
	Samantha Camera	Assistant Principal	362-1714
Summit Academy	David Slovin	Principal	362-1753

Central Office Administration

Name	Title	Phone
E. Xiomara Herman	Superintendent	362-1807
Nyby Douglas	Executive Assistant to the Superintendent	362-1807
Jennifer Ortiz Yahdira Torres	Human Resources Office Administrators	362-1895 362-1873
Jerry Champagne	Director of Information Systems	362-1810
Michael Gallo-O'Connell	Director of School Nutrition Services	362-1839
Marta Guevara	Director of Student & Family Engagement	362-1871
Doreen Reid	Director of Student Services	362-1834
Mary Kiely	Administrator of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	362-1825
Maureen Fleming	Mental Health & Behavioral Services Administrator	362-1804
Rupert Roy-Clark	Director of Facilities	362-1853
Doug Slaughter	Director of Finance	362-1812

School Committees

REGIONAL

Tilman Wolf	Leverett	wolft@arps.org
Sarah Marshall	Amherst	marshalls@arps.org
Bridget Hynes	Amherst	hynesb@arps.org
Sarahbess Kenney	Pelham	kenneys@arps.org
Deborah Leonard	Amherst	leonardd@arps.org
Irv Rhodes	Amherst	rhodesi@arps.org
Jennifer Shiao	Amherst	shiaoj@arps.org
William Sherr	Pelham	sherrw@arps.org
Anna Heard	Shutesbury	hearda@arps.org

To reach all Regional School Committee members, email Regionalschoolcommittee@arps.org and send

public comments to scpubliccomment@arps.org. Please note that all correspondence with the School Committee is a public record and, therefore, subject to public records requests.

AMHERST

Bridget Hynes	Amherst	hynesb@arps.org
Deborah Leonard	Amherst	leonardd@arps.org
Irv Rhodes	Amherst	rhodesi@arps.org
Sarah Marshall, Chair	Amherst	marshalls@arps.org
Jennifer Shiao	Amherst	shiaoj@arps.org

To reach all Amherst School Committee members, email Amherstschoolcommittee@arps.org and send public comments to scpubliccomment@arps.org. Please note that all correspondence with the School Committee is a public record and, therefore, subject to public records requests.

PELHAM

Margaret Stancer, Chair	Pelham	stancerm@arps.org
William Sherr	Pelham	sherrw@arps.org
Sarahbess Kenney	Pelham	kenneys@arps.org
Open Seat		
Open Seat		

To reach all Pelham School Committee members, email Pelhamschoolcommittee@arps.org and send public comments to scpubliccomment@arps.org. Please note that all correspondence with the School Committee is a public record and, therefore, subject to public records requests.

Admission

All children of school age who reside in Amherst, Pelham, or one of the regional towns with a parent/legal guardian or an adult who has assumed legal responsibility for the student, will be entitled to attend the public schools in Amherst, in Pelham, or in the Regional District respectively. In addition, certain children who do not reside in a town within the school district, but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to non-resident students or by specific action of the School Committee, may also attend the public schools.

New students who will attend grades K-6 in any of the Amherst or Pelham Elementary Schools can register online (arps.org) or in person at the ARPS Family Center, located across the Superintendent's Office located in the Amherst-Pelham Regional Middle School building at 170 Chestnut Street. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact Mildred Martinez, Elementary Registrar, at (413) 362-1871.

New students who will attend grades 7-12 in the Amherst-Pelham Regional Middle or High School register in the Registrar's Office, located in the Amherst-Pelham Regional High School building at 21 Mattoon Street. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact Erika Lisle Region Registrar, at (413) 362-1703.

In the Amherst and Pelham School Districts, advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place each spring. All children who reach the age of five years on or before September 1st of the current school year are eligible for kindergarten in the fall. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age and proof of immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency and legal guardianship is required for enrollment. Additionally, proof may be requested by the district at any time questions arise regarding the residency or guardianship of an enrolled student.

Children transferring into the school District from other school systems will be referred for grade placement to the school Principal. If the grade level classification of the child is doubtful, the Principal shall confer with the Superintendent or designee before making permanent assignment. Except in extraordinary circumstances, students will not be assigned to a higher grade until they have spent a full year in their present grade in this school district or other school systems.

Residency for School Attendance

Under Massachusetts Law, a child may attend the schools of the town in which they reside. To attend public school in Amherst, in Pelham, or in the Regional District, a student must reside permanently in Amherst, in Pelham, or in one of the Regional towns, respectively, and must reside with at least one parent or legal guardian who has physical custody. Typically, the residence of a child under 18 is the residence of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) who has/have physical custody of the child. "Residence" is the place where a person dwells currently, with an intention to remain, and is in the town that is the core of his/her/their domestic, social, and civil life.

The School District may require a variety of documentation to establish proof of residency and custody. Investigations may be made by school officials to assure that a student maintains a bona fide permanent residence in the town. Parents/guardians are under a continuing obligation to inform the School District of any and all changes to a student's residential status.

Students over 18 and living apart from parents/guardians in one of the Region's towns are entitled to attend school as residents. Children who are undocumented immigrants and residing in the school Districts are entitled to attend school as residents. Students who are placed in a residence in town by a public agency are entitled to attend school as residents. This residency policy does not apply to homeless students. Please see Services for Homeless Students for more information.

Non-resident parents/legal guardians of a child, who resides in Amherst or Pelham apart from his or her parents or legal guardians, for the sole purpose of attending an elementary school in Amherst or Pelham, may be held responsible for the costs of education for the child. Similarly, non-resident parents/legal guardians of a child residing in one of the Regional towns apart from his or her parents or legal guardians, for the sole purpose of attending the Regional Schools, may be held responsible for the costs of education for the child. The student will be dismissed for non-residency.

Any student who is determined to be a non-resident while enrolled in a school in any of the districts will be dismissed for non-residency. The dismissal may be appealed to the Superintendent, and the student may be allowed to remain in school pending the outcome of the appeal.

Kindergarten Screening

Each child who enters kindergarten will be given a "screening" in fulfillment of the requirements of the 603 CMR 28.03(1)(d), that governs special education and related services in public schools, and public or private day and residential schools. In addition, this screening will assist in assessing the child and plan appropriately for his or her needs. The screening provides us information about a child's strengths and needs. The results of this screening and other observation will be shared with parents/guardians during the Fall Parent/Guardian Conferences.

Attendance Expectations *(Guidelines)*

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for academic success in school. When a student is absent from class or school, the continuity of the instructional process is disrupted, and the benefits of classroom instruction are lost. Families are asked to review specific expectations in the Family Handbook of their child's school. Following is a list of important information for students and parents/guardians:

- All students will attend school every day, on time.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's daily and timely attendance.
- Parents/guardians will not keep students from school while it is in session.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for reporting their child's absence on the same day, before the official opening of school. In case of an emergency that prevents this from

happening, parents/guardians must send a note explaining the absence to the student when they return to school.

- Reporting an absence is not the same as excusing it. The Superintendent or designee (usually the building Principal) is the only person that can legally excuse an absence.
- The only “excusable” reasons to keep a child/youth from attending school are: students’ illness, religious observance, court obligation and/or a major family emergency (accident, serious illness/quarantine, death). Please check in with your school if you have any questions. High school students are allowed to have three college visits. Please check with the guidance office for details.
- Students must present a note upon their return to school after three consecutive absences.
- Tardiness will not be excused. Three tardies will equal an unexcused absence.
- After fourteen (14) cumulative or consecutive days of being out sick, students may be eligible for home or hospital tutoring. Please contact your child’s school Principal or administrator for more information regarding eligibility for home/hospital tutoring.
- There are several weeks in the school calendar designated for vacation/holiday time out of school. Families are advised to plan all trips and visits during these weeks.
- Students who are absent 18 days and more are considered chronically absent according to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).
- Parents/guardians will be held responsible for failure to send their children to school and/or not bringing them to school on time, daily.
- School staff will contact parents/guardians to set up a meeting when issues of attendance arise.
- Parents/guardians and their students will be referred to local agencies for additional support to improve school attendance.

Civil Rights & Grievance Procedures

Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, Amherst Public Schools, and Pelham Public Schools do not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act). Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or homelessness status in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76 §5, M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L. c. 151C, and 603 C.M.R. §26.00.

Amherst-Pelham Regional School District has adopted and implemented grievance procedures to ensure the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of discrimination, retaliation, and harassment on the basis of membership in any of the above protected classes. Those grievance procedures may be accessed through the ARSD website, the Principal’s office, and/or the Title IX Coordinator, and here: _____. To make a report or to file a complaint of discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, please contact the Civil Rights Coordinator’s office at:

The *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure* shall not apply to reports of sex-based harassment or sex discrimination as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and its implementing regulations (“Title IX”) effective August 1, 2024.

Allegations of conduct that could, if proven, meet the definition of sex discrimination under Title IX, or the definition(s) of sex-based harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students) shall be addressed through the District’s *Title IX Sexual Discrimination Grievance Procedure*.

