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## 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 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. This will be accomplished using a standard based curriculum that is challenging and diverse to include 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.

## WHO TO GO TO FOR INFORMATION

### Question/Concern

### Who to see

To get help with your schedule

Guidance Office

If you have a problem or question

Your Teachers  
Main Office  
Guidance  
An adult you feel comfortable with

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

Computer Educator  
Main Office

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

Main Office

Library questions

Library

### Attendance Policy

The Athol-Royalston Middle School is involved in a school attendance program called "School Is Where It's At." This program was established by the District Attorney's office in an attempt to work with schools to improve school attendance throughout Massachusetts. 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 whether an absence is determined to be 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.

### Arrival/Departure Times

Students should arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:25 a.m. and report directly to the gymnasium or the cafeteria if eating breakfast. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria until 7:25 a.m. Some Royalston students who arrive on the bus shortly after 7:00 will report directly to the cafeteria, as there is no supervision in other places.

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.

### 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. Call School about every absence.

### Class Attendance

Your 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 at class. If you were not excused from the class, you will be seen by the Assistant Principal and assigned 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 an excused absence include:

- Illness
- Medical
- Dental Appointments
- Court
- Bereavement
- Civic Duty
- Religious Observance
- School sponsored event/activities
- Educational trip

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 everyday. 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 AM 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, you need to 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 Assistant Principal. 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
- . Illness or medical appointments
- . Court appearances
- . Other 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. Upon returning to school the parent or guardian must sign the student back in at the Main Office.

### General Rules

**School Rules apply and are enforced at all times when students are on school grounds, all ARRS 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.

## Bus Rules

**The school is responsible for students doorstep to doorstep.**

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. Such suspension will be initiated by the school Principal or Assistant Principal. 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.

## Dress Code

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

### **Students will not be permitted to wear the following:**

- T-shirts expressing profanity, referencing drugs, alcoholic beverages, inappropriate substances, or cigarettes, or having sexual or degrading connotations—expressing hatred or serious “put-downs” of groups.
- Clothing that is excessively ripped or tattered.
- Shirts worn by female students that show excessive cleavage.
- Spaghetti strapped shirts, tank tops, muscle shirts, short skirts, tight clothing, midriff blouses, strapless and backless dresses and or shirts
- Tops/clothing that shows the midriff when sitting or standing or revealing clothing.
- Bandanas and/or other gang-related attire.
- Chains, spiked bracelets/necklaces or anything that may be a potential safety concern.
- Pajamas or bedroom slippers are not permitted. Rubber sole moccasins are permitted.
- Shorts, skorts, and skirts that are excessively revealing.
- Any roller blade type shoes (Heelies)
- No hats or head covering are allowed to be worn in the building.
- Coats and backpacks are not to be worn during the school day.

### **Other items not specified below because of changing fashions, but are deemed inappropriate or dangerous by the administration:**

**Boys:** Tank tops with baggy armpits are not allowed to be worn. Undershirts are to be worn under shirts, not as shirts. We also ask that you pull your pants up and make certain that your underwear is not showing.

**Girls:** There is to be no skin showing between the bottom of your show even if you are raising your arms. Spaghetti strap tops are not enough and the cut under the arm high enough not to be a distraction to the length stated above.

If any item of clothing is viewed as inappropriate, students will be asked to fix the problem immediately. This may be done by turning T-shirts inside out or by removing the item.

#### **Footwear**

Safety and cleanliness with regard to footwear is our primary concern. The foot should be protected from items that may fall on them. Footwear must be secured. **Flip-flops are not permitted.**

#### **Lost and Found**

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

#### **Lockers and Belongings**

Student lockers are the property of the Athol-Royalston Regional School District and remain under control of the school.

- 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.
- **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.

#### **Book Bags and Backpacks**

Book bags and backpacks must be stored in student lockers. They are not to be carried throughout the day.

#### **Cell Phones / Recreational / Personal Items**

- All electronics and cell phones must be turned off. If any of these items are found either visible or in use, they may be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian. The student shall receive office detention at discretion of administrator.
- Cell phones are to be kept turned off and securely stored in lockers. If found either visible or in use, it will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian.
- Improper cell phone use, (texting, photography, talking) will initiate a consequence. Some improper use may be considered illegal and be referred to legal authorities.
- Cell phones are not allowed on extended, overnight field trips unless given permission by administrator.
- During field trips, adults have cell phones for student 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. **Do not contact your child via his/her cell phone during the school day.**
- Skateboards/Scooters must be stored during the school day.
- 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 receive office detention(s).
- Matches and lighters are not allowed at ARMS for safety reasons. If any found in a student's possession, it will result in (ISS or OSS).

#### **Bicycles/Scooters/Skateboards**

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 skateboards and scooters.

