



Athol-Royalston Middle School
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Athol, MA 01331
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Student Handbook 2019-2020

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians of the Athol-Royalston Regional School District,

It is the hope and expectation of the District that all students have a welcoming, safe, positive, and productive 2019-2020 school year. In an effort to meet this goal, each school has developed a student handbook that provides all members of each school community with information regarding policies, procedures, and services. It is the District's view that information and expectations outlined in this handbook will foster the appropriate school environment for students and their families, as well as for teachers and administrators. Please be familiar with the information provided in this handbook, use it as a reference, and contact the building principal if you have any questions regarding its contents.

At the request of a parent or student whose primary language is not English, a translated student handbook or student code of conduct will be made available by the District.

Sincerely,
The A.R.R.S.D. Administrative Team

District Mission

The Athol-Royalston Regional School District is committed to providing challenging educational experiences that inspire students to acquire the knowledge and skills to become responsible citizens in a global community.

Athol-Royalston Middle School Vision

The Athol-Royalston Middle School community is committed to combining the best teaching practices of the past and present to transform our future learning environments to meet the intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative needs of our 21st century learners. This will be accomplished using a challenging and diverse standards-based curriculum that includes the use of information and communication technologies as tools in the educational environment.

Translation

Any parent or guardian may request to have the Athol-Royalston Student Parent Handbook translated into his/her native language. Requests are to be made to the principal.

Spanish

Cualquier padre o guarda puede pedir para tener el manual del padre del estudiante de Athol-Royalston traducido a su lengua materna.

Non-Discrimination

Athol-Royalston Regional School District has a non-tolerance for any form of harassment or discrimination based

upon race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.

WHO TO GO TO FOR INFORMATION

Question/Concern

To get help with your schedule
If you have a problem or question

Who to see

Guidance Office
Your Teachers
Main Office
Guidance
An adult you feel comfortable with
Main Office
Your Teachers
Main Office
Guidance
Any Adult
Main Office
Coach or Athletic Director
Ms. Winters/Library
Main Office
Library

Morning Announcements

If you are being bullied or feel unsafe

Absent/Tardy notes upon your return

Questions about athletics

Help in using the computers or any problem with your account

Main Office Articles delivered to the school (homework, lunch, etc.)

Library questions

Attendance Policy

While there are a number of reasons that a student may be absent from school, the principal has legal responsibilities when the number of absences exceeds a certain limit. A student may be considered truant and court proceedings may be initiated when the student accumulates seven unexcused absences in a six-month period (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Sec. 2). The decision regarding whether or not an absence is excused is made by the principal, not by the parent/guardian. Diligent attention is given to attendance: all students need to attend school on a regular and consistent basis.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

At the commencement of each school day the teacher in charge of the first class/homeroom shall lead the class in the recitation of the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag," and shall also announce a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration, during which silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in.

Arrival/Departure Times

Students should arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:25 a.m. and report directly to the gymnasium (grades 6-8) or the cafeteria

(grade 5). Breakfast is served in classrooms at the start of school. No student should arrive before 7:00 a.m. The school day ends at

1:55 p.m. Students should leave school by 2:05 p.m. unless they are under direct supervision of an adult.

Absences

If you are absent from school your parent/guardian must inform the school that morning by 8:00 am. If the school does not receive notice, a phone call will be placed to the parent/guardian informing them that you did not attend school that day. In any circumstance, you are also expected to make up work missed in your absence. The school may request documentation from a doctor for students absent more than three (3) consecutive days.

The principal shall meet with any student and that student's parent/guardian who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Class Attendance

Teachers take attendance during every class period and send an attendance record to the office at the end of the day. If you miss a particular class, the office will check to see why you were not in class. If you were not excused from the class, you will be seen by the administration and assigned a time to make up that class, and may receive further consequences. In addition, your family will be informed if you cut a class.

Excused Absences

Reasons for excused absences include:

Civic Duty

School sponsored event/activities/trip

Medical/Dental Appointments

Court

Religious Observance

Bereavement

In any of these cases a phone call and/or note explaining your absences must be brought in and signed by your parent/guardian.

Planned Absence

It is extremely important that you attend school every day. It is impossible to fully benefit from a lesson when you are doing the assignments but not participating in the classroom activities. We understand that, occasionally you need to miss school due to a family activity and/or medical situation. Your parent/guardian must contact the Principal, in advance to notify the school of any planned absence. Teachers are available after school for make up work by parent request.

Tardiness

You will be considered tardy if you arrive to homeroom after the 7:30 a.m. bell. At this time you must report to the office to sign in and receive a late pass. If you have a reason for being tardy, we ask that you bring a written note from home signed by your parent/guardian that explains the reason. If you do not have a note for being tardy, you may be asked to make up time. A continued pattern of tardiness will be referred to the administration. A student may be subjected to disciplinary action for unexcused tardiness.

Early Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from school for the following reasons only:

Family or personal emergency

Court appearances

Illness or medical appointments

Other reason(s) to be approved by the Principal

If it becomes necessary for a student to be excused from school, a note must be presented from a parent or guardian to the Main Office. If a student is ill, he/she must see the nurse or an administrator to leave school. The parent or authorized adult should come into the office to sign the student out. Students are not to leave school without having gone through this process.

General Rules

School Rules apply and are enforced at all times when students are on school grounds, all ARRSD property, on school buses, during all athletic events, field trips, and during all school sponsored activities.

In all matters, the Principal/Administration reserves the right to exercise his/her discretion.

Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards/Hoverboards

Racks are provided for parking bicycles. The school is not responsible for damage or theft of bicycles or parts. Bicycles are to be parked upon arrival at school and are not to be used until the end of the school day, and only after the buses have left the campus. Students are reminded that the Massachusetts General law requires helmets. A helmet is also recommended for those who use skateboards, scooters, or hoverboards.