Title IX & Non-Discrimination

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and strictly prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in any education program or activity that it operates, including in admission and employment. Amherst-Pelham Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, parental, family, or marital status in its educational programs and employment activities consistent with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; M.G.L. c. 151B; M.G.L. c. 151C; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5. The District’s policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admissions, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

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

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

Maureen Fleming, Title IX Coordinator
Amherst-Pelham Regional School District
170 Chestnut Street, Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 362-1804
flemingm@arps.org

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

U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor

5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
Facsimile: (617) 289-0150
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

If the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District has designated certain staff members to serve as Confidential Employees with whom a student or employee may discuss a report of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, informally and without concern for further disclosure, any such information is available by contacting the Superintendent's Office.

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

Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan

Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, sect. 37O and 603 CMR sect. 49.00, the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts have developed a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Relevant portions are included in this handbook, for the complete text of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, [click here](#).

Any and all acts of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation based upon the reporting of bullying to the school administration are prohibited in the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others

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

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

Code of Conduct, Discipline, & Suspension

The District is committed to educating and supporting all students to learn in a safe, secure environment with a focus on positive behavior. The learning expectations in the schools are aligned with good citizenship, social justice, multicultural awareness, and community partnership. Our schools use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports as a framework to identify and support shared core values, address behavioral concerns, and implement educational interventions and disciplinary responses. We also incorporate the principles and practices of Restorative Practices in response to behavior concerns. School handbooks include a description of the school-wide tiers of interventions and supports.

Suspension

Breaches of standards of behavior may result in suspension from school in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws/regulations and court decisions. The Principal of each school will implement specific procedures for imposing suspensions, conferring with parents, and readmitting and counseling suspended students.

A suspension may be imposed for behavior which includes, but is not limited to, when a student's behavior creates a threat to his/her/their own or other's safety such as fighting, committing an assault on another, stealing, vandalism, possession/sale/attempted sale of weapons, explosives or prohibited materials, possession/sale/attempted sale of alcohol, controlled substances or prescription medication prescribed for someone other than the student, making false alarms or bomb threats, lewd or threatening behavior or language. In cases of repeated violations of other code of conduct rules, suspension may be imposed after other attempts have been made to resolve the problem. Additionally, suspensions may also be imposed for the violation of rules set forth in student handbooks. Principals and their designees may exercise their discretion to impose suspensions and expulsions for school rule violations within the limitations and the due process provisions set forth below.

The Amherst-Regional Public Schools adhere to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sections 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, and 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ as well as 603 CMR 53.00, et seq.

Disciplinary Due Process

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

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$

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

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ please see the appropriate sections below.

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

Superintendent – the Superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.

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

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

*Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

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

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¹/₂ no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

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

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

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ³/₄ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ¹/₂ please see the appropriate sections below.

All school principals and principal's designees and the Superintendent and Superintendent's designees when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for violations of school rules other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses, shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal or designee shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would

be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4(b).

Emergency Removals; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, 603 CMR 53.07 - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of: (1) the emergency removal; (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the Principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

In-School Suspension, M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 - Removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 C.M.R. 53.00.

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

and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

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

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

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

Notice – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to

have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

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

Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The Principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

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

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

Notice - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

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

Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension: M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student. Long term suspension/expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. 71 §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

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

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school and school district by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school and school district by the Principal.

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

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who has been expelled from the Amherst, Pelham, or Amherst-Pelham Regional School District pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel (at his or her own expense) at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

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

Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

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

Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent in writing and must notify the Superintendent of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or felony delinquency charge or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

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

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

Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities as identified by a Team under the IDEA/M.G.L. c. 71B or Section 504

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

(10) consecutive school days or which will result in a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for ten (10) school days or less to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her/their program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a “change of placement,” building administrators, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team will meet to review all relevant information in the student’s file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP—“a manifestation determination.”
2. No later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district will notify the parent(s) of that decision and provide them with written notice of procedural safeguards.
3. If building administrators, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the student’s conduct was NOT a manifestation of the student’s disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students, except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. The student’s IEP Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan, or may, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the student’s parent(s)guardian(s), and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the misconduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student’s disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student’s current educational program based on that incident of misconduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others). The student’s IEP or Section 504 Team shall review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment. The IEP or Section 504 Team will develop (with the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) consent), modifications to or a new 504 Plan, IEP, behavior intervention plan, and/or placement as appropriate.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a dangerous weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may, with or without parent/guardian consent, and regardless of the manifestation determination, place the

student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. A parent can also consent to a forty-five (45) school day interim setting.

6. The interim alternative setting must enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and progress toward the goals in the IEP. The interim alternative setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring.
7. At the conclusion of the forty-five (45) school day period, *the student shall be returned to his/her/their previous placement* unless the parent (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the interim alternative setting or an Order is obtained from the Bureau of Special Education Appeal authorizing the student's continued removal.
8. The parent shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

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

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress

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

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

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

Corporal Punishment

In accordance with State law:

"The power of the School Committees or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committees to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student."

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as preventing a teacher or other employee or agent of the school committees from using reasonable force as is necessary for the following situations: to protect themselves from assault by a student, to protect other students and staff members from violent aggressive acts of students, or to prevent a student from harming themselves.

The Superintendent will issue regulations regarding staff training in the proper uses and limitations on the use of physical restraint.

Physical Restraint Policy – School Committee Policy JKAA

Maintaining a school environment that is conducive to student learning requires that the environment be orderly and safe. Physical restraint of a student may sometimes be necessary to protect the student or other individuals. Physical restraint is the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. Students in the District are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint will be used with extreme caution and only in emergency situations after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

The two goals of the physical restraint policy are:

1. To administer physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm, and

2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

The school district's emphasis is on prevention and de-escalation, which reduces the risk of injury to both students and program staff. The emphasis is always on the care, safety, and welfare of the students and the primary technique used is verbal de-escalation.

Physical restraint may only be used when non-physical interventions would not be effective, and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

The administrator in charge of Special Education or his/her/their designee will provide all staff with guidelines and procedural information regarding physical restraint. The only school personnel who should physically restrain students are those who have been trained through an approved Restraint Training Program. The only physical restraint techniques to be used are those taught by the approved Restraint Training Program.

Each building will provide its staff with a list of the school's personnel who have been trained through the Restraint Training Program. Whenever possible, these trained staff members will be called upon to administer physical restraint in situations where a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

However, nothing in 603 CMR 46.00 precludes any teacher or employee from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. In addition, nothing in these regulations should interfere with or prohibit law enforcement, judicial authorities, or mandated reporter responsibilities.

The Districts will adhere to all laws and state regulations governing physical restraint.

Search and Seizure

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

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

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

participant(s) in rule violations or illegal activity; and violation of rules listed in the student handbook.

A search of a student's person may include the use of a breathalyzer test when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. The refusal of a student to participate in the breathalyzer test may lead to a disciplinary penalty equal to the offense of which the student is suspected.

As stated above, students are hereby given notice that they have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers; student lockers are accessible to school officials and may be subject to search at the discretion of school officials. When appropriate, the police and the use of trained animals may be used to conduct a search.

Contraband is defined as any material of an unauthorized or illegal nature (such as tobacco products, vaping products and paraphernalia; drug paraphernalia; drugs, illicit and prescribed; alcohol; weapons; explosives and such similar items) not authorized to be brought to or kept in school on a person, in a locker, or vehicle or any other place on school grounds.

Personal possessions such as fireworks, stink bombs, disguises, water pistols, or dangerous items of attire, which could cause potential disruption or injury to students, faculty or school staff, their possessions, or the school facility or grounds, are contraband. As a condition of entry into any school event, for student safety, all belongings and vehicles are subject to search for contraband. Contraband seized as a result of routine locker or backpack/bag inspection will be turned over to the police if the material seized is of an illegal or dangerous nature. Parents will be notified of the seizure as soon as possible after the seizure. **VEHICLES PARKED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO SEARCH.**

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her/their designee will be present. The student's parent or guardian will be immediately notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

Police Relations

It may be necessary to summon police assistance in cases of extreme disruption, uncontrolled or dangerous behavior or for violations of law.

This document states the intent of the Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools and the Amherst Police Department to engage in cooperative efforts aimed at the elimination of drugs and alcohol from the schools. Such cooperation will ensure a more comprehensive community response to the social and physical hazards of drug use and drug trafficking by students while under the authority of school personnel.

The parties to the memorandum of understanding hereby agree to the conditions and procedures entered below.