Scooters and skateboards are to only be stored in the designated area. Students are not allowed to use scooters or skateboards on Middle 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 or skateboards 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.

#### **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.

#### **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.

#### **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).

### Morning Announcements

Information is provided in many different formats. It is the student's responsibility to listen to all announcements.

### 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.**

### 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.

### 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 administrator.**

### 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.

### Athol-Royalston Middle School

#### Non-Negotiable Building Rules

- No student or group of students will interfere with or interrupt a teacher's instruction.
- Hallway behavior must be safe and appropriate. No running, roughhousing or physical contact.
  - Cell phones, MP3 players/Walkmans/I pods, etc. may not be used in the building at any time. These items must be turned off.
- Students must have hall passes when in the halls during class time.
- Students will dress appropriately and follow the school dress code.

### 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 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- 7<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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:

**5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- 3 doses Hepatitis B
- At least 4 doses DTP (Diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)
- At least 3 doses polio vaccine
- 2 doses MMR (2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella)
- Physician certified reliable history of chickenpox or 1 or 2 doses of varicella vaccine (1 dose if < 13 yrs. of age: 2 doses if >13 yrs. of age)

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- 3 doses Hepatitis B
- 4 doses DTP
- DTAP has not been given within the past 5 years.
- At least 3 doses Polio
- 2 doses MMR (2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella)
- Physician certified reliable history of chickenpox or 1 or 2 doses of varicella vaccine (1 dose if < 13 yrs. of age: 2 doses if >13 yrs. of age)

**Medication Administration**

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

1. A signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine.
2. 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 medication. 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:**

1. Copying of another student's test paper or any other school assignment
2. Using material during a test which is not authorized by the person giving the test
3. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting, in whole or part, the contents of a test or other assignment
4. Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for one's self to take a test or complete an assignment
5. Bribing another person to obtain a test or other assignment that is to be administered
6. Securing copies of a test or answers to a test or other assignment in advance of a test or assignment
7. Copying or copy and pasting information from print or Internet sources without proper citation

**Benchmarks and Targets**

Students have benchmarks in all subjects, which are tied to the state curricula, high school expectations, and real world requirements.

**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.

**Honor Roll**

Honor Roll – all classes are used for determining honor roll each quarter.

Gold - Straight A's

Silver - All A's and B's (no grade lower than an 80%)

Bronze - All A's and B's with one C of 75% or higher permitted.

At the end of the year there will be a celebratory event that recognizes the students' academic achievements. *To qualify a student must make the honor roll the first three terms.*

### **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, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 85 or better. They must have no serious discipline issues. 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. Only those truly outstanding students in the areas of knowledge, leadership, service, and character are selected to the ARMS National Junior Honor Society.

### **Report Cards**

Quarterly report cards are distributed in November, February, April, and June.

Progress reports will be issued to all students halfway through the 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.

Separate grades will be given for conduct. Criteria include responsibility, self-control, respect for others, organization and preparation of work, attention, class participation, and use of time. Conduct will be graded as follows.

5	=	Superior
4	=	Above Average
3	=	Average
2	=	Improvement Required
1	=	Unsatisfactory

**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.**

### **A STUDENTS RIGHT TO LEARN**

All students have the right to learn in a disruption free environment.

### **Removal from a Course**

A student who frequently violates classroom rules, repeatedly disrupts the educational decorum of a class, or presents a safety hazard may be removed from the course. Prior to removing a student from a course, attempts will be initiated to improve the student's behavior.

- Referral to Student Support Team
- Develop relationship with students
- Called parents
- Consult guidance
- Child study meeting held after DCAP
- Parent Meeting
- Child study
- Create DCAP

### **Alternative Classroom Setting**

Students who continually disrupt the educational process in the classroom, and prevent other students from learning may be assigned to our 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.

### **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.

### **Athletics and Activities**

#### **Athletics**

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 on interscholastic teams includes authorization by the school physician, written parent consent, and endorsement by the school Principal based on established school and MIAA rules.

*See concussion policy:*

#### **Sports Teams**

Subject to funding, teams may include the following: Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Field Hockey, Football, Soccer, Softball, Track and Field, and Wrestling. User fees may apply.

#### **Student Spectators**

Students are welcome to attend athletic competitions, but must leave school at dismissal time and return for the start of the game. 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 administrator.

#### **Computer Technology Rules**

The middle school has one computer lab in Room 211, one in the library, one in Tech Ed in Room 111, and computers in each classroom, all of which are networked and have Internet capability. 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 work: 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.

#### **Absolutely No Food or Drink at the Computers**

If a student violates any of the District's Acceptable Internet use rules, applicable state and federal laws, or posted classroom or middle school computer rules, the student may be subject to the loss of computer privileges and any other district disciplinary options as determined by the administration.