Scooters, skateboards, and hoverboards are to only be stored in the designated area. Students are not allowed to use scooters, skateboards, or hoverboards on school grounds beginning at the school sign near the parking lot entrance, and not until after the buses have left the campus after school. For safety reasons, students may not ride

scooters, skateboards, or hoverboards on school property beginning at the intersection of Pleasant Street.

After school, walkers may not leave the Middle School campus until after the buses have left. Students are expected to use the sidewalk. No short cuts through the woods or paths are allowed.

Book Bags and Backpacks

Book bags and backpacks must be stored in student lockers unless given permission by the administration. They are not to be carried throughout the day.

Lunch Rules

Students must show respect to all cafeteria workers and staff at all times.

Students are not allowed to leave their seats except to get lunch, return their tray, and at dismissal time. Students may not take food out of the cafeteria.

Students should not be in the academic areas during lunch.

Students may not throw, toss, or forcefully slide food or drink.

Students must follow lunch supervisors' and cafeteria workers' directions in the food lines and at all times during lunch. Students must walk quietly to and from lunch staying to the right in the hallways.

Students must follow all other school rules while in the lunchroom.

Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken when there is a violation of the lunch rules. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the administration.

Bus Rules

The school is still responsible for students doorstep to doorstep when students are on the school bus.

All school rules shall be in effect during this time. Please read the bus rules outlined below and follow them whenever you ride on a school bus.

Waiting for the bus:

While waiting for the bus, students must act in a safe manner and be respectful of neighboring property owners.

Students should be at their bus stops ten minutes before the schedule time.

Use common sense around roadways and avoid crossing streets when possible.

Do not move toward the bus to board until the bus has come to a full complete stop.

Riding the bus:

Students needing to ride a bus other than their regularly assigned bus, or stop, must have a note from a parent presented to the office, no later than the morning of the proposed change. Students will be accommodated when space is available. While buses are in motion, students are to be seated quietly at all times, and cannot change seats.

Talk quietly and do not use profanity or offensive language. Do not eat food while you are on the bus.

Nothing is to be thrown either on the bus or out the windows.

Listen carefully and obey all directions issued by the driver.

Keep windows closed until directed by the driver to open them. When a window is open, students will not call to people outside or put any parts of their body outside of the bus.

Unloading from the bus:

Do not leave your seat until the bus has come to a full and complete stop and the driver has opened the door.

Obey all directions issued by the driver.

Leave the bus quickly but in a courteous manner, without pushing other pupils.

If you must cross a street as you leave the school bus, be sure to walk in front of the bus (never in back) at a distance of at least 12 feet from the bus. The driver may not be able to see you and a serious accident could occur. Again, be sure to observe all safety precautions as you travel from your bus stop to your home.

When arriving at school, upon leaving the bus, immediately remove any headphones, earplugs, Walkman, Ipods, or MP3's, cell phones or electronic devices and store them in your locker.

Loss of riding privileges initiated from the Bus Behavior Report form:

Students engaging in unsafe or inappropriate behaviors may be suspended from riding the school bus for a period of time up to the remainder of the school year. Such suspension will be initiated by the administration. During any suspension of the bus privileges parents are responsible for transportation.

Car Transportation

If your family chooses to drive you to school or pick you up, they should use the lower levels of the parking lot for pickup and drop-off. The upper level is reserved for buses and emergency vehicles from 7:00 to 7:40 a.m. and from 1:15 to 2:20 p.m. The ramp entrance near the cafeteria is available for students with special circumstances as long as the office is notified of the need.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones are allowed for emergency use only. Students may use phones before or after school, or at the discretion of an ARMS staff member. Students should not use their phones for texting, accessing social media, or taking unapproved photographs or videos. Unless given permission by a staff member, phones should not be visible during class time. The school district cannot be responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones or electronic devices. Inappropriate use of phones can lead to disciplinary action and/or confiscation. Some improper use may be considered illegal and be referred to legal authorities. On field trips, advisors/chaperones will have trip-specific rules regarding phone use. If you need to contact your child during the school day, call the main office and a message will be forwarded to your child.

Change of Address / Status

Please be sure to inform the main office if there is a change of residence including custody, address, or telephone number during the school year. This is necessary for permanent records, as well as for the report cards, newsletters, and other mailings. An accurate record of your child's information is essential to communicate with you and those who the custodial parent chooses in the event they cannot be reached.

Computer Technology Rules

All students must have a signed Internet Use Contract on file at the Middle School in order to use the Internet. It is important that students abide by the District's Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policies. We encourage you to use the computers at the school to do your writing and research assignments as well as other assignments that teachers have developed that use technology. The computers are available to students throughout the day as well as after school when a student is supervised by one of our teachers.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional networks. The operation of the Internet relies heavily on the proper conduct of the users, who must adhere to strict guidelines. The district staff has the right and obligation to monitor student Internet activities. Please remember that Internet access at the middle school is a privilege, not a right.

The principal will have final authority on usage of personal computers, pen drives, disks or other storage devices.

Computer Use Policies

Students shall not:

Attempt to access or send email unless created by the school district.

Attempt to access chat rooms or personal gathering websites deemed inappropriate like, facebook, snapchat, instagram, etc. Access or type in any Internet address (URL) unless directed to do so by their teacher.

Reveal their account password or shall not permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password. Gain unauthorized entry into a file, either to read or change information or transfer files.

Use another individual's account or vandalize another user's data.

Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system performance. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.

Download, install or load programs or disks onto a specific school computer.

Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic material; that advocates illegal acts, that contains ethnic slurs, or racial epithets; or that discriminates on the basis of gender, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity,

disability or age.