- 1.1 All school staff members are under obligation to report any and all incidents of the use or possession of any drugs by students.
- 1.2 School personnel are not protected under the confidentiality statutes of the Commonwealth, and if called on to testify in court, they would be obligated to reveal any information relating to drugs even if voluntarily confided to them by the students.
- 1.3 Each and every such incident, suspected incident, or suspected pattern of use, possession, or trafficking in drugs is to be reported immediately to the appropriate building Principal, other administrator or designee.
- 1.4 Any student who is suspected of, observed as, or has admitted to being under the influence of a drug must be immediately escorted to the office of the building Principal or the office must be notified immediately of the incident.
- 1.5 Incidents, as described, in items 1.0 – 1.3 are considered violations of school rules and possibly of the law if they occur in the school building, on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, at activities or events which may be conducted off school grounds, on school buses, and at or around school bus stops, during loading and unloading procedures.
- 2.1 The Principal of each school building shall be the party to whom all such incidents are reported and who will coordinate all procedures in these matters. In the absence of the Principal, another administrator or designee shall perform this function.
- 2.2 Upon a report to the Principal of an incident, an investigation will be conducted. Parents will be informed expeditiously. Disciplinary hearings will take place when appropriate and will be conducted by the Principal, another administrator, or designee.
- 1.0 To be under the influence of drugs, but not in possession of drugs is a violation of school rules. Students in violation of school rules only will be appropriately disciplined and parents notified, but police will not be ordinarily summoned. Police may be summoned in cases of disorderly or dangerous conduct.
- 3.1 Students found to be in possession of drugs, on their person, or in locations specifically associated with students (school corridor lockers, gymnasium lockers, personal clothing or other locations or items) will be considered to be in violation of the law. In such cases, parents will be notified immediately and the police will be summoned. The case will be turned over to the Amherst Police

Department. Contraband (illicit drugs and paraphernalia usually associated with drug use) will be turned over to the police department as well.

- 3.2 Where appropriate, the Police Department will pursue criminal action against any student found to be in possession of drugs.
- 2.0 The Amherst Police Department's Officer in Charge of Operations will coordinate the department's actions in cases of a student found to be in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia. The Officer in Charge of Operations will coordinate record-keeping functions and police department/school system educational efforts with the Principals of the schools.
- 4.1 The school system will report to the police department all incidents of students found to be under the influence of drugs. The names of such students may be, at the discretion of the Principal, submitted to the police department after notification of parents. Such incident reports will be maintained by the Amherst Police Department as well as by the school system. A standard form for the purpose of reporting will be developed jointly by the police department and the school system.
- 4.2 The police department's Officer in Charge of Operation and the school Principals will form a liaison/coordinating committee. This committee will meet regularly during the school year for the purpose of reviewing procedures contained herein and for the purpose of monitoring local conditions regarding drug use and trafficking.
- 4.3 The liaison/coordination committee shall meet with and report to the Chief of the Amherst Police Department and the Superintendent of Schools annually (in March) for the purpose of reviewing the goals and effectiveness of the procedures contained herein.
- 4.4 The procedures contained in this memorandum should be consistent with the codes for student conduct established in each school building.

Chapter 76: Section 16 Children excluded from school; remedies

Section 16. Any pupil who has attained age eighteen, or the parent, guardian, or custodian of a pupil who has not attained said the age of eighteen, who has been refused admission to or excluded from the public schools or from the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public schools shall on application be furnished by the School Committee with a written statement of the reasons therefore, and thereafter, if the refusal to admit or exclusion was unlawful, such pupil may recover from the town or, in the case of such refusal or exclusion by a regional school district from the district, in tort and may examine any member of the School Committee or any other officer of the town or regional school district upon interrogatories. (This provision, as well as Section 17, below, is only applicable when the offense is one for which the Principal does not have the authority to expel the student.)

Chapter 76: Section 17 Hearing prerequisite to exclusion

Section 17. A School Committee shall not permanently exclude a pupil from the public schools for alleged misconduct without first giving him and his parent or guardian an opportunity to be heard.

Communication

In late September or early October there will be evening Open Houses in each of the schools to share information about the general nature of your child's classroom program and to answer questions you may have about the school.

At the elementary schools, two (2) early release days will typically be scheduled annually during the month of October, in order to facilitate the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the discretion of the parent and the teacher. In addition, report cards are sent home in January and June.

Middle School and High School students receive progress reports at the middle of each semester and report cards at the end of each semester.

Newsletters containing lists of important dates, and other news and information about the school are sent out regularly. Materials are generally sent home on Fridays. Materials about activities which are not school-sponsored must have prior approval from the Superintendent's Office. School-related information requires approval by the Principal.

Computer Use Guidelines/Acceptable Network Use Policy

I. Introduction

This document is a joint effort of the Franklin and Hampshire County public schools, adopted by the school Superintendents and technology coordinators/administrators for the purpose of guiding the appropriate use of technology in education. The electronic resources at the public schools in Franklin and Hampshire County are provided by and in consonance with their mission to:

- Improve education for all students through access to unique resources and partnerships;
- Improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration and distribution of successful education practices, methods, and materials.

In addition, we seek to ensure the healthy and appropriate use of technology resources by making provisions for:

Prevention of access by users to inappropriate matters on the Internet;

- The safety and security of users when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Prevention of unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities;
- Prevention of unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- The design of measures to restrict minors’ access to harmful materials; and
- Prevention of any and all inappropriate or illegal use.

Our electronic resources—including, but not limited to, computers and Internet access—allow users access to local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy, and are intended solely for educational purposes. Every user has the responsibility to respect the rights of every other user in our school communities and on

the Internet. Users are required to conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner, in accordance with both school and district policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States.

The potential exists, outside the school/district network, for users to access inappropriate material. A user may intentionally or innocently access material inconsistent with our educational purpose and policies. While violations of school/district policy are cause for concern, we maintain the educational advantages of using the technology outweigh the disadvantages. It is the burden of parents and guardians to establish standards of use of electronic media consistent with school/district policy and to ensure that users comply with established policy. We respect each family's decision whether their child should or should not have access to the Internet. Parents should notify the school in writing if they do not want the student to use the Internet. The use of electronic resources is at the discretion of the schools/districts according to their individual electronic policy.

The following explains our common policies for acceptable use of the schools' and districts' technology. Policies specific to individual schools and districts are at the end of this document. Use of computer networks and the Internet are revocable privileges dependent upon compliance with school/district policy and these procedures. A user's failure to comply with the policy shall result in limited network/Internet access, suspension of access, and/or other disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion.

II. General Provisions

The Greater Hampshire and Franklin County schools have established certain protocols to ensure the safety of our school communities, the security of computer networks, and compliance with applicable law. All users should be aware of the following provisions:

A. Network and Internet monitoring

Most schools and/or their vendors have software and systems in place that monitor and record all Internet usage. Most security systems are capable of recording each website visit, chat, newsgroup, e-mail message, and file transfer into and out of our internal networks for each user. We reserve the right to intermittently monitor Internet traffic and other usage of electronic resources, for instance, by tracking the destination URLs of individual users. Users should have no expectation of privacy when browsing the web, sending or receiving e-mail, or using other electronic resources.

B. Filtering

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by the U.S. Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), our schools shall employ filtering software to block access to inappropriate content on all computers with Internet access. Our schools and districts certify that a policy of Internet safety and technology protection measures shall be enforced. Users are restricted from accessing visual depictions of subject matter that are obscene, pornographic, child pornographic, or harmful to minors. In compliance with CIPA, our schools and districts shall, in furtherance of this set of Acceptable Use Procedures regarding Internet safety, monitor the online activities of users.

Users should be aware that filtering software will not block ALL inappropriate websites. Users shall report all inappropriate sites not blocked by filters to a technology administrator for appropriate action. Filtering software may be temporarily disabled for users 18 and over by a technology administrator for educational research purposes.

Our schools and districts cannot be held responsible for misuse of material downloaded from any online service, or for inappropriate or sexually explicit material being obtained through the network.

III. User-specific Provisions

A. All Users Students, administrators, staff and faculty shall not:

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy, or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs or racial epithets; or discriminates on the basis of gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, religion, handicap, age or any other legally protected classification.
3. Degrade damage or disrupt equipment or system/network performance (for example excessive bandwidth use that disrupts the network for other users).
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user's data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
8. Download, install, load, or use programs without written permission of the technology coordinator/administrator.
9. Use school resources for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul, or abusive language.
11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening, or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images, or language.
12. Forward chain letters.
13. Forward e-mail messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community (see number 5 below in the section "Students, staff and faculty must").
14. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
15. Engage in the practice of "hacking" or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity using the network.
16. Engage in any conduct which constitutes cyber-bullying as defined by the Districts' Anti-Bullying Policy.
17. Engage in any other inappropriate use of the system.

B. Students, staff and faculty must:

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, the use of appropriate language.

3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended and reporting all unauthorized use of one's account to a technology administrator.
4. Avoid bulk emailing.
5. Forward all emails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to a technology administrator for appropriate distribution to the entire school community.
6. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect.
7. Abide by this procedure and specific school policy.

C. Students

Students may access the Internet only with adult supervision and must notify a teacher or technology instructor immediately if they come across inappropriate content. In addition, students may not use the Internet to give out personal information (such as a home address, telephone number, or picture) about themselves or other students. Student use of electronic resources is restricted to teacher-approved projects and research.

