

Athol-Royalston Middle School
1062 Pleasant Street Athol, MA 01331
Telephone: (978) 249-2430 Fax: (978) 249-0055
Website: www.arrsd.org
Principal: Julie Stanley
Assistant Principal Grades 7 and 8: Dan Hill
Assistant Principal Grade 5 and 6: Sharon Gilmore



2022-23 Athol-Royalston Middle School Student Handbook

Section 3

Welcome to Athol-Royalston Middle School! We are happy to have you as a part of our learning community.

At ARMS we strive to provide a safe and supportive learning environment with rigorous academics in an engaging, 21st century learning environment. We recognize the strengths of our students and meet their unique learning profiles through differentiated instruction that supports all learners.

Our staff works collectively to provide consistent behavioral expectations through core values. These values are:

- Perseverance
- Respect
- Integrity

Students are taught expected behaviors associated with these values as a part of the routines that structure their school day, including in the classroom, the cafeteria, on the playing fields, on the bus and in other areas in the school.

As we partner with students and their families, we are always looking for ways to make our schools better. We appreciate constructive feedback for this purpose. We look forward to a positive learning experience for all our students.

This Handbook provides important information for Parents/Guardians and Students. It is not intended to cover all policies, rules and regulations used to operate the schools. If you have any questions, please feel free to call a member of the ARMS Administration Team.

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. At the Athol Royalston Middle School, our classrooms create a culture of belonging for each student within a very diverse population of learners. We are 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. Rituals and routines build relationships with students that create clear expectations and foster a sense of belongingness within the classroom community. Students are the focus of learning and therefore their voices are heard and represented throughout lessons.

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3.A.1 General Rules & Procedures

Use the following grid to help you to guide through some of the common questions of issues students may have.

WHO TO GO TO FOR INFORMATION - Question/Concern

Issue	Who to see
To get help with your schedule	Guidance Office
If you have a problem or question	Your Teachers
For a question about morning announcements	Main Office
If you are being bullied or feel unsafe	Your Teachers, Main Office, Guidance, Any Adult
Absent/Tardy notes	(upon your return) Main Office
Questions About Athletics	Coach or Athletic Director
Help in using the computers or any problem with your account	Technology/Media Staff, Main Office
Articles delivered to the school (homework, lunch, etc.)	Main Office

ARRIVAL DEPARTURE TIMES: Students should arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:25 a.m. and report directly to their homerooms. Breakfast is served in homeroom 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.

Students in grades 5 and 6 will enter and exit the building through the main entrance.
 Students in grades 7 will enter and exit the building through the door by the back stairwell.
 Students in grade 8 will enter and exit the building through the door by the gym.
 Buses will drop students off at the side entrance first and then at the front of the building.

EARLY DISMISSAL: Students may be dismissed from school for the following reasons only: family or personal emergency, illness or medical appointments, or court appearances. 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/they 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. Students should not contact families directly to be picked up from school.

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.

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.

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 scheduled time. Students should practice safety 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 the bus, 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 will be suspended from the bus for a period of one or more days after a second bus infraction, depending on the severity of the behavior. 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 decisions about removal will be determined by the administration. During any suspension of the bus privileges parents are responsible for transportation.

Late Bus: A late bus will be provided for students who stay after school for tutoring, extra help sessions, after school clubs, or detentions. The late bus will be provided on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, unless the district is running a half-day. Students must inform the staff member that they are staying after with, that they need to ride the late bus by 2:30 and the staff member will add students to the late bus list. The late bus departs ARMS at 2:50 pm. It does not provide door-to-door service but drops students at centralized spots near their house. Any inquiry about bus stops can be directed to Merrifield Bus Company at 978-249-4804.

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 for grades 5 & 6 students. 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 grade 7 & 8 students are dropped off/picked up on the side of the school at the parking lot adjacent to the soccer field. The ramp entrance near the cafeteria is available for students with special circumstances as long as the office is notified of the need.