Use of the Internet for personal commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying.

Refer also to the Internet Use Policy (all policies can be found in the About section of the ARRSD website).

Dance Rules

Staff members and parents serving as chaperones have complete authority at dances and their directions are to be followed.

No student may leave the dance early without the permission from the staff member in charge of the event. If permission is granted, a student must call home and have a parent come to the school entrance before being allowed to leave.

All school rules apply – such as no profanity, no public display of affection, no rough housing, no hats, and no inappropriate clothing, etc. (see dress code) Any violation of student handbook rules and regulations may constitute removal from the dance and follow up action with parents.

Students must wear shoes at all times that conform to school rules.

No guests from outside Athol-Royalston Middle School are allowed.

No moshing allowed – deliberate bumping and tossing of bodies too close.

Any use of alcohol, or drugs, inappropriate substances or possession of a weapon will mean immediate removal from the dance by and may be followed up with school-based and potentially other consequences as determined by the administration.

Students must attend school on the day of the dance and must be on time in order to be able to go to the dance and must not be assigned to in-house suspension on the day of the dance (unless otherwise given permission by the administration).

Students may be removed from the dance, with a parent pick-up, for inappropriate behavior.

Delayed Opening and School Closing

In the event of a storm, hazardous road conditions or other emergencies requiring schools to be closed and families will be alerted by the *One Call System*. No school or delayed openings will also be given over radio stations: Eagle (99.9 FM) in Orange, WJDF (97.3 FM) in Orange, WWLP (TV 22) in Springfield, WGGB (TV 40) in Springfield, WCVB (TV 5), WBZ (TV 4) in Boston, Fox Channel (TV 25), and CBS (TV 7).

Directory Information

Directory information is defined as: name, address, telephone number, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight, height of members of athletic team, dates of attendance, and awards. Athol-Royalston Middle School reserves the right to exercise this judgment in releasing such directory information to requesting agencies, institutions, and individuals. It is the policy of this school to protect its students from invasion of privacy. The school will not release information when it is to be used for solicitation. If you do not want directory information regarding your student to be released, you must inform the school in writing.

Property Damage

It is against the law to deface or damage public school property or the property of others. Parents and students will be held accountable for damage costs.

Public Display of Affection

Students are to refrain from displaying and/or participating in inappropriate public acts of affection on school premises. Such activity contradicts efforts to maintain acceptable decorum during school and at school activities. Students in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the administration.

Selling Gum/Candy Etc.

Selling of any gum, candy, soda, snacks, etc. in school is not allowed by students unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Selling of anything for personal profit is strictly against school rules.

Smoking/Tobacco/E-Cigarette Products

No one, including adults, is permitted to smoke on school grounds. Students who are in possession of cigarettes, lighters, or matches, on school grounds will face disciplinary consequences. Parents will be notified. The rule is simple: students are not to bring cigarettes, hold cigarettes or smoke a cigarette anywhere on school property. E-cigarettes and vapor cigarettes are included in this rule.

Student Records

Individual student records are on file in the school. They are open to parental review upon written request. The Principal will act on this request within 2 school days of the written request.

As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records *unless* the school or district has been given documentation that:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge, which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

Substitute Teachers

A substitute teacher is an important visitor whose impressions of our school will be carried into the community. Let us be certain that these are good impressions by being polite, helpful, respectful, and considerate. Students know what is expected when their regular teacher is present and no less is expected when a substitute teacher is with us for the day.

Telephone Calls

Classroom phones may be used by students with permission from the classroom teacher. School phones are not to be used for social calls. Incoming telephone calls or messages for students should be made on an emergency basis only. The occasional emergency message will be delivered to the student's classroom as soon as possible.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately while attending school. Appropriate attire is that which is safe, does not cause disorder or a disturbance in the school, does not promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal activities, and is not vulgar or profane.

If any item of clothing is viewed as inappropriate, students will be asked to fix the problem immediately. If necessary, parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes. Students will not be allowed to return to class until the clothing issue has been remedied and may face disciplinary action.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Intoxicants

No person on school grounds, including students, may possess alcohol, drugs or other intoxicants. Students may not be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicants.

All pills or other forms of prescription and non-prescription drugs are banned. Any substance used as an intoxicant is banned.

All medicines and drugs prescribed by a physician must be dispensed only under the supervision of the school health office. The school building and grounds may be searched by trained police dogs if deemed necessary by the school administration.

If, in light of reasonable suspicion, it becomes necessary to question a student, the following process will be followed:

The administrator or designee will hold a conference/interview with student regarding the issue. The investigation will continue as needed, which may include interviewing other students and/or searching the student and/or his/her locker with another adult present. Parents will be notified if there is an issue. If the student refuses to cooperate with this test, the administrators without benefit of this information will make a judgment. Once available information has been gathered, a collaborative conference will be held by the office administration to decide the course of action.

If, in the administrator's judgment, the student is found to be in violation, the following steps will take place: Good faith effort will be made to notify parent/guardian or designated emergency contact. Student is to be immediately removed from school by a parent /guardian. If the school is unable to contact parent/guardian or designated emergency contact, or if said persons refuse to remove the student from school, the local police will be contacted and their usual procedures followed.

The due process procedure contained in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾ will be followed. (See Below.)

Drug Paraphernalia

Students may not be in possession of vapes, pipes, tools, papers, or other paraphernalia that are related to marijuana or other drug use.

Fire Safety Rules

Students may not possess or ignite matches, lighters, or other flaming devices.

Students may not ignite any material except under supervised conditions, as, for example, in a laboratory experiment. Setting fire to any material or property will be considered arson.