IV. Electronic Communication

School and District resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes. Incidental and occasional personal use of electronic mail may occur when such use does not generate a direct cost for the District, but such messages will be treated no differently from other messages on the network. Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
2. Use of electronic communication systems to send messages, access to which is restricted by laws and regulations.
3. Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct school/district business.
4. Constructing electronic communications to appear to be from someone else.
5. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial school/district business purpose.
6. Users will conform to the rules of email archiving and document retention according to the document retention policy under Massachusetts General Laws.
7. Any other communication in violation of this policy or the specific school policy.

V. Software

All technology purchases, software and hardware, must be approved by the Director of Information Systems. All software purchases must be made according to the procedures outlined in the document, Instructional Software Purchase Procedures, available from the Information Systems Department.

A. Supported Software

Software which the District has standardized will be given priority in terms of installation, troubleshooting and training. A list of standardized and supported software, and other software owned by the District, will be updated from time to time and made

available for viewing at a location designated by the Superintendent, Principal, or technology administrator or his/her/their designated agent.

B. Other Software

Installation, troubleshooting and training for all other software used by faculty, staff and students will be supported as time permits. Software to be used in the curriculum or in a lab environment must be purchased in “lab packs” of sufficient quantities to account for the greatest number of simultaneous users or as site licenses and must be owned by the school/District. Single copies of software are considered evaluation copies and will not be supported, installed on multiple computers, or made available from the network to multiple computers.

C. Unsupported Data, Media and Software

Software which makes the computers and network harder to maintain and support and which offers little or no benefit over comparable software will not be supported. Do not install software, including downloaded freeware or shareware, on any computer. The technology coordinator/administrator reserves the right to uninstall unsupported media or reimage any computer as necessary. No personal data or files are to be stored on the local hard drive of any computer. Please store data and files in your home directory.

VI. Data Storage and Backup:

The technology coordinator/administrator has the right to reimage any computer as necessary. No personal data or files should be stored on the local machine. The school/District makes every effort to run regular backups of data and email hosted on its systems and networks; however, it cannot guarantee that in the event of data loss or catastrophic failure all information will be recovered.

VII. Hardware:

A. Use of equipment other than that owned by the school/district:

1. The school/District does not support equipment brought in from the outside by any user.
2. The technology coordinator/administrator has the right to confiscate any outside equipment that interferes with the operation of the system/network.
3. The school/District is not responsible for damage to or loss of equipment brought in from the outside.
4. Permission to set up any outside equipment on school premises must be given in advance by the technology coordinator/administrator or his/her/their designated agent.
5. Permission must be granted for the use of electronic devices not owned or provided by the school/district.

B. Wiring of network devices:

Any wiring of computers and peripherals must be done in accordance with local and state building codes. The connectivity requests should be made through the IT department. The IT department is solely responsible for this process.

VIII. Web Pages:

A. General guidelines for student, teacher & classroom sites

- 1. Posting**—All web pages produced by faculty or staff that reference or depict the school/District are assumed to be school- or district-owned educational resources, created for the sole purpose of education, and shall be posted on a school-maintained website, with the exception of school-authorized sites whose purpose is to simplify the process by which a page/site is posted. All student websites/pages must be approved by authorized school personnel for posting prior to being posted.
- 2. Disclaimers**—If a user's home page is housed on a school/district server, but has links to sites/pages which are not housed on a school/district server, the user must include the following disclaimer: "The Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts are not responsible for any content which is not hosted on our servers" Any school-related web page produced by staff but not housed on the school web site must be posted to an authorized site and must include the following disclaimer: "The contents of this site/page express the views of the author(s) only and do not necessarily express the views of Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts." The school/District is not responsible for content on school-related websites not housed on our site or on another authorized site.
- 3. Student pictures and work**—A student photo will be posted only when there is no signed parent form on file documenting that the posting is prohibited.
- 4. Content**—Do not advertise, endorse or link to any product or organization whose primary function is not to disseminate educational content (e.g., commercial enterprises or political groups). Certain fundraising information and links may be allowed, such as "shopforschool.com" or "marketday.com" and certain exceptions may be made for commercial entities who have significantly contributed to the school community (e.g., Verizon or Microsoft). These company links are allowed at the discretion of appropriate school administrators; please see the school- and District-specific provisions at the end of this document for more information.
In all cases, exceptions may be made when links to commercial or political groups are provided for legitimate educational purposes—for instance, links to the sites of political parties for civics courses, or links to commercial entities for media literacy courses. Proofread your content and use a spell checker before posting. As an educational institution with a potentially broad audience, it is incumbent upon us to have grammatically correct content. Viewers often have high expectations and we must maintain a high level of accountability to our community.
- 5. Copyright issues**—Make certain that copyrighted material conforms to the "fair use" test (<http://www.benedict.com/basic/fairuse/fairtest.htm>) and that all copyrighted material on your site is appropriately credited.

Controversial Issues in School

Controversial issues are topics that may be publicly sensitive and about which there are varied levels of opposing views, biases, emotions and/or conflict. American academic tradition stresses the free exchange of ideas as a basic element of curriculum development, instruction, and discussion. Studying controversial issues in school is important in preparing students to participate intelligently and responsibly in a democratic and pluralistic society.

An important goal of public education is to help students develop the capacity to participate respectfully, critically and positively in the discussion and analysis of controversial issues. Studying controversial issues provides opportunities to develop a student's ability to think clearly and critically, to reason logically, to differentiate between opinion and intelligent analysis, and to respectfully examine different points of view with an open mind. All staff and students have a right to express their opinions and a right to a respectful hearing. While teachers and other staff may have personal views on controversial issues, they do not have a right to use the school setting as a forum to promote their personal views. Educators need to be constantly mindful that their views may influence students and that they have an obligation to model objectivity and to encourage their students to think for themselves.

The approach to writing about controversial issues and to discussion of controversial issues in the classroom will be objective and scholarly and will be done in a spirit of critical inquiry rather than advocacy. Teachers will ensure that reasoned arguments on an issue are presented in classroom discussions. Teachers will strive to balance major views and to assure that as many sides of the issues as possible are presented in a fair and impartial manner, with no position presented as the only one acceptable. Political issues will be presented in a non-partisan manner. Controversial issues that arise incidentally during instruction should be used by the teacher to promote critical inquiry and to teach thinking skills. In all instances, teachers will encourage students to develop an ability to meet issues without prejudice and to withhold judgments while facts are collected and evaluated.

Teachers must obtain permission from the Principal to invite visitors for classroom and/or school-wide presentations. Whenever outside persons are invited to speak on controversial issues, care will be taken to assure that a reasonable range of opinions on the issue are presented in an equitable manner and that they are consistent with the academic standards of the school. Teachers will offer students and parents who might be offended by a presentation because of their religious or personal beliefs the opportunity not to participate in a presentation. Student-initiated forums are subject to the same standards for approach to discussion, consistency with the academic standards of the school, and use of visitors for presentations.

English Language Learners

In accordance with Federal law, State law, and the Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance, the Amherst Pelham Regional School District will provide an instructional program for all identified English Learners (EL) in grades kindergarten through 12 that is designed specifically to assist them in learning English and in learning subject matter content.

The Amherst-Pelham Regional School District will identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents/guardians, teachers and other persons. Identified students will be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language. Students receiving EL support are required to participate in state-wide assessments. If parents elect to exclude their child from EL services, they must check the box marked, “No” on the Permission for Services form or contact the principal in person, via telephone or email. Students will exit the EL Program after passing statewide testing, and based on the results of standardized testing, classroom performance and teacher recommendation.

Seal of Biliteracy

Amherst Regional Public School students have the opportunity to earn the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy. This seal is an official recognition from the Department of Education which honors and celebrates students who have studied and attained proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in two or more languages by high school graduation. This award is noted on a graduating student's transcript and affixed to a diploma. The Seal of Biliteracy is earned by demonstrating an Intermediate-High level of proficiency in English and an additional language, as demonstrated on standardized tests. Graduating students can also earn the Seal of Biliteracy with distinction by earning an Advanced-Low level of proficiency in the two languages.

In addition to the Seal of Biliteracy awards offered to graduating seniors, Biliteracy Pathway Awards will be offered to students in grade six and grade eight to recognize and celebrate their growth on the path towards biliteracy.

Equity

Our schools are committed to Excellence with Equity for all students. Efforts to actively link equity, social justice and multicultural education across the teaching and learning standards have engaged the Amherst-Pelham Regional District's educators for almost three decades. We believe it is imperative that all members of our learning community, students, families and staff, are learning, are treated equitably, and share the responsibility for creating a caring environment focused on the academic achievement of all students. To that end, we are committed to Teaching and Learning that is built on attention to both, the cognitive and affective domains, with a curriculum that is infused with uniform and practiced socially just behaviors.

In our review of the evolution of modern society's pursuit of equity, we find that the definition of equity and its goals have changed. Equity in schools has grown to be defined as student...