BOOK BAGS and BACKPACKS: Book bags and backpacks may be stored in student lockers upon request to the administration. Lockers are not to be shared between students unless assigned as such.

SUPPLIES and MATERIALS: A supply list will be provided to families in early August via email and listed on the school websites. Additional supplies will be available to support students and families unable to purchase these items.

TEXTBOOKS: Textbooks are lent to students in good faith that they will be cared for in a respectful manner. 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.

LOST and FOUND: We collect a large amount of items in our lost and found within just a few months. Misplaced articles should be turned into the lost and found. Please have your children check the lost and found after lunch each day. Articles unclaimed after a reasonable period of time will be donated to a charitable group.

LUNCH RULES:

- Students will be escorted to and from the lunch area by teachers and they will walk quietly, single file while staying to the right.
- Students must follow lunch supervisors' and cafeteria workers' directions at all times during lunch
- Students will respect peers, cafeteria staff and lunch monitors, while using school appropriate language, tone and volume (level 1-2 voice).
- Students will sit down quickly and quietly to start lunch and are allowed to select their preferred table.
- Lunch staff will direct students to appropriate lunch lines to gather their food items.
- Students must follow all other school rules while in the lunchroom. Students will keep hands, feet, their body and objects to themselves. They will also not play with their drinks, food or other cafeteria implements.
- Students will remain at the table they selected to sit at throughout the entire lunch, unless given permission to leave their table by lunch staff.
- Students must raise their hand and be acknowledged by lunch staff before leaving their table to clear their tray and or get a snack.
- Students may not take food out of the cafeteria. Students should not be in the academic areas during lunch unless they have a pass.
- Students may not throw, toss, or forcefully slide food or drink.
- At the end of lunch students will sit quietly as lunch staff dismisses them to the appropriate teacher.
- Three or more lunchroom infractions will lead to students being assigned seating during lunch and/or a lunch detention. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the administration.

For the safety of all students, they should not share food with each other.

Outside Food: Food and beverages from local restaurants should be consumed before entering the building for arrival. Students are not allowed to bring in food from outside establishments and will be asked to dispose of food and beverages before heading to class.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are allowed for emergency use only. Cell phones are not to be visible, turned on, or used in any way (camera, text functions, etc.) upon entering the building and continuing throughout the school day. 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. If a student is using the cell phone without permission we will follow this procedure:

Student receives one reminder to put it away.

1. If student does not put it away, or repeats the behavior of cell phone use, the student will be asked to place the phone in a "cell phone envelope" and the teacher will store the cell phone in the school office in a locked cabinet or the phone will be given to the assistant principal/dean to be stored in their office.

Please note that, under normal circumstances, it is not our practice to touch the phone or to review the media content; the phone is stored in a locked cabinet to remove the distraction from the student.

- a. If that was the first time the student's phone needed to be stored in the office, the student may pick it up after school.
- b. If it happens more than once, the phone will need to be retrieved by parent/guardian.

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.

Earbuds/Headphones: Students are not permitted to use earbuds or headphones during the school day unless given permission by an ARMS staff member. Use of headphones/earbuds will result in the following:

Student receives one reminder to put it away.

1. If student does not put it away, or repeats the behavior of earbuds/headphones use, the student will be asked to place the earbuds/headphones in an "earbud envelope" and the teacher will store the ear buds in the school office in a locked cabinet or will be given to the assistant principal/dean to be stored in their office. Please note that it is not our practice to touch the earbuds. The earbuds are stored in a locked cabinet to remove the distraction from the student.

- a. If that was the first time the student's earbuds needed to be stored in the office, the student may pick it up after school.
- b. If it happens more than once, the earbuds will need to be retrieved by parent/guardian.

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.

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.

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.

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 closely. Any use of alcohol, or drugs, inappropriate substances or possession of a weapon will mean immediate removal from the dance 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.

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.