Students may not ignite or possess any incendiary device, firecracker, sparkler, stink bomb, etc. Setting off a false fire alarm will be considered a criminal act as well as a violation of school rules.

Lockers and Belongings

Student lockers are the property of the Athol-Royalston Regional School District and remain under the control of the school. Students should have no expectation of privacy of their contents stored in their assigned locker. The school reserves the right to inspect any locker at any time without student consent and without a search warrant. When it is possible the search will be conducted in the student's presence.

Students are expected to assume full responsibility for the locker and its contents.

Students will sign a locker usage form when the locker is used. A school lock will be provided if requested. Locker combinations are to be kept confidential and students must not share combinations with other students.

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or other valuables to school, and if they wear glasses or watches, to keep track of them at all times.

The students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Lost and Found

Articles unclaimed after a reasonable period of time will be donated to a charitable group.

Visitors

General Procedures:

Doors to the school will be locked during school hours. Visitors must ring the bell to be admitted into the school. Upon entering the school, all visitors must sign in at the main office and will be issued a visitor's pass. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the school and should contact the school to arrange details.

Students from other schools will not be permitted into the building during school hours unless given permission by an administrator.

Weapons/Banned Items

Squirt guns, toy guns or knives, playing or trading cards, or other distracting items are not permitted on campus at any time without prior permission of administrators. A student violating the rule may face disciplinary action.

Matches and lighters are not allowed at ARMS for safety reasons. If any are found in a student's possession, it will result in disciplinary consequences as determined by administration.

All weapons, including but not limited to knives or any kind of guns, are banned from school. This includes penknives, exacto knives, laser pointers any other dangerous objects that could be used as weapons.

Student Code of Conduct

The A.R.M.S. Code of Conduct is designed to provide all members of the school community with clear expectations regarding student behavior along with specific consequences for the violation of these expectations. It is the school's goal that all students can come to school in a safe and orderly educational and social environment and that they develop the necessary character, work-ethic, and sense of personal responsibility for students to be successful in school and in life.

While the infractions and consequences outlined below are meant to provide clear expectations for behavior, each disciplinary incident involves unique elements. Therefore, situations may be handled differently by the administration because of contributing factors.

For disciplinary actions that are deemed less severe in nature, a warning and/or parent notification may occur before first offense consequences are implemented. For those of a more serious nature, parent meetings may be required.

List of Possible Consequences (additional/other/different consequences may be assigned at any time as determined by school administration)

Conferences are a formal warning where the school administration will clarify the behavior expectation and outline potential consequences for future infractions. These conferences are documented in a student's disciplinary record. Parents/guardians may participate in the conference or be contacted by the school administration to be informed of the purpose of the conversation.

Teacher Detentions are assigned by individual teachers or grade-level teams for violations of classroom academic or behavioral expectations. Students are expected to report to assigned detentions/extra help and to work productively. Any student who fails to report to the teacher detention or who refuses to work as asked will be referred to the administration.

Office Detentions, which are assigned from 2:00-2:55, are formally recorded in a student's disciplinary record and result from a failure to report to a teacher detention or if he or she commits an infraction deemed by the administration to be serious in nature. After being assigned three office detentions, a student will face more severe consequences for poor behavior such as a Saturday detention or internal suspension.

Saturday Detentions will be scheduled on an as-needed basis and will be held from 8:00-11:00 AM. Saturday detentions are assigned at the discretion of the administration and are used with students for whom internal suspension has proven ineffective at changing poor behavior. They are also assigned for incidents of a less serious nature such as truancy, cutting class, chronic tardiness, excessive phone usage, or excessive referrals.

In-School Restriction is assigned when a student is unable to be in a classroom setting for disciplinary or other reasons and is held in the internal suspension room. All in-school suspension expectations and rules apply during this restriction period.

In-School Suspension is assigned to a student when a disciplinary offense warrants action more severe than detention but less severe than one that warrants an out-of-school suspension. Students assigned to in-school suspension must complete work sent to them. Those who refuse to work productively may remain in in-school suspension until work is completed or may be assigned to a Saturday detention. Those who are assigned to a full-day of in-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on the day of the assigned suspension unless the administration feels an exception is warranted.

Out-of-School Suspension is assigned when a student has committed a serious disciplinary offense or when other consequences have proven ineffective at modifying behavior. Students who are suspended out-of-school may not attend school events and are prohibited from being on school grounds unless they have prior permission from school administration. Please see the ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK for the process for Out-of-School Suspensions and correlating laws.

Severe disciplinary infractions such as drug or alcohol possession, weapon possession, bullying, fighting/assault, and threats directed at faculty/staff may result in a long-term out-of-school suspension/possible exclusion hearing.

Student Discipline

Each school has developed discipline policies in keeping with individual school culture, in accordance with district policies and state and federal regulations. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians. The focus is on student education and changing behavior whenever possible and/or appropriate.

In-School Suspension is assigned to a student when a disciplinary offense warrants action more severe than detention but less severe than one that warrants an out-of-school suspension. When appropriate, in-school suspension will be imposed as an alternative to short-term out-of-school suspension. Students assigned to in-school suspension must complete work sent to them. Those who refuse to work productively may remain in in-school suspension until work is completed or may be assigned to a Saturday detention. Those who are assigned to a full-day of in-school suspension will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities on the day of the assigned suspension unless the administration feels an exception is warranted.

Out-of-School Suspension is assigned when a student has committed a serious disciplinary offense or when other consequences have proven ineffective at modifying behavior. Students who are suspended out-of-school may not attend school events and are prohibited from being on school grounds unless they have prior permission from school administration.

Severe disciplinary infractions such as drug or alcohol possession, weapon possession, bullying, fighting/assault, and threats directed at faculty/staff may result in a long-term out-of-school suspension/possible exclusion hearing.