- access to the system – desegregation
- participation in the system – integration (e.g., on the team, taking the same classes)
- benefits from the system – achievement outcomes and goal attainment

Food and Nutrition Services

Breakfast and lunch are served every school day. There is always a vegetarian meal option available. The State of Massachusetts has approved funding for free meals for the 24/25 school

year. This will allow each student to receive one free meal at each meal period. A second meal can be purchased at full price. Children that bring lunch from home can buy milk at school. Please take the time to fill out the free meal application form when you receive it because it may qualify your family for other benefits.

Breakfast (per day)
Middle School/High School \$1.30
Elementary Schools \$.80

Lunch (per day)—All Schools
Full Price \$3.25
Adult Price \$3.50
Milk – All Schools \$.60

Health

A. Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco Free School

- Alcohol and drug use is prohibited on school grounds/property (including buses) or at school-related activities at all times. Use of tobacco is prohibited on school grounds/property (including buses) or at school-related activities at all times. The use of tobacco is not permitted in vehicles that are parked on school grounds.

B. Allergy Aware Guidelines

- The Amherst, Pelham and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts (ARPS) provide a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff at school to the extent reasonably possible. Students identified with life-threatening allergies will be provided for as medically necessary in the school environment. The ARPS guidelines will help reduce exposure to allergens to the best of our ability, knowing that we can be allergen-aware, not allergen free, and follow established procedures to treat allergic reactions.
- A student identified as having a life-threatening allergy must have a written statement clearly documenting the allergy from his/her/their healthcare provider/allergy specialist along with a written medication order, and parent/guardian consent for required interventions and medication. ARPS will provide training to educate staff in the management of life-threatening allergies.
- No student shall be discriminated against or excluded from school activities based on their life-threatening allergy except as permitted under the regulations and guidance pursuant to Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The school will implement the following guidelines to provide a safe and socially inclusive environment for the student.
- ***The Amherst, Pelham and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts are "allergy aware" schools.*** Families and personnel are respectfully asked to refrain from bringing nuts or foods processed with nuts in lunches and snacks. We have many students with serious nut allergies who are at risk of anaphylactic shock due to cross-contamination (i.e., a student eats nuts, then plays on equipment and the nut oils are transferred. Later a student with a nut allergy comes in contact with the same equipment and suffers a reaction). Please help the school keep all

students healthy. This practice means: ***Do Not Bring Nuts or Foods Processed with Nuts into the Schools.***

C. Appropriate Clothing

- Please send student(s) to school with clothing appropriate for varied weather conditions (especially warm clothing for winter weather). Students should have proper footwear for indoor use, gym, and outside activities.

D. Dental Health

- Families are encouraged to have their students visit a dentist regularly and follow his or her recommendations for a preventative dental health program.

E. Emergency Information

- At the beginning of the year, Emergency Information Forms are distributed to each child. It is extremely important that the information on the form be filled in accurately, kept up-to-date, and signed by a parent or guardian. There must be a way of reaching alternate persons to notify in cases of emergency if the parent/guardian cannot be reached. Please be sure that the person(s) you name is willing and able to serve in this capacity. Please use a local person.

F. Head Lice

- When head lice or nits are found, the student should be treated at home. Head lice are contagious and quickly spread unless treated. A student's head should be checked regularly, especially if an itchy scalp is noted. Eggs are commonly found in the hair around the ears, the back of the neck, and the crown of the head. All family members and close contacts should be examined and treated as needed. The nurse will provide the necessary information needed to deal successfully with this problem. The student is advised to report to the nurse's office before returning to class.

G. Immunization Requirements

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health sets entry into school immunization requirements. This information is available at the schools and from a health care provider. EVIDENCE OF THE REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE ENTERING THE AMHERST, AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL, OR THE PELHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS. If a parent/guardian is claiming a medical or religious exemption from this requirement, an exemption request must be made in writing. All medical exemptions must be supported by a healthcare provider. Sufficient information must be provided for both exemptions, so that the administration may make a judgment as to the validity of the claimed exemption. Any student with medical or religious exemptions may be subject to exclusion from school if there is an outbreak of a specific disease. State Health Regulations require that all students entering preschool or kindergarten present evidence of having been screened for lead poisoning.

H. Medication Policy

- The Amherst, Amherst-Pelham Regional, and Pelham Public Schools follow all legal requirements for administration of medication in schools, including 105 CMR 210.00 *et. seq.* The administration of medication to students by the school nurse should take place only if the student's health would be jeopardized without it. No initial dose will be given in school. A signed and dated consent form by the

parent/guardian and prescribing health care provider authorizing the administration of the medicine during school hours must be presented to the nurse. Prescription medication must be in the original pharmacy container, labeled with the student's name, the health care provider's name, the name of the medicine, the dose, the time of day and the dates to be administered. Non-prescription medication must be presented in the original container. All medicines must be kept in the nurse's office, except for inhalers, EPI Pens, and diabetic supplies which may be carried by the student. These particular medications also require written permission from the parent/guardian, health care provider, and nurse at the school which will be kept on file in the nurse's office. It is the student's responsibility to come to the nurse's office at the prescribed time. Medication must be hand delivered by an adult to the nurse in order for that medicine to be dispensed to a student. The District does not keep stock supplies of medication, except for emergency situations. Please see the nurse at school for consent and order forms along with clarification of these policies.

I. Physical Examination Requirements

- A report of a complete physical examination including an up-to-date record of immunizations is required for each child prior to entrance into school. Physical examinations performed within six months of the opening of school will meet this requirement. In Amherst, Pelham, and Amherst-Pelham Public Schools examinations are required before beginning kindergarten and fourth, seventh, and tenth grade. A student transferring from another school system should be examined just as any other student just entering one of the Districts. The physical examination must be conducted by a licensed medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Documentation of the examination should be submitted to the nurse's office prior to entering school. Also, the documentation should include the date the exam was conducted, a statement regarding a general assessment of health, unusual findings or chronic health problems, treatments or medication administrations to be carried out in school and any limitations to usual school activities.

J. Sickness and Accidents

- If a student is sick or has a serious accident in school, the school will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s). It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to take the student home and arrange for needed medical attention. The school will administer first aid only. Parents/guardians are asked to pick up their children in the nurse's office. It is sometimes difficult to assess how a child looks or feels in the morning, and many children will go to school well but develop an illness during the day. For the child's sake, as well as for the sake of others, please keep a student home if they are not well. Examples of illnesses that should keep the child at home include:
 - conjunctivitis (pink eye) may return after treatment has started
 - fever (over 100 degrees orally) as a symptom.
 - significant headache or stomachache
 - diarrhea or vomiting within the past 24 hours

- impetigo (may return to school after treatment has started)
- earache, runny nose, cough, and/or sore throat (if these symptoms interfere with a student's participation at school).

K. Pregnant Students

- Pregnant students will be encouraged to continue to attend school. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible, that return to school after delivery is encouraged and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided. In accordance with Federal law and the Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance, a student who is pregnant in the Amherst, Pelham, and the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District is permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities throughout her pregnancy. After giving birth, a student is permitted to return to the academic program in which she was enrolled and is permitted to participate in extracurricular programs. The District does not require that a pregnant student obtain certification from a physician that she is physically and emotionally able to continue in school unless certification is required for all students with other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician. All pregnant students will be provided the contact information of the Title IX Coordinator and information about the Title IX Coordinator's ability to take specific actions, including but not limited to: discussing reasonable modifications, voluntary leave, and access to a clean, private (non-bathroom) space for lactation.

L. Staff

- The School Health Services team is composed of a School Physician, a Nurse Leader, Certified School Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses. The School Physician is available on a scheduled basis as an advisor for the overall school health program, consultation, and preventative health programs. A nurse is on duty during regular school hours to meet the needs of children and staff.

Health Screening

A. Height and Weight

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 57 and CMR 200.500 mandates that students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 be measured for height and weight annually in our Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening Program.

B. Postural Screening

Postural (scoliosis) screening, also known as screening for spinal curvature, is conducted yearly for students in grades 5-9. Parents/guardians of students who are found to need further evaluation by their own healthcare provider will be notified.

C. Vision and Hearing Tests

Screenings are conducted with students each year in the school for students in grades K-6, 10, and upon request. Parents/guardians of students who are found to need further evaluation by their own healthcare provider will be notified.

D. SBIRT (Screening, brief intervention referral to treatment)

Our students in grades 7 & 9 complete the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) screening in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71§ 97. SBIRT focuses on prevention, early detection, risk assessment, brief counseling, and referral intervention that can be utilized in the school setting. This validated verbal screening tool will enable school nurses and counselors to detect risk for substance use-related problems and to address them at an early stage in adolescents. Any statement, response or disclosure made by a student during a verbal substance use disorder screening shall be considered confidential information and shall not be disclosed by a person receiving the statement, response or disclosure to any other person without the prior written consent of the pupil, parent or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or a disclosure is otherwise required by state law; provided, however, that the screening shall be implemented in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to student confidentiality.

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

E. DESSA (The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment)

The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) is a universal screener used in schools to assess students' social-emotional competencies. This research-based tool helps identify students' strengths and areas for growth in skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. By using DESSA, our schools aim to support the holistic development of every student, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.