DRESS CODE: Students are expected to dress appropriately while attending school. Appropriate attire is that which is safe, does not cause a disturbance in the school, and is appropriate for a healthy and safe learning environment. Appropriate attire does not promote or seem to promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances, 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. Enforcement of the school dress code will not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, housing status, gender identity, or cultural observance. The Athol Royalston Middle School is committed to guiding staff in the fair and sensitive enforcement of the dress code with respect to these stated considerations, treating all students with fairness and compassion.

When a teacher or school administrator discusses a dress code violation with a student, it is recommended that another adult be present and at least one of the two adults should be the same gender as the student (identify as the same gender). In no circumstance shall a student be spoken to about a dress code violation in front of other students.

Students are not allowed to wear hoods or hats during the school day unless given permission from the Child Study Team.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, and INTOXICANTS: ARMS follows the ARRSD Non-Discrimination policies and procedures found in Section 1, I of this handbook.

Students may not 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 from student possession.

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.

Use of or possession of intoxicants will result in an immediate removal of the student from the school and a suspension. Students may also be referred for treatment programs. Law enforcement will be notified in cases of use or possession of intoxicants on school grounds and students could face additional consequences. In an effort to promote a healthy and safe learning environment, routine visits by trained police dogs may be scheduled. Student lockers and backpacks may also be searched as deemed necessary by school administration.

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, including nicotine. Possession of these items may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to students being required to complete educational programming around marijuana, vaping, or other intoxicant use.

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 for school fundraising purposes. Selling of anything for personal profit is strictly against school rules.

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. Student athletes must maintain passing grades of 60% or higher to participate in sports. To be eligible for sports, students must have passed all classes the previous term. Student athletes are representatives of the ARMS community, their behavior both in school and at sporting events, must meet the code of conduct. The Athol-Royalston Regional School District adheres to a concussion policy for all students.

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.

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.

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.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic integrity is an important component of a student's development. We expect all students to adhere to 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: 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

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: Learning is a lifelong process that involves not only the students and teachers, but parents/guardians as well. Homework assignments are a critical part of the learning process and aim to:

- Reinforce and extend upon material taught during the day.
- Encourage more in-depth study of specific topics at a pace and time appropriate for each student

There is always something to do each night. Students at least should be studying, reviewing, copying notes, reading, and organizing notebooks. We generally use the 10 minute rule for each grade level (i.e. 5th grade-50 minutes, 6th grade-60 minutes, 7th grade 70 minutes, 8th grade-80 minutes).

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.

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.

BENCHMARKS/TARGETS/ASSESSMENTS: Students are given benchmark assessments in Reading and Math three times per year. Students participate in state-mandated testing during the school year, such as MCAS. Other data is diligently collected to assure that students are making academic progress or receiving intervention to support such progress. Additionally, common formative assessments are given according to a district timeline. These assessments align with the curriculum adopted by the District.

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.

LIBRARY USE and RESOURCES: 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.

OPEN HOUSE: Open House will be held within the first month of school. This is an opportunity for students and parents to visit classrooms and learn about school programs and curriculum. This is a wonderful time for students to show off their school. Please be mindful, this is not a time for parent conferences.

PARENT CONFERENCES: A formal Parent-Teacher conference will be held once a year. This conference provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to exchange information in all areas that affect a student's school performance. Conferences are a wonderful opportunity for parents to learn about their children's experiences and to collaborate with teachers.

PARENT /TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS and COUNCILS:

- **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL:** Parents and community members are vital parts of the council to work alongside teachers, and the building principal to review and update the School's Improvement Plan each year. If you are interested or considering becoming a member of the council, please contact the school principal via email or phone.
- **STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL:** The A.R.M.S. Student Advisory Council is composed of homeroom representatives and other students recommended by the administration and/or staff. This group, meant to represent the voices of the student body, meets regularly with the dean of their respective house, as well as the principal, on issues related to school improvement.

In order to remain in the student advisory council, students must be in good academic and behavioral standing. Students in the council are expected to participate positively and productively in meetings and to solicit and share thoughts meaningfully on school issues.