REGULATIONS AND LAWS REGARDING STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The District assumes the responsibility to provide every student with an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension whether in-school, out-of-school, or expulsion, see due process, below:

DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language:

a) the disciplinary offense; b) the basis for the charge; c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; d) 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/guardian to attend the hearing; e) the date, time, and location of the hearing; f) the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered

by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

Due Process for Certain Disciplinary Consequences:

I. Suspensions of Ten Days or Fewer, short-term suspension Unless emergency circumstances dictate otherwise, the following procedure will be followed for suspensions of ten days or fewer:

The student will receive a letter indicating the intent to suspend which will include: 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; and the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

At the hearing, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be told the nature of the charges, and have an opportunity to respond. The principal will make a decision based upon information presented by the student, further investigation if required, and evidence already known to the principal. If the principal determines that a suspension is warranted, he/she will notify the student of the nature and duration of the suspension verbally and in writing, and, if the student previously denied the charges, the principal will supply an explanation of the basis of his/her finding.

The school will make every effort to notify parents/guardians of the suspension by telephone immediately, and will, in all cases, notify them in writing. A student returning from suspension must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, and must meet with the principal prior to re-admission to school.

In most cases, suspensions will be based upon the disciplinary consequences listed in this handbook. However, the principal retains discretion to impose a suspension of a different length (longer or shorter), or impose some other penalty based upon the circumstances of the case.

In all cases, once a student has been assigned to suspension, he/she will not be allowed to take part in or attend any school-related function or activity. This remains in effect until the student has officially returned to school from suspension. Suspension days will be counted as excused absences. Students who are suspended will be given the number of days they are out to make up their work. The school's Educational Service Plan is available on the district website and outlines the opportunities available for students to make up academic work during the period of removal.

The principal will send written notice of his/her determination to the parent/guardian, outlining the reasons for the out-of-school suspension. In the case of PreK-grade 3 students, the principal will send a copy of this written determination to the Superintendent before the short-term suspension takes place.

II. Suspensions in Excess of Ten Days, long-term suspension For cases involving suspensions in excess of ten days or indefinite suspensions based upon the issuance of a felony criminal complaint, the following procedure will be followed:

The student will be allowed an informal hearing, as set forth in Section I. for "Suspensions of Ten Days or Fewer," prior to the suspension taking effect except where circumstances make it necessary to impose the suspension prior to such a hearing. (Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, incarceration of student, refusal of student to attend the hearing, or where the student poses an unreasonable danger to the welfare of the school). In cases involving a felony criminal complaint, the principal may decide to take action without a hearing. If the parent/guardian is present during this informal hearing, the principal will allow the parent/guardian an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances for the principal's consideration.

The Principal will notify the student and parent or guardian in writing of the reasons for a suspension in excess of ten days. The notice will include the information set forth in Section I. for "Suspensions of Ten Days or Fewer," as well as the following additional student rights: notice of the student's right to receive education services during removal; 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 in advance of the hearing; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent 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.

The Principal will issue a prompt written decision to student and parent/guardian, setting forth findings on whether the student committed an offense and if so, the penalty awarded. Suspensions will be of a definite duration, except when based upon a pending felony criminal complaint. For suspensions in excess of ten days, educational services will be provided.

The student may appeal the suspension to the superintendent by forwarding a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent within five days of the effective date of the suspension, or request an extension for filing up to seven days. Notice of appeal must be in English and the primary language of the home. In the event of an appeal, the long-term suspension remains in effect unless reversed by the Superintendent. During the appeal, the student may request a hearing, at which the student will have the right to present evidence and be represented by counsel. The Superintendent will issue a decision within five days of the hearing.

The principal will send written notice of his/her determination to the parent/guardian, outlining the reasons for the out-of-school suspension. In the case of PreK-grade 3 students, the principal will send a copy of this written determination to the Superintendent before the short-term suspension takes place.

III. Emergency Removal

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing 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. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal. A student will not be removed from school until adequate provisions are made for the student's safety and transportation.

During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

IV. In School Suspension

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school 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 above, 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, 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.

IV. Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses: Possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; or assault of staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event.

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

Felony Complaint or Issuance of a Felony Delinquency Complaint

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

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency

The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or who has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Any student found guilty of a felony and who is not removed from school, may be placed on academic probation and may not participate in any extracurricular activities, i.e., sports, student council, class offices, NHS, plays, dances. When a student is placed on academic probation he/she will have the right to attend school during the academic day only. The duration of the academic probation will be determined by the principal. (Refer to MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H1/2)

Academic Progress

The District assumes the responsibility to provide every student with an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension whether in-school, out-of-school, or expulsion.

DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. However, students eligible for special education are entitled to certain additional protections under state and federal law.

The District shall make appropriate procedures for the discipline of with disabilities and students with Section 504 Accommodation Plans. Specifically, these laws include M.G.L. c. 71B and its implementing regulations (603 CMR 28.00) and 20 USC 1401 et.seq. (“IDEA”) and it’s implementing regulations (34 CFR 300 et. seq.).

Students eligible for special education who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current educational placement for up to ten school days per school year, to the extent that such removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without prior determination as to whether the misconduct is related to the student’s disability. [Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with a written notice of procedural safeguards.](#)

Any time school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten school days in a school year, this constitutes a “change of placement” and invokes certain procedural rights including but not limited to a review by the IEP Team, [within ten days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the students’ file, including the IEP and](#) of the relationship between the student’s disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action, which is referred to as a Manifestation Determination.

If the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability the student’s Team will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior intervention plan, provided that such an assessment was not already conducted before the behavior occurred. In the situation where an assessment was already conducted and a behavior intervention plan is already in place, the Team will review the plan and revise it accordingly. The student will also be returned to his/her educational placement unless the parent and the school agree otherwise.