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

Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This program works to ensure the enrollment, attendance and the opportunity to succeed in school for homeless children and youth. This program collaborates with other state agencies and community providers to support homeless families and their students

The staff of the ARPS Family Center, under the direction of the Director of Student and Family Engagement, coordinates the support for homeless students with designated school staff. School staff and community members can contact the ARPS Family Center to inquire about the services provided for homeless students in our schools.

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

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

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

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

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

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

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

Homeless Education Liaison

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

Enrollment and Dispute Resolution

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

The Amherst Public Schools, Pelham Public Schools, and Amherst-Pelham Regional School District will immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment – such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. The District's liaison for homelessness will assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

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

Homeschooling of Students

The District recognizes the right of parents/guardians to provide home education to their child/children. This right is not absolute, but subject to reasonable regulation by the District. Parents/guardians must submit a written home education proposal to the Superintendent or his/her/their designee, who, under Chapter 76, Section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws shall approve or disapprove it. Such approval must be obtained in advance of its implementation.

In evaluating each proposed home education proposal, the Superintendent or his/her/their designee, will consider the following factors:

1. The competency of the teachers. Though certification is not required, the presence or absence of the requirements that would lead to certification may be considered.
2. The teaching of subjects required by state law, Chapter 71, Sections 1, 2, and 3, or regulation; the manner in which they are taught so as to impart comparable knowledge as given in the local schools.
3. The number of hours and days devoted to teaching to meet the minimum requirements of the state.
4. The adequacy of the texts, materials, methods, and programs being used.
5. The availability of periodic tests and measurement of the child's educational growth.

Parents/guardians have the right to a hearing before the Superintendent in the event that the home education proposal is disapproved, so as to allow them an opportunity to explain their plan and answer questions about it. They may be represented by counsel and shall be provided reasonable notice of the time and place of such a hearing.

If a plan is approved, there will be a periodic evaluation of the child's progress under guidelines and standards set by the Superintendent to measure whether adequate educational progress has been made.

Participation of Home-Educated Students in Athletics and Extra-Curricular Activities

The opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports and/or other extracurricular activities should be considered a privilege rather than a right. The Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools encourage students with approved home education plans to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities at the Middle School and High School, provided they meet the same eligibility requirements as enrolled students.

Specifically, to participate in extracurricular activities and/or athletics, a home-educated student:

- must have a home education plan that has been approved by the Superintendent prior to the beginning of the school year
- must reside in the Region and must be living with his/her/their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in the family residence
- for participation in interscholastic athletics, must meet all eligibility requirements of MIAA including, but not limited to, rules governing transfers and academic eligibility beyond grade eight and rules governing eligibility of home educated students

- for participation in extracurricular activities and athletics, must meet all eligibility requirements of the school, including attendance and academic requirements
- must pay required fees for participation in athletics and, if applicable, for extracurricular activities
- must pass the District's physical examination annually, or have a family doctor perform such an examination, and must secure and present evidence of their own insurance coverage for participation in athletics

Two aspects of a student's home education program have been identified as being important measures of academic eligibility. These are, attendance/daily completion of coursework and acceptable academic performance. Students must complete their normal academic work on the day of a scheduled practice or game; and students must complete satisfactory work in all subject areas in order to participate in extracurricular and/or athletic activities. Parents/guardians of home education students are expected to monitor these requirements.

Attendance

On days when there is either a game scheduled or a practice to be held, the head coach of an athletic team will review that day's Home Education plan which must be signed by the parent/guardian, thereby certifying the student's completion of that day's academic work. Participants in other extracurricular activities must present their signed daily Home Education plan to the club's advisor.

Academic Performance

On a term basis, no later than three (3) school days following the close of grades at the high school and middle school, the parent or guardian responsible for the home education program must submit to the Superintendent or his/her/their designee a progress report on work completed that term, including representative work samples and/or any other methods used for evaluating academic performance in English, mathematics, science and social studies. The Superintendent or his/her/their designee, with consultation from department heads, will determine whether or not the work completed that term satisfies the school's grade-level standards.

Failure of a home-educated student to adhere to requirements for participation in extra-curricular activities, or failure of a parent/guardian who has assumed responsibility for a home education program to properly monitor their child's adherence to eligibility requirements, shall lead to the loss of the privilege to participate.

Homework

The District believes that homework is an important part of the educational process and that it is valid if it has the following objectives: to reinforce, enrich, and extend classroom instruction; to provide essential practice in developing skills; to promote the growth of individual responsibility and self-direction in learning; and to help students develop good study habits and time management skills.

Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. When assigning and evaluating homework, teachers cannot assume that the student will have adult support outside of school for the successful completion of an assignment. Homework will not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

Homework guidelines for elementary students may be found here: [Elementary Homework Guidelines.pdf](#).

Seventh grade students may expect to be assigned a maximum of 70 minutes on average, and eighth grade students a maximum of 80 minutes on average, per night across all subjects. High school students in college prep classes can expect 30 minutes of homework per night per class. Students in Honors and AP classes can expect more than 30 minutes per class per night, given the smaller number of available instructional days under the block schedule.

Guidance about homework at the secondary level over school vacations may be found [here](#).

School handbooks will publish specific homework guidelines that are consistent with the goals of the instructional program (Policy IA), this policy and other relevant School Committee policies.

Inclement Weather

If the weather is inclement in the morning, please do not call the schools directly. Instead, refer to the following to learn whether school will be canceled or delayed:

- <https://arps.org>
- Radio: WHYN (93.1 FM), WHMP (1400 AM, 99.3 FM) and (1430 AM)
- TV: (WWLP) Channel 22 and ABC40
- ARPS Cancellation/Delays Message Line: Call 362-1898 beginning at 6:30 A.M.

Restorative Practice

The district utilizes a restorative practices approach to responding to conflict as well as using this approach in a proactive manner to build a positive community and culture in our schools. The use of circles to bring people together to promote engagement from all is an approach used in classrooms across grade levels. Response to behavioral incidents may or may not include a disciplinary response and frequently includes working with those involved in restorative meetings to repair any harm and rebuild safety and trust. Use of the restorative practice does not limit the authority of administrators to utilize suspension or expulsion as disciplinary measures in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §§ 37H, 37H1/2, 37H3/4, and 603 CMR 53.00 *et seq.*

Safety and Well-Being

The School Districts and the School Committees seek to create an environment that achieves equity for all students and ensures that each student is a successful learner, is fully respected, and learns to respect others. By building on strengths and overcoming impediments, the schools can ensure the academic engagement and school membership of every student from the moment she/he/they enroll to the moment she/he/they walk across the stage at graduation.

Respect, fairness, consistency, responsibility, and appropriate social skills are essential components of our schools. Every effort, both formal and informal, that supports these values and social skills will promote a positive learning environment, increase a climate of acceptance, and improve the quality of relationships among and between students and adults.

Mechanisms and procedures must be in place in every school and in every classroom not only to ensure the physical, social, and emotional safety of students, but also to provide the supports and advocacy necessary for students. The need for safety, well-being, support, and advocacy applies to the general student body, to victims, and to alleged offenders. All members of the school community need clear expectations, reasonable limits, and established structures and procedures to ensure safety and to protect the rights of all.

All members of the school community must be aware of school rules. Non-compliance with any of these rules will lead to appropriate consequences.

The School Committees expect prevention and responsiveness on all issues of safety and well-being to be high priorities in the Districts and schools. Every student will report to an adult concern about his/her/their safety and well-being or concerns about the safety and well-being of others. All adults in the school community will be trained in their responsibilities with respect to concerns about student safety and well-being, and every school will have clearly identified and trained individuals to provide support to those who receive and respond to such concerns. All reports from students or adults regarding issues of safety and well-being will be taken seriously.

The School Committees direct the Superintendent to develop guidelines for the implementation of this policy and to publish these district guidelines in the appropriate handbooks. Building Principals may establish specific protocols related to these district guidelines.

Social Skills

These are the K-12 Social Skills guidelines. It is important for students to:

- accept responsibility for their own actions;
- express appropriately their own ideas and feelings;
- accept and respect others' ideas and feelings;
- recognize the effect of their behavior on others;
- demonstrate perseverance in working to accomplish goals;
- recognize and respect individual differences;
- demonstrate physical self-control (i.e. physical activity appropriate to time, place and setting);
- demonstrate verbal self-control (i.e. speaking appropriate to time, place, and setting); and
- care for and respect materials, possessions and facilities.

Parents/guardians are expected to assist the District in supporting these goals.

School Visitation and Classroom Observation

Visitor Admission and Protocols

To best maintain the safety of students, the following protocol will be used to monitor who enters the buildings during the school day. While implementing this process is consistent with the districts' focus on student safety, the community should be assured that parents/guardians, community members, and volunteers are welcome in the schools, and the districts recognize that partnership is critically important to meeting the needs of students. Here are guidelines that will support a meaningful visit that maintains school safety:

- All visitors will enter the school building through the front door
- Access will be granted to the school via the front door after utilizing the door access bell
- Access will be granted by school office personnel, the building Principal or other authorized persons after visual identification is made and the visitor's purpose for requesting access to the school is accepted
- All school doors shall remain locked during the regular school day except at arrival and dismissal time when certain designated doors will be open
- All visitors will be directed to the school main office where they will sign a visitor log and obtain a School Department Visitor Badge
- Visitors who fail to report to the main office to sign-in or obtain a visitor badge will be reported to the building Principal or other authorized person for investigation

Visitors who fail to report to the main office to sign-in or obtain a visitor badge will be reported to the building Principal or other authorized person for investigation.