- **SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL:** Each school in the district welcomes parents/guardians of children with disabilities to consider participation in our district's Parent Advisory Council. Membership is open to all parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. The parent advisory council duties include, but are not limited to: advising the school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities, and meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development, and evaluation of the school committee's special education programs. The parent advisory council shall establish by-laws regarding officers and operational procedures. In the course of its duties under this section, the parent advisory council shall receive assistance from the school committee without charge, upon reasonable notice, and subject to the availability of staff and resources.

PARENT - SCHOOL COMMUNICATION: We encourage parents to visit and become active in the school! Please feel free to contact your child's teacher with any compliments or concerns as soon as they arise. Teachers are available through the district's email system or by phoning the main office of your child's school. Appointments must be made in advance for parent/teacher meetings.

3.A.2 Academic/Scheduling Expectations and Academic Failure Policy

In order to support student success here at the Athol Royalston Middle School, family partnerships are critical. Our bridge between home and school helps charter waters of both academic struggle and social emotional challenges that can lead to failure if unattended. If a student's cumulative average in a major subject (ELA, math, science) at the close of the school year is an F, the student will be retained and must make-up the course.

The options for making up the course are as follows. The student may be retained in their current grade-level or the student may attend summer school. There will be a cost for summer school related to academic failure.

This summer school will be fee based using a sliding scale, making the fee accessible to all those impacted. If any family is unable to pay the fee, volunteer hours will be arranged by administration, in conjunction with the guidance department, in exchange for the fee. Volunteer hours will be sought out locally and the student must attend alongside the parents for these hours.

Though students will be assigned a homeroom cohort for the school year, at times, school administration may move a student or students to a new homeroom cohort when it is in the best interest of the students and/or maintains a positive effective learning environment.

3.B.1. Student Health & Well Being

ABSENCES: If you are absent from school your parents/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 Medical/Dental Appointments Religious Observance School sponsored event/activities/trip Court 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 at 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.

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. Parents or guardians should notify the school nurse in writing should they feel that this screening is not necessary. Postural screening is provided to all students grade 5 through 8 with parental consent. If a parent or guardian refuses to have postural screening done by the school nurse, written documentation provided by the family physician must be submitted. 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. Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to

Treatment (SBIRT), a substance use screening tool, is conducted annually in grade 7, with parental consent only. 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

DTaP - 5 doses
Polio - 4 doses
Hepatitis B - 3 doses
MMR - 2 doses
Varicella - 2 doses

7th and 8th Grade

Tdap - 1 dose
DTap - 5 doses
Polio - 4 doses
Hepatitis B - 3 doses
MMR - 2 doses
Varicella - 2 doses
Meningococcal (MenACWY) - 1 dose

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 prescriptions 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.

MEDICALLY EXCUSED FOR PE: 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 Aerosol Sprays and Fragrances

Please do not bring aerosol sprays and fragrances to ARMS. We place the highest value on the health and safety of members of our school community. Members of our school community have sensitivities to aerosol sprays and strong fragrances. We recognize that students are experimenting with using fragrances or products that contain fragrances, and that sometimes they bring these products to school. In order to protect the health and safety of those who have health-threatening sensitivities to these fragrances, we must insist that these products not be used in the school building. This includes the use of deodorant sprays, hair products that are sprayed, as well as all perfumes and air fresheners in hallways, classrooms, cafeteria and library.

USE OF THE 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.

3.B.2. Student Safety

Athol-Royalston Middle School has a comprehensive Safety Plan. Emergency procedures are reviewed and safety drills are conducted with students throughout the year. Each room displays a well-marked fire exit plan map and evacuation plans. The staff is trained to respond to several specific safety concerns. *The single-most most important part of an emergency procedure is for students to listen to teacher/staff, remain quiet to hear and follow directives. Please reinforce this requirement with your child.*

3.C. Non-Discrimination

ARMS follows the ARRSD Non-Discrimination policies and procedures found in Section 1.C. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.D. Student Records

ARMS follows the ARRSD Student Records Regulations policies and procedures found in Section 1.D. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.E. Equal Access

ARMS follows the ARRSD Equal Access policies and procedures regarding special education, 504, ELL, and Title 1 services found in Section 1.E. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.F. Technology Policies and Procedures

ARMS follows the ARRSD Technology Policies and Procedures found in Section 1.F. of the Main Body of this handbook. In addition, ARMS employs the following internet safety procedures.