If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability, then the student may be removed from his/her educational placement to the same extent that a regular education student would be removed, provided that the special education student must continue to receive educational services to enable the child to continue to receive his/her special education services in order to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student’s IEP. Additionally, the student should receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavior intervention plan to prevent the behavior from happening again.

There are certain situations in which school personnel may order a change in placement of a special education student without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. These situations include when a special education student:

1. Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency;
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

In these situations, school personnel may remove the special education student to an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. A student may also be placed in such a setting on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is substantially likely to injure him/herself or others.

If a special education student commits an offense, which causes the student to be expelled from school, the school district continues to be responsible for providing the student with a free appropriate public education in another educational setting.

For more information regarding the rights of special education students see the Massachusetts Department of Education's Procedural Safeguards Notice, which is available in many languages, at www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/. Additionally, copies of the state and federal special education laws are available online at the Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals website, at www.doe.mass.edu/bzca/ or can be requested from the Director of Special Education at 978-249-2403.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for special education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if, before the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the student's school or to a teacher of the student that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
2. The parent requested an evaluation of the student; or
3. District staff 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 deemed to have had 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 was completed and resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If the district had no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities. However, if an evaluation is requested during the time period in which the student is subjected to these disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS ON 504 PLAN

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten consecutive school days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for eligible 504 students are the same as those afforded to special education students. Please contact the principal of the School.

Bullying

Bullying or harassment of any type, including cyber-bullying, will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or exclusion from an Athol Elementary School. Bullying that occurs outside of school may result in disciplinary action if the behavior causes problems at school. Please see the ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK for the full anti-bullying policy and correlating laws.

Progressive Discipline, Additional Consequences, and Due Process

The school's Code of Conduct provides a list of common infractions and the typical corresponding consequences for less severe violations of school rules. Consequences for such infractions range from detentions to short-term suspensions. Students who repeat the same offense will receive stronger penalties for subsequent offenses (at the discretion of the administration) which will likely include out-of-school suspension. The school administration reserves the authority to prevent students from participating in school events, keeping a leadership role, or being a member of a team if their behavior puts at risk other students or the reputation of the school. Students have the right to due process and appeal of decisions affecting them by faculty or the administration. The chain-of-command applies in processing such a complaint is as follows: teacher, principal, superintendent, school committee.

Disciplinary Infractions, Expectations, and Consequences

The following is a list of common infractions of the school's Code of Conduct. Each infraction has its own unique set of circumstances and the school administration reserves authority to assign disciplinary consequences. The school administration also reserves the authority to take disciplinary action for other offenses not listed below.

Infraction	Tardy to School
Expectation	School starts at 7:30 AM. Those who repeatedly report late to school without a valid excuse will face disciplinary action.

Infraction	Tardy to Class
Expectation	Students are expected to be in their assigned classroom on time. Those who report late to class without a valid pass will face disciplinary action.

Infraction	Full-Day Truancy
Expectation	Students who are absent from school without a valid excuse will be considered truant and will face disciplinary and/or legal action.

Infraction	Cutting Class
Expectation	Students are expected to report to their assigned classes. Those who are not in their assigned class without permission will be considered to be cutting class and will face disciplinary action.

Infraction	Cut Teacher Detention
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Expectation Students who fail to report to an assigned teacher detention without a valid excuse will be considered to have cut the teacher detention and will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Cut Office Detention

Expectation These detentions are not extra-help sessions and must be served in the designated office detention location. Students who fail to report to an office detention without a valid excuse will be considered to have cut the detention and will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Cut Saturday Detention

Expectation Students who are assigned Saturday detentions are expected to report to the middle school at 8:00 and stay until 11:00. Students are also expected to bring enough work/material to last the duration of the detention. Those who have been assigned to Saturday detention because they could not properly behave in internal suspension –and cut Saturday detention – may face an out-of-school suspension.

Infraction Leaving School Without Permission

Expectation Students are expected to report to school and remain for the entirety of the school day. Those who leave school without permission will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Cell Phone/Electronics Violations

Expectation Students are expected to keep all electronic devices put away and out of view. Those found in use of electronic devices without explicit teacher permission can face disciplinary consequences. Repeated infractions could lead to confiscation and parent/guardian pick-up of the phone.

Infraction Dress Code Violation

Expectation Students are expected to dress in a manner that is safe and/or does not create a distraction to members of the school community. During warm weather, shorts may be worn but must be modest in nature. Hats, hoods, see-through attire, and tank-tops are not acceptable. At no point should undergarments be visible. Those who are in violation of the dress code will be required to make appropriate changes immediately.

Infraction Computer Violation

Expectation Students are expected to comply with the computer/internet acceptable use policy found in the student handbook. Failure to comply with the acceptable use policy will face disciplinary action. The disciplinary consequence will vary depending upon the nature of the violation. Action for the computer violation may be in addition to any disciplinary action for the offense that resulted from the infraction.

Infraction Horseplay/Endangering Behavior (Teasing, Pushing, Throwing Objects)

Expectation Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is safe and appropriate. Horseplay, roughhousing, or physically joking around can create an unsafe environment and those that engage in such behavior will face disciplinary consequences. Consequences will vary based on the nature of the action/activity.

Infraction Disruptive Behavior

Expectation Students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning of all students. Those who engage in disruptive behavior will face disciplinary action. Consequences will vary based on the nature of the behavior of concern.

Infraction Defiant Behavior

Expectation Students are expected to comply with all classroom rules and expectations. Those who blatantly disregard teacher/staff requests or defy rules or expectations will face disciplinary action. Consequences will vary based on the degree of defiance.