Elementary School Parents/guardians are invited to eat lunch with your child. Call the main office ahead of time so that a lunch may be ordered for you. Adult lunches are \$3.50.

Observations of Education Programs - Guidelines and Procedures

Pursuant to Mass. General Laws Chapter 71B Section 3, Amherst, Pelham, Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools accommodate written requests by parents/guardians to observe a student's current or proposed special education program and/or services. The following guidelines apply to the scheduling and conducting of these observations.

A parent's/guardian's request to observe a student's special education program, a proposed placement and/or services must be made in writing at least one (1) week in advance (with a copy provided to the designated Central Office Administrator) to the building Principal. The written request should identify the particular student, the observer, and the nature of the observation to be conducted.

The building Principal (or designee) will contact the parent/guardian and/or visitor for an initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the written request to avoid undue delay.

If the parent/guardian of the student is requesting that a third party (e.g. independent evaluator or educational consultant) conduct the observation, the parent/guardian must provide the school district with written permission for the third party to conduct the observation and, if requested, to review school records.

The building Principal (or designee) will work with staff and the observer to set up the details of the observation including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom. The school district will permit access to programs that is sufficient in duration to accomplish the purpose of the visit. The duration and extent of the observation will be determined on an individual basis but typically occur within one (1) and two (2) hour blocks. The start and end time of the observation will be agreed upon in advance.

The number of observers at any one time may be limited.

The observer will be informed that he/she/they are not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom including interacting with students and teaching staff during instruction. If his/her/their presence becomes disruptive or distracting, the observer will be informed that the observation may be terminated earlier than anticipated. This notice is particularly important since the presence of parents/guardians or others may influence the performance of the specified student and those of others.

The parent/guardian will be informed that he/she/they are there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. Observers are not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his/her/their contractual job duties.

The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff will be mindful of removing materials which may be part of a student's record from plain view.

A school administrator (or designee) will escort the parent /guardian or the third party during the entire observation.

The districts may designate certain periods of the year, such as during MCAS testing, field trips, the first or last few of days of the school year, as times when observations may not be scheduled.

The districts may condition observation of any of its programs when necessary to protect: a.) the safety of the children in the program; b.) the integrity of the program; and c.) the disclosure of any confidential or personally identifiable information about the children in the program while the program is being observed.

The building Principal (or designee) may exercise discretion at any time to reschedule or terminate an observation in the event of an emergency or a disruption that impacts on the physical or emotional well-being of the students in the school or the program being observed.

Observers will be required to sign a confidentiality statement providing that, in the event that they obtain personally identifiable or confidential information during the course of an observation, the observer will not disclose it except when the information is relative to the specific student being observed, in which case it will be used consistently with the parent's authority and direction.

Services for Students with Disabilities

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

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

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

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

The 504 Compliance Officer is: Doreen Reid, Director of Student Services

Video/Audio Taping of TEAM and Meetings

Tape recording of TEAM meetings is not permitted unless tape recording of a TEAM meeting is the only reasonable accommodation for a documented disability or the limited English proficiency of any participant in the TEAM meeting where the documented disability or limited English proficiency prevents that participant from fully understanding or participating in the team process without the use of tape recording. This would apply to the parent/guardian/educational surrogate, student, a person invited to the team meeting, such as a consultant or evaluator, as well as service providers, attorneys for the District or parent/guardian/educational surrogate/student, or advocates for the parent/guardian/educational surrogate/student. The person requesting the accommodation must contact the TEAM chairperson at least two (2) school days prior to the TEAM meeting to request the accommodation. Documentation related to the claimed need for an accommodation must be provided at that time.

Documentation of a disability or the limited English proficiency (if not obvious) should identify the impairment and how the impairment affects the parent/guardian/educational surrogate/adult student in an environment like a TEAM meeting. Further documentation, or oral or written information, may be requested by the District if the initial documentation is insufficient for the District to make a determination. Once adequate documentation is received, as determined by the District, the District will engage in the interactive process. As a result of the request and the interactive process, the District may choose to provide a different accommodation. If the District determines that:

- That the impairment is not a disability, or there is no limited English proficiency, or
- Taping is not permitted and a different accommodation will be provided, then the person requesting the accommodation of taping the TEAM meeting will be provided a copy of the District's Section 504 statement of procedural rights and/or complaint procedure and civil rights grievance procedure which the person may utilize in order to challenge the determination that taping is not permitted.

Extracurricular Activities and Athletics

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

As they pertain to extracurricular activities, including athletics (interscholastic, club, and/or intramural), both laws provide that qualified students with disabilities must be afforded an equal opportunity to participate with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate, given their needs. This does not mean that everyone is guaranteed a spot on the team. Schools are

permitted to require a level of skill to participate in a competitive program. Even if the school offers separate and different athletic opportunities for students with disabilities (e.g., allied or unified sports), students with disabilities still must be allowed the opportunity to compete for teams that are not separate and different. Schools are required to make reasonable modifications to ensure the opportunity to participate, unless the school can show that it would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, or the modification would create an undue financial or administrative burden. Even if a specific modification would constitute a fundamental alteration, the school district would still be required to determine if other modifications might be available that would permit the student's participation.

Student Records

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

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

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

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the School receives a request for access.
- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The contact information for the Office that administers FERPA is:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education

Massachusetts Student Record Regulations

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

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

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

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

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

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

Directory Information - Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a

student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying their school building office in writing by the end of September of each school year.

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

1. Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than three (3) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system with two exceptions: the first exception is the transcript (which shall be maintained for sixty (60) years) and the second exception is IEPs (which shall be maintained for a period of seven years after the fiscal year in which the IEPs were written). When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian wants the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that all documents in the temporary record be provided to them. **No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.**
2. In addition, each year, the principal and/or teachers and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions/expulsions/exclusions), any notes from the Parent/guardian or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian wants those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. Test protocols from special education or 504 evaluations are also considered part of the student's temporary record and are subject to destruction at the end of the school year following the next reevaluation of the student. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian would like to view test protocols, they must schedule a meeting prior to the last day of school as protocols cannot be released. **No additional notice about the destruction of records, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian prior to the destruction of any record in the student's file.**

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

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

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

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

Complaints - A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Problem Resolution System, 135 Santilli Highway, MA 02149, (781) 338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Student Records Regulations, please contact the building principal.

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

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

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE): political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; Mental or

psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following: any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use: protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

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

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

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

Transportation

Motor Vehicle Idling

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

Busses

Bus service is provided to children who live further than 1.5 miles from their school. Safety concerns for students who live closer than 1.5 miles will be assessed on an individual basis to determine if bus service is necessary. Bus stops and schedules are published at <https://arps.org/bus-routes/> just before school opens. These schedules are estimated times only. Traffic conditions vary from day to day and bus arrivals can vary by up to ten minutes.

Parents/Guardians are asked to review the following bus rules with their children:

Do not allow inadequately supervised siblings not attending school to accompany you to the bus stop.

- a. Do not play on the road.
- b. If possible, avoid crossing streets.
- c. If you must cross a street, do so only if you are sure no moving vehicles are approaching from either direction. Where appropriate, your school bus driver can also signal when it is safe to cross to your actual bus stop location.
- d. Do not push, pull or chase any other students.
- e. Avoid trespassing on private property or being noisy while waiting for the bus.
- f. As the bus approaches, line up at least six feet off the road. Do not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door. Again, don't push others in the line.

Loading on the bus

- Get on your bus quickly and be seated at once.
- Listen carefully and obey any directions issued by the driver.

Riding on the bus

Do not eat food while you are on the bus. Many students and staff have food allergies and their health will be compromised.

Do not throw anything while you are on the bus.

Do not extend your arms or any other parts of your body out of the window.

You must remain seated at all times while the bus is moving.

Do not change seats at any time.

Avoid shouting and other excessive noise that may distract the driver and lead to a serious accident.

Keep your bus clean and sanitary.

Be courteous to other students.

Listen carefully and obey any instructions from the driver.

Unloading from the bus

1. Do not leave your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.
2. Obey any instructions from the driver.
3. Leave the bus quickly but courteously without pushing any other students.
4. If you must cross a street as you leave the school bus, always wait for the driver to signal you to cross, and be sure to walk in front of the bus (never in the back).
5. If you walk too close to the front of the bus, the driver will not be able to see you and a serious accident could occur. Always walk at a distance of at least 12 feet from the front of the bus.
6. Be sure to observe all safety precautions as you travel from the bus stop to your home.