Mobile Devices Policy

ARMS will provide all students with mobile computers/Chromebooks, grades 5-8. Grade 8 students will be piloting a “take home” aspect. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network. All users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution. These are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to student’s care. Users should immediately report any loss, damage, or malfunction to teachers. Teachers will report to the Information Technology(IT) Staff. Users will be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse. Use of school issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored. Grade eight students are expected to remember to bring their devices back to school each day fully charged. If a device is left at home, parents/guardians are asked to bring the device to school as extra devices are not always available. Parents/Guardians will sign a technology agreement before students will be able to bring devices home.

Internet and Social Media Safety

The internet is a wonderful and wide reaching tool for adults and children alike. In many cases children and teens are fully involved in experimenting and exploring the web and social media. It is important that children are supported in a supervised and productive way when they are online, so that they will be safe and grow to be responsible digital citizens. In our experience, unsupervised access to the web through the use of computers, tablets and especially cell phones put both your child and your own data at risk. We would like to share some of what we have learned in working with students over the past few years as use of social media has expanded significantly. We expect all ARMS students to follow our acceptable use policy with electronic devices in school.

Social Media Safety

Social networking sites like Facebook and social media apps such as Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine and more have become especially popular with children and teens and can have both benefits and hazards which should be addressed. Students use social media in positive ways to stay connected to friends and family, share experiences, and sometimes even work on school assignments. Students do not always understand the implications of information they share. Young people often post photographs, videos and audio recordings of self and others including full names, contact information and other revealing facts. While there are safety features on social networking sites that can prevent strangers from viewing some information, teens (and children) often do not use these privacy options and even when they do, their information is never completely private. In addition, information from these sites can be used for identity theft and other more serious crimes that infringe on your child’s health and safety both physically and social-emotionally.

Cyber-bullying: Monitor children’s device usage

We want to reiterate that the internet can be an empowering tool with which to collaborate and build knowledge. Just as we would never send our child on a bus or train without any awareness of its destination, we would not want our children to be wandering the online world without adult support. There are many areas online where students can be exposed to confusing, inappropriate, and hurtful material. It is important to be actively involved in your children’s online life and be aware of what sites they are members of and how they are presenting themselves in their “digital life.” Many parents report that it has been helpful to regularly monitor the content of their child’s texts and social media accounts as well as the times in which children are online to help teach children about safe use of these tools and the potential consequences of misuse. This uncensored online environment can be the site of ‘cyber-bullying,’ in which students are harassed online (or by cell phone) by other young people – or adults.

This can take the form of emails, texts, chats, personal quizzes, or photos/videos posted to make another person uncomfortable or worse. If you are concerned that your child or another child may be the victim of any form of 'cyber bullying' please contact the school for help.

ARMS Response to Reports of Inappropriate Online Behavior

It is an ongoing challenge to manage the overlap between students' digital lives and their school lives. If we become aware of negative online behavior that involves your child, we will alert you to it. While it is ARMS policy to share information with the families of students involved in on-line misbehavior, ***if the behavior does not occur in school and does not impact students in the school setting, ARMS staff cannot apply consequences.*** Online behavior outside of school is a family and law enforcement responsibility. However, if any related negative behavior occurs in school, ***or if behavior outside of school impacts student learning at school, ARMS will act swiftly to make sure that this behavior stops, and that all students experience a safe and supportive school environment.*** We take all incidents of hurtful interpersonal interactions seriously. A pattern of hurtful interpersonal interactions should be reported to school staff immediately.

Internet Safety Tips for Families

Please consider the following internet safety tips for families, and for more information on keeping your child and yourself safe online, visit some of the sites listed at the bottom of this section.