Infraction Disrespectful Behavior

Expectation Students should act respectfully toward all members of the school community, as well appropriately toward the buildings and grounds. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action and may include the assigning of community service in the building.

Infraction Refusal to Follow a Staff Directive

Expectation Students are expected to follow all staff directives. Those who disagree with a reasonable directive should comply with the request and then express the concern to the teacher or an administrator at the appropriate time. Failure to comply with a staff directive will result in disciplinary action. Such action will vary based on the nature of the incident.

Infraction Lying/Deceitful Behavior/Rudeness

Expectation Students are expected to be honest in their interactions with members of the school community. Those who are not truthful or attempt to deceive staff members will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Tobacco Possession/Use

Expectation Students may not be in possession of tobacco products or any other products that contain nicotine or are designed to contain nicotine such as e-cigarettes and vaping devices. Those who are found in possession or use of such products will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Inciting a Fight

Expectation Those who encourage others to fight, either in person or in an online forum, will be considered to be inciting a fight and will face disciplinary action.

Infraction Harassment/Intimidation/Threats

Expectation Harassment is unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends the victim and results in a hostile environment for the victim. Harassing behavior may include, but is not limited to, epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, lewd propositions, impeding movement, unwanted touching, and the posting of inappropriate images. Consequences for such behavior will depend on the nature of the activity.

Infraction Refusal to do Work

Expectation To the best of their ability, students are expected to complete work that is assigned by a teacher. Those who blatantly refuse will face disciplinary consequences.

Infraction Inappropriate Language/Profanity/Obscenity

Expectation Students are expected to speak and act in a manner that is appropriate and not offensive to others. Those who speak inappropriately or display images that are vulgar in nature will face disciplinary consequences. Those consequences will vary depending upon the nature of the activity.

Infraction Bus Misbehavior

Expectation Expectations for behavior on buses are the same as they are in school. Students are expected to follow all driver requests. While electronic devices may be used on the bus (unless otherwise directed by the driver), they should not cause a distraction to others. Students must not take photographs or videos while on the bus. A student's privilege of riding the bus can be taken away. Disciplinary action taken by the administration will vary depending upon the nature of the behavior.

Malicious Physical Abuse or Assault

A student who abuses others and with whom normal school disciplinary action is not effective may be subject to a complaint filed by school officials with District Court or local police.

A student who clearly assaults another may be subject to a complaint filed with District Court or local police.

Any intentional act, which results in the serious abuse or injury of another individual may be considered an assault or assault and battery and treated accordingly by notifying police.

Health Issues

The school nurse's function is to establish a comprehensive school health program consistent with the Massachusetts guidelines, regulations and statutes governing nursing, school health, and local school district policy.

Health Screening

Vision screening will be conducted annually for 5th grade students.

7th grade students are screened yearly for vision and hearing loss; and height and weight is recorded.

Body Mass Index (BMI) screening will be conducted annually for 7th grade students. BMI is a measure used to show a person's

weight for height and age. It is a tool that is used to determine possible health risks. Parent or guardian should notify the school nurse in writing should they feel that this screening is not necessary. All parents or legal guardians are advised to refer to the Athol- Royalston Regional School District Health Website for Growth and Development Screening.

Postural screening is provided to all students grade 5 through 8. If a parent or guardian refuses to have postural screening done by the school physician, written documentation provided by the family physician must be submitted to the school nurse.

Physical exams are required for 7th grade students and are required annually for all students before participation in competitive sports.

The school physician will be available to perform these exams, with parental permission.

The parent or guardian of any student with an area of concern discovered during these screenings shall be notified in writing for follow-up and/or evaluation.

Physician's evaluations should be returned to the nurse to be filed in the student's permanent health record.

Illness/Injury

Students who are ill or injured must receive a pass from their teacher, and report to the Nurse's Office or the Main Office if the school nurse is unavailable. At no time should a student administer treatment to another student. If the school nurse or administration finds it necessary to dismiss a student due to health reasons such as illness or accident, a parent/guardian will be notified. A parent/guardian or authorized person must pick up the student at the main office. Early dismissal rules must be followed at this point.

Immunizations

State law requires the following immunizations:

5th and 6th Grade

Hepatitis B – 3 doses
mumps, 1 rubella

MMR – 2 doses measles, 1

DTaP/DTP – 4 doses

Varicella – 1 dose or physician

Polio – 3 doses

certified reliable history of chickenpox

7th and 8th Grade

Hepatitis B – 3 doses

Polio – 3 doses DTap/DTP – 4 doses MMR – 2 doses

Tdap – 1 dose

Varicella – 2 doses or physician certified reliable history of

chickenpox

Medication Administration

Ideally, all medication should be given at home. If your child's physician feels it is necessary to receive medication during school hours, the school must receive the following:

A signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine. A signed medication order from your child's licensed prescriber.

Both of these forms are available from the school nurse and must be returned by the parent/guardian with the medication in a pharmacy or manufactured labeled container. This is applicable for all prescription and over the counter medications. No more than a thirty-day (30) supply of the medicine should be delivered to the school. Students are not allowed to carry any medication with them during school hours. A student will be allowed to

carry an inhaler or epi-pen on his/her person provided the school nurse determines it is safe and appropriate and there is a physician's order to do so. Designated school staff may dispense medication when authorized to do so.

Medical Excuses

Medical excuses are required for those students who cannot participate in physical education classes. A parental note will suffice for one gym class. After that, a note from a physician with the medical diagnoses, specifying the length and extent of the excused absence, must be submitted.

Use of Elevator for Medical Reasons

If a student has a medical reason for using the school elevator, he/she must report to the nurse's office and receive a written pass to use the elevator.