When problems arise

The safety and well-being of students riding the buses and the staff driving them must be protected at all times. Students engaging in inappropriate and/or unsafe behaviors will be asked to stop such behavior to protect their safety, as well as others riding the bus. The bus driver will report all incidents to the school Principal or designee. Parents/guardians will be contacted after each incident. Students will be assigned consequences, which may include specific seat assignments, suspension from riding the school bus for a specific period of time, and/or suspension or expulsion from school.

Kindergarten student transportation

For safety reasons, a parent/guardian, or another pre-designated person, must be physically

present when a Kindergarten student gets on and off the bus. When an older sibling is the only option to meet the Kindergartener, they should be at least in 6th grade. If no one is at the kindergarten

student's stop when students are transported home, he or she or they will be brought back to the school until the parent/guardian can pick him/her/them up. All kindergarteners will wear an I.D. or badge

(provided by the school) for the school year. The parent/guardian will be responsible for

clipping the badge on the outer clothing of the child in the morning, and the teacher will be

responsible for clipping the badge on the outer clothing of the student in the afternoon. [RR1] All

kindergarteners will be seated in the first three rows of the school bus. Driver has the right to return a student or students to school if there is no one to meet the student or if the driver perceives unsafe conditions. For instance, if a parent or guardian typically meets a student, regardless of the age of the student, the driver may decide to return that student to school.

Changes in going home routine—Bus Passes

Parents/Guardians are asked to limit plans that will require their child/children to ride a different school bus than usual. However, when it is absolutely necessary for a child to take a different bus, all Elementary students are required to use the Bus Pass system for their safety. This system ensures that the school knows where all Elementary students are being transported.

In order to obtain a Bus Pass, students must submit an authorized note from their parent or legal guardian to their school office. The note must include the address at which the student will be temporarily picked up or dropped off. The school office will issue a Bus Pass to the student who must then present it to the driver. Children will not be permitted to board a different bus or get off the bus anywhere other than their usual designated stop without a Bus Pass.

Please plan ahead if changes will be required in a student's usual transportation home. Do not make alternative transportation arrangements by phoning the school on the day of the change except in cases of emergency.

Secondary students are allowed to ride a different bus from their regular bus without obtaining a bus pass provided there is available space on the bus, they are using a designated stop (no new or additional stops will be made) and their presence does not lead to repeated behavior issues on the bus.

Crossing Guards

A crossing guard is on duty before and after school to help students across designated streets. If a crossing guard is not on duty or at a crosswalk, the student should use standard crossing protocol.

PVTA Buses

The Districts strongly recommend against children riding the PVTA buses to and from school. PVTA buses are not required to stop traffic when discharging children.

Bicycle safety rules:

1. Always wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet to protect your head—every time you ride.
2. Use a bicycle that is the appropriate size for you, not one that is too big or too small.
3. Before you ride, make sure you don't have any loose clothing, drawstrings, or shoelaces; they can get caught in your chain and make you fall.
4. Have an adult check the air in your tires and that your brakes are working before you ride.
5. Wear bright clothes so others can see you at all times of the day.
6. Stay alert at all times; never listen to music when riding. Pay attention and watch for cars, people, and other bicyclists around you.
7. Don't bicycle at night. If you must ride, make sure your bike has reflectors and lights and wear retro-reflective materials on your ankles, wrists, back and helmet.
8. Before you enter any street or intersection, check for traffic by looking left-right-left to make sure no cars or trucks are there.
9. Learn and follow the rules of the road.

Rules of the Road

1. When riding in the road, always ride on the right-hand side (same direction as traffic).
2. Obey traffic laws, including all the traffic signs and signals.
3. Ride predictably—ride in a straight line, and don't weave in and out of traffic.
4. When riding on a sidewalk show respect for the people walking on the sidewalk. Let them know you are coming and always pass them on the left.
5. Look for debris on your route like trash, stones, or toys that could cause you to fall off your bicycle.

Walking & crossing streets safely:

1. If a ball or toy goes into the street, ask a grownup to get it for you.
2. ALWAYS stop at the curb. Do not run into the street.

3. If there is a crosswalk, you should always use it and always cross streets only at the corners.
4. Look all ways (left, right, and left again) before you enter or cross a path, sidewalk, street or driveway. Keep looking as you cross.
5. Make eye contact with each driver before you pass in front of them.
6. Never cross a street from between parked cars.
7. Always use the sidewalk when walking to school. If there is no sidewalk, walk on the side of the Road against traffic.

Volunteering in the District

The Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools provide a rich array of volunteer opportunities which address the educational needs of all students and support educational programming and school community needs. Fortifying school success for all students fosters language, literacy, social and initiative skills. Community members, college students and parents/guardians are encouraged to become volunteers to support learning and to facilitate positive community involvement, partnership and collaboration.

There are many volunteer opportunities available throughout the academic year. Examples include academic tutoring, classroom support and afterschool programs. For more information, please contact Carol Newman Rose at 413-362-1808 or newman-rosec@arps.org.

Parental Notification Relative to Sex Education

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

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

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

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

Students in Foster Care

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

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

Best Interest Determination

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

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

Transportation

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

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

Immediate Enrollment

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

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district

liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

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

Any school official or employee who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observes the child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, will immediately report or cause a report to be made to the building principal or his/her/their designee, who will then become responsible for making a report to the Department of Children and Families as required by law.

Addendum/Public Notice

Amherst, Amherst-Pelham, & Pelham Public Schools

The following information shall be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, staff members, and the general public in compliance with various Federal and State laws and regulations.

Dr. Xiomara Herman
Superintendent of Schools

Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011 - Gender Identity

On November 23, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011, An Act Relative to Gender Identity. This law adds “gender identity” as a protected category to Massachusetts’ employment, housing, credit, and public education anti-discrimination laws and to Massachusetts’ hate crimes law.

The law defines “gender identity” as a person’s gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth.

Definitions:

- Gender Expression: the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others
- Gender Identity: a person’s gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth
- Gender nonconforming: a term used to describe people whose gender expression differs from stereotypic expectations
- Transgender: an umbrella term used to describe a person whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth

Some Implications for New Gender Identity Law in MA

- Schools are required to accept a student’s assertion of his or her gender identity
- In terms of names and pronouns, the best course is to engage the student (and family, in the case of a younger student) with respect to name and pronoun use and agree on a plan to initiate that name and pronoun use across all school contexts except for legal

documents which require the consistent use of the birth name (unless legally changed) such as the IEP's administrative data page, the transcript, etc.

- Under state law—information about gender identity matters is confidential except for authorized school personnel, which includes current teacher(s), guidance counselor, nurse, and administrator(s).
- Other Implications for New Gender Identity Law in MA
- Transgender students who are uncomfortable using a gender-segregated restroom should be provided an alternative, such as a single unisex restroom or a restroom in the nurse's office
- The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association will rely on the gender determination made by the student (confirmed and respected by the district) with respect to interscholastic athletics

Classroom-Based Practices for New Gender Identity Law in MA

- Historically, many teachers have used gender-based differences in their classrooms. One example is having boys and girls line up on different sides of the hallway. Best practices are to use non-gender alternatives, such as having students line up in the order of their birthdays.

M.G.L. c. 269: Section 17—Hazing; organizing or participating

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

The term “**hazing**” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.

Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Chapter 269: Section 18—Failure to report hazing

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

Chapter 269: Section 19—Issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

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

Procedures

In accordance with these provisions, the following procedures concerning Chapter 269 shall apply in schools of Amherst, Amherst-Pelham, and Pelham Public Schools.

Every applicant for and participant in each co-curricular and extra-curricular activity under the jurisdiction of a secondary school, as well as the chief advisor or head coach of said activity shall be provided a copy of the regulations concerning Chapter 269.

All recipients of this form will sign the form acknowledging receipt of Chapter 269 and these forms shall be forwarded to the building Principal for use in preparing an annual report to the Massachusetts Department of Education.

It shall be the responsibility of the building Principal to report any and all cases of Chapter 269 violations to an appropriate law enforcement official and notify the Superintendent of the same.

Violations of Chapter 269 shall be considered serious infractions punishable in accordance with the Student Handbook and will include notification to parent and may include suspension, expulsion, or other measures as deemed appropriate by the administration.

Immigration Policy 2017

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) personnel, or employees of any other agency acting as immigration agents, will be refused entry to District property or access to students in the Districts' custody unless:

- The Superintendent and District Counsel are provided with a warrant signed by a judge or magistrate
- The Superintendent makes the determination that the ICE agent is allowed on the property and the limits of their access

Amherst, Pelham, and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools staff will not refer students or families to ICE if they inadvertently or intentionally disclose their immigration status. Pursuant to FERPA and state records law, Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools staff shall not disclose, without parental consent, the immigration status of any student immigration Practice if an ICE representative makes a request about access to a student or student data.

“Our district policy and guidance from the Massachusetts Attorney General instructs me to not allow you access to students, student information, or staff members. The only person who has the authority in the district to provide you access is the Superintendent. I will contact him/her/them now so that you can communicate with him/her/them directly about your request.”