- Students should only be permitted to sign up for social media when they are of proper age. (Although many social networking sites do have age limits, children as young as 7 and 8 have been known to violate the age limits by signing up with false birth dates and/or names.)
- Keep the computer in the family room or another open area of your home. Remember that cell phones with internet access function in the same way as a computer.
- Some parents report that their child becomes overly focused upon texting and/or social media. Limiting mobile phone and/or computer access to specific time periods is reportedly helpful.
- Talk to children about not responding to offensive or dangerous e-mail, chat, or other communications. Report any such communication to local law enforcement. Do not delete offensive or dangerous e-mail.
- Look into safeguarding programs or options your online service provider might offer. These may include monitoring or filtering capabilities.
- Talk to children about what to do if they see something that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused. Show them how to turn off the monitor and emphasize that it's not their fault if they see something upsetting. Remind children to tell a trusted adult if they see something that bothers them online
- Consider using a contract for responsible use of a mobile device.

3.G. Physical Restraint

ARMS follows the ARRS Physical Restraint policies and procedures found in Section 1.G. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.H. Student Discipline

ARMS GUIDELINES OF STUDENT SUCCESS:

- Be Responsible.
- Be Respectful.
- Be Prompt.
- Be Honest.
- Be Your Best

EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSROOMS:

- Be on time to class and bring materials for learning.
- Participate positively and appropriately.
- Be a positive group member and allow teachers to teach and students to learn.
- Be polite to others, use appropriate language at all times.
- Respect others' voice and right to learn.
- Work to the best of your ability.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSEMBLIES:

- Students and teachers will proceed together quietly to their assigned seating and remain there until dismissed. Leave all book bags and coats in the locked classroom.
- Speak quietly with people on either side of you until the speaker approaches the microphone or the lights dim.
- Give full attention to the program/performers or speaker.
- Follow instructions given during the program.
- When dismissed by staff, line up in a single file line and return quietly to the classroom.

EXPECTATIONS FOR HALLWAY MOVEMENT:

- Walk on the right
- You need a pass
- Use a level 1 voice (talking quietly to the person beside you)
- Hands to self (example: no hanging on the person in front of you, no pulling items off walls).
- Follow staff directions
- Use a level zero voice during an emergency or fire drill (this allows you to hear directions)

EXPECTATIONS FOR CLASSROOM TRANSITIONS:

- Wait to be invited into class by an ARMS staff member. Never enter a classroom without adult permission.
- Line up in designated areas when waiting to enter a classroom.
- Enter and exit classrooms quietly and safely.

- Keep hands, feet, books, etc. to yourself.
- Talk quietly only to the person beside you.
- Stop and talk with a staff member if that adult requests that you do so.
- Do what the staff member asks you to do when that adult requests that you correct a behavior.
- Be prompt and prepared for class.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BATHROOM USAGE

- Students need a bathroom pass every time they use the bathroom
- Refrain from using cell phones in the bathroom
- Be considerate of others' time. Return to class immediately when finished
- Respect each other's privacy (don't open stalls that are in use or jump to see over them)
- Keep bathrooms clean - throw paper towels in the trash bin
- School rules apply in the restroom (no vaping other illegal activity and treat property with respect and care)
- Wash your hands
- Report behavior concerns to the office right away

ARMS CODE OF CONDUCT: The Athol-Royalston Regional School District strives to provide all students with a quality education in all schools in the district. The Code of Conduct provides a foundation for a respectful school culture. It is a set of guidelines to ensure that all students are able to learn in an environment that is both safe and free from unnecessary disruption. In addition, it instructs students on the behaviors that are practiced by responsible citizens in our society.

All students and members of the Athol-Royalston Regional School District faculty and staff deserve the opportunity to work and learn in an environment of mutual respect and trust. This requires that students and all members of our community regard each other with courtesy, consideration, and appreciation, and act accordingly. Procedures have been developed to ensure that all students can learn, and all employees can work in a safe environment.