Academics

Academic Honesty

Cheating is to act dishonestly, to trick, or mislead regarding one's schoolwork. Plagiarism is taking another person's ideas, writings, or work, and passing it off as one's own. Any form of cheating or plagiarism is an act of dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. All students involved in such dishonesty are in violation of this rule and are subject to disciplinary action.

Cheating/Plagiarism Includes:

Copying of another student's test paper or any other school assignment

Using material during a test which is not authorized by the person giving the test

Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in whole or part, the contents of a test or other assignment

Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for one's self to take a test or complete an assignment

Bribing another person to obtain a test or other assignment that is to be administered

Securing copies of a test or answers to a test or other assignment in advance of a test or assignment

Copying or copy and pasting information from print or Internet sources without proper citation

Alternative Classroom Setting

Students who continually disrupt the educational process in the classroom, and prevent other students from learning may be assigned to an alternative classroom for a period of time until the student learns to modify their disruptive behavior. Parents/guardians will be involved in this process with the goal of returning the student to the regular classroom setting.

Extra Help

Students or parents may seek extra help from teachers if the student does not understand an assignment, if the work is difficult, or if they have been absent and have missed assignments and class discussions.

A late bus (approximate 2:50 p.m. departure) is provided on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays to common stops in Athol and Royalston.

Homework

There is always something to do each night. Students at least should be studying, reviewing, copying notes, reading, and organizing notebooks. Nightly assignments and studying usually requires one and one half hours.

If a student is absent from school for one day, he/she may make arrangements with classmates, or speak with the teachers the next day to get assignments or classroom notes. It is very difficult for the office to collect work for one day. If he/she will be absent for more than one day, parents/guardians may contact the Main Office.

Library

The middle school library is a learning center. The print and non-print materials are meant for student study, research, and browsing. The library is to be used in an orderly quiet manner. There are rules posted by the librarian, which must be followed. The following guidelines are to be followed at all times:

When you arrive at the library, check in at the main desk and present your library pass to the librarian. You may

not take materials out of the library unless you check them out through the librarian. When you are ready to leave the library, please check out at the main desk with the librarian. Other library rules are posted in the library. Please become familiar with these rules.

Make-Up Work

Make-up work is the student's responsibility. If a student is absent for one day, he/she may make arrangements with classmates, or speak with their teachers the next day to get assignments or class notes. If s/he will be absent for more than one day, parents/guardians may contact the main office to request the homework assignments for the time the student will be out. Homework requested through the main office is available within 24 hours. Make-up work takes precedence over all extra-curricular activities including sports.

National Junior Honor Society

To be eligible to apply for the ARMS National Junior Honor Society, 7th and 8th grade students must meet the organizations requirements. Students may be removed from NJHS for academic or disciplinary reasons. Students must also complete an application form on which they identify their participation in community service and leadership activities. Selection is made by a committee of teachers and administrators who rate the entire application package.

Report Cards Quarterly report cards are distributed in November, February, April, and June. Progress reports will be issued to all students halfway through each marking period.

Teachers assign grades to report all aspects of a student's classroom performance: effort, achievement, homework, class work, and tests as well as special requirements that vary from class to class.

A student is a candidate for retention if he/she fails two (2) or more major subjects (English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and Unified Arts collective average) with a grade below 60 for the school year. Parents will be notified in writing at the beginning of the second semester if their child is in danger of being retained. Input from teachers, guidance personnel, parents, and the school administration will be sought; however, the final decision for retention rests with the administration.

A student who successfully completes a summer school program that is approved by the ARMS administration may be reconsidered for promotion.

Any eighth grade student who fails two or more subjects as listed previously will not be allowed to participate in the end of the year step-up ceremony.

Supplies and Materials

Paper, notebooks, pens, pencils, etc., will not be supplied by the school. Students are expected to come to school prepared with supplies necessary to complete ordinary assignments.

Textbooks

All students are expected to cover their textbooks and to replace the book jacket if it becomes worn during the school year. If a textbook is misused, a fee will be charged to repair the book. If a textbook is lost, it is to be paid for and another book will be issued.

Athletics and Activities

Interscholastic sports are an important piece of the middle school experience. Students are encouraged to participate in grades 6, 7, and 8. Student eligibility for participation in interscholastic teams includes authorization by the school physician, written parent consent, and endorsement by the school Principal based on established school and MIAA rules.

The Athol-Royalston Regional School District adheres to a concussion policy for all students.

Student Spectators

Students are welcome to attend athletic competitions. Appropriate school behavior is expected at all athletic

events. All school rules apply at these events.

Clubs and Activities

Various clubs and activities may be offered throughout the school year. Students will be made aware of and may participate in activities/clubs that are offered.

Field Trips

Teachers will provide students with a permission slip for field trips. These forms must be returned to the teacher prior to the day of the field trip. Students are expected to follow all school rules when on a field trip. A student who has consistently demonstrated poor attendance, continual tardiness, attitude or behavior problems, or who has not completed the required work may not be permitted to go on a field trip. This decision is up to the school administration.

Please see ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK for the following policies and correlating laws:

INTERNET USE POLICY

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS ON 504 PLAN

DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H^{1/2}

STUDENT DISTURBANCES

DISRUPTION AND HARASSMENT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER 722 - AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR DEFACING OR DESTROYING STATE, COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL PROPERTY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, HARASSMENT and DISCRIMINATION POLICY/COMPLAINT PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

PROHIBITION AGAINST FIREARMS IN SCHOOLS

SEARCH AND SEIZURE IMMUNIZATION LAWS

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

TITLE IX- CHAPTER 662

NON-DISCRIMINATION

POLICIES AND PROCEDURE SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The Title IX Coordinator for the Athol-Royalston Regional School District is:

Molly Superchi
Title IX Coordinator
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