Students are to comply in a courteous and respectful manner with any reasonable request from any member of the school staff. School staff, in turn, are expected to treat students in a courteous and respectful manner.

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that does not violate the rights and privileges of others. They are required to respect authority and to conform to school rules. They are expected to conduct themselves in a manner, which promotes a safe, orderly learning environment within the schools. Disciplinary consequences will be issued for inappropriate behaviors, as well as restorative justice practices.

PREVENTION, INTERVENTION, and DISCIPLINARY RESPONSES

The Code of Conduct is annually reviewed by the School Council and approved by the School Committee. It 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 district'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.

Students with behavior infractions may be asked to complete a writing prompt that allows them to reflect on the choice(s) made and participate in a “fix up,” a restorative piece of problem solving for improved behavior in the future. Behavior incidents of this nature are tracked to make decisions about further support for student success. Parents will be notified when a child completes a writing prompt of this nature and will be included in the solution process for repeated behaviors. Consequences for behavior infractions are decided upon with teacher and/or administrator input. Final decisions rest with the discretion of the school administration.

The Athol-Royalston Regional School District has developed discipline policies in keeping with our 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 by getting to the root of the problem and providing support.

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 parent notification by the teacher will occur before first offense consequences are implemented. For those of a more serious nature, parent meetings may be required.

Restorative Practices and Discipline Procedures:

The goal is to define, teach, and support appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Restorative practices, also referred to as “Restorative Justice,” is a powerful approach to discipline that focuses on repairing harm through inclusive processes that engage all stakeholders. *“Implemented well, Restorative practices shift the focus of discipline from punishment to learning and from the individual to the community. ...Restorative Justice is an alternate method of disciplining students that seeks to balance the process between being too permissive and being too punitive. The goal of Restorative Justice is to work with students (the victims and the accused) to come to a solution rather than simply handing down punishment. Restorative justice seeks to fix the problem, impose fair punishment, foster understanding, and adjust student behavior.”* This information is sourced from teachers and school staff who are explaining the process to their communities:

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_ga_with_larry_ferlazzo/2016/02/response_how_to_practice_restorative_justice_in_schools.html

In addition to sharing the philosophy of the Athol-Royalston Regional Code of Conduct and our expectations for student behavior, we also provide specific rules, disciplinary protocols and potential consequences for inappropriate behavior through restorative perspectives. Whenever students receive disciplinary consequences, restorative actions will be taken to repair the harm between all stakeholders. These sources provide more information about restorative practices:

Ashley, J. & Burke, K. (2009). *Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Retrieved from <http://www.icjia.state.il.us/publications/implementing-restorative-justice-a-guide-for-schools>

Davis, F. (2014, Sept 26). 8 Tips for Schools Interested in Restorative Justice on Edutopia [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/restorative-justice-tips-for-schools-fania-davis>
 International Institute for Restorative Practices. (2011). Safer Saner Schools: Whole-School Change Through Restorative Practices. Retrieved from <http://www.iirp.edu/pdf/WSC-Overview.pdf>

LIST OF TIERED OFFENSES and POSSIBLE OUTCOMES: the following is a list of examples of infractions and possible outcomes.

TIER I: Tier I offenses include student behavior which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. An adult or staff member in the classroom manages these behaviors. Tier I offenses must be documented by submitting a Google Discipline referral form.

Actions (not limited to)	Behavior	Management	Possible Interventions/Consequences
1. Not following classroom/school expectations 2. Violation of the dress code 3. Tardy 4. Cell phone usage 5. General derogatory comments 6. General profanity and gesture 7. Inappropriate drug/alcohol references (language, conversations, talking, joking, drawings, etc.) 8. Failure to identify self when asked 9. Inappropriate display of affection	1. Refusal 2. Refusal 3. Refusal 4. Refusal 5. Disruption 6. Disruption 7. Disruption 8. Refusal 9. Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tier 1 Student behaviors are managed in the classroom. ● The staff member maintains a proper, accurate record of the offenses and disciplinary action on Google Discipline Form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal Redirection ● Alternative assignment ● Withdrawal of classroom privileges ● Conference with the teacher privately ● Teacher detention ● Parent contact ● Referral to School Counselor ● Contact Advisory Teacher

TIER II: Tier 2 offenses include student behaviors of such frequency or seriousness that the learning climate of the classroom is disruptive. These infractions, which usually result from the continuation of Tier 1 behaviors, require the intervention of personnel on the administrative level because the application of Tier 1 consequences/interventions have failed to correct the situation. Also limited in this level are behaviors, which do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others, but the educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of the administrative team.

TIER III: Tier III offenses are student acts that are directed against persons or acts that warrant immediate intervention. These acts may require assistance from outside agencies including law enforcement. All Tier 3 behaviors/actions require staff to immediately contact the Front Office to report the incident.

Actions (not limited to)	Behavior	Management	Possible Management/Consequence
1. Continuation/repitition/escalation of Tier 2 behaviors that impacts instruction	1. Refusal	The staff member immediately notifies the Front Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Temporary removal from class
2. Possession and/or use of controlled substances (see specifics under heading 'Substance Use/Possession')	2. Safety	1. The Administrator determines the most appropriate response. 2. If contraband is involved, it will be confiscated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Office detention ● Extended Office detention ● In-School Suspension
3. Possession of incendiary device (lighter, matches)	3. Safety	3. Law enforcement/SRO is notified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Out-of School Suspension
4. Leaving campus without permission	4. Safety	4. An investigation is conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus Suspension
5. Unauthorized access	5. Safety	5. A search is conducted (if needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to School Counselor
6. Fighting	6. Safety	6. The parent/guardian is notified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restoration/restitution made by student
7. Pulling a false fire alarm	7. Safety	7. Emergency removal (if needed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Behavior contract
8. Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Threats, Harassment,	8. Safety	8. The Front Office or Administrator maintains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety Plan ● Referral to Child Study Team ● Referral to school resource officer ● Re-entry meeting

Intimidation, Taunting		a proper and accurate record of the offense and documents in X2	(may include one or more of the following: administration, school counselor, parent, student, teacher(s))
9. Inciting a violation of the code of conduct	9. Safety		
10. Assault	10. Safety	9. Hearing for proposed suspension is held	
11. Possession of a Weapon	11. Safety	10. The Administrator provide notification of action taken to the student and parent/guardian	• Expulsion
12. Arson	12. Safety		
13. Threats to the safety of the school	13. Safety		
14. Disturbance of school or assembly	14. Disruption	11. Re-entry meeting (if needed).	

DESCRIPTION OF POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES: Additional/other/or 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 will 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. Parents and guardians will be contacted by the teacher. 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. These detentions may be educational in nature, requiring students to do some learning about their behavioral infraction. After being assigned three office detentions, a family intervention meeting will be scheduled with members of the student's team, including teachers and administrators. A student will face more severe consequences that may include but not be limited to: extended detention or internal suspension.
- **In-School Suspension** is assigned when a student is unable to be in a classroom setting for disciplinary or other reasons and is held in the Student Success Center. All in-school suspension expectations and rules apply during this restriction period.

Please see the ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK for the process for In and 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 expulsion hearing. Please see the ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HANDBOOK for the process for expulsions and correlating guidance.

Providing work during suspensions: Teachers will provide students with work for the duration of their suspension. The work will be due to the teacher upon returning to school.

3.I. Discrimination and Harassment

ARMS will adhere to the Discrimination and Harassment policies and procedures found in Section 1.I. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.J. Bullying

ARMS will adhere to the Bullying policies and procedures found in Section 1.J. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.K. Public Complaints

ARMS will adhere to the Public Complaints policies and procedures found in Section 1.K. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.

3.L. District Curriculum Accommodation Plan

The Athol and Royalston Elementary Schools follow the ARRSB District Curriculum Accommodation Plan policies and procedures found in Section 1.L. of the Main Body portion of the handbook.