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.

Administration (Principal) will have final authority on usage of personal computers, pen drives, disks or other storage devices.

#### **Computer Use Policies**

**Students shall not:**

1. Attempt to access or send email unless created by school district
2. Attempt to access chat rooms or personal gathering websites deemed inappropriate like myspace, facebook, etc.
3. Access or type in **any** Internet address (URL) unless directed to do so by their teacher.
4. Reveal their account password or shall not permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
5. Gain unauthorized entry into a file, either to read or change information or transfer files
6. Use another individual's account or vandalize another user's data
7. Degrade damage or disrupt equipment or system performance

8. Gain unauthorized access to network resources
9. Download, install or load programs or disks onto a specific school computer
10. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material
11. 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, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, handicap or age
12. Use of the Internet for personal commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying

Students must:

13. Provide proper citations for all information taken from the Internet; plagiarism is prohibited
14. Treat all computers and equipment with the utmost care and respect
15. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at a minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended
16. Respect commonly accepted practices of computer network etiquette: Do not watch when others type in their passwords. Be polite. Do not use vulgar or obscene language
17. When using the Internet, do not give out personal information; reveal your home address, telephone number, or the telephone numbers of others
18. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes consistent curriculum
19. Access the Internet only with adult supervision, and notify a teacher or Ms. Harris, the computer coordinator in Room 211 immediately if you come across inappropriate content

The Internet is a great resource for knowledge, but it can also be an inappropriate and even dangerous place for children. Follow the rules for safe Internet use. Talk about your activities on the Internet with your parents/guardians, teachers and administrators. If you encounter problems, notify them immediately.

#### **Dance Rules**

Dances are meant to be fun. It is everyone's hope that no problems arise. **BUT** just in case, we want everyone to know the rules.

1. Staff members and parents serving as chaperones have complete authority at dances and their directions are to be followed.
2. 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.
3. 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 mean removal from dance and follow up action with parents.
4. Students must wear shoes at all times that conform to school rules.
5. No guests from outside Athol-Royalston Middle School are allowed.
6. No moshing allowed – deliberate bumping and tossing of bodies too close.
7. Any use of alcohol, or drugs, inappropriate substances or possession of a weapon will mean immediate removal from the dance by police.
8. Students must attend school on the day of the dance 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 administration).

#### **Drugs, Alcohol, Intoxicants, Smoking, Weapons**

- 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.
- 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 school administration.

#### **Drug, Alcohol or Intoxicant Incidents**

**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.
- If necessary, the student will be given a GAZE NYSTAGMUS TEST (eye pupil dilation and movement test) by an administrator or nurse to determine eye response and its relationship to possible alcohol use. 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 adult. Student is to be immediately removed from school by a parent /guardian. If the school is unable to contact parent/guardian or designated emergency adult, 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 the Athol-Royalston Regional School District Handbook Supplement under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H and 37 H1/2 will be followed.

### **Drug Paraphernalia**

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

### **Smoking/Tobacco 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.

### **Weapons**

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.

### **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.

### **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.

## **BULLYING**

### **BULLYING IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED**

**ARMS complies with: Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010. An Act relative to bullying in schools. Bullying is prohibited:**

- On school grounds
- Property immediately adjacent to school grounds
- At a school-sponsored or school related event
- Function or program whether on or off school grounds
- At a school bus stop, school bus, or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- Through the use of technology or an electrical device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- At a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school. If the bullying creates a hostile environment at a school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non- school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

**Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination, directed at a victim that:**

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage the victim's property
- Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

### **CYBER BULLYING**

Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of:

- Signs, Signals, Writings, Images, Sounds, Data, Intelligence of any nature

Transmitted in whole or in part by:

- Wire, Radio, Electromagnetic, Photo Electronic, Photo Electric System

Including but not limited to:

- Electronic Mail, Internet Communications, Instant Messaging, Facsimile Communication

Cyber-bullying shall also include:

- the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person
- the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages
- if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses posted content or messages

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the previous list.

All Student/Faculty/Staff/Parents must make reports of bullying to the Principal and or Vice Principal. All bullying allegations will be handled within 24 hours. Reports of bullying or retaliations may be anonymous.

Parents/Guardians of victims shall be notified.

Any Student/Faculty/Staff/Parent who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation is subject to disciplinary action.

### **HARASSMENT**

Harassment in school occurs when a student or adult's behavior or inappropriate language creates a hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment. A single incident, depending on its severity, may constitute illegal harassment.

A hostile, offensive or intimidating school environment may be created by behaviors such as the following:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting or abusive verbal statements or writing of a sexual or racial nature or related to a student's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- Graffiti, slogans or other visual displays (such as swastikas and burning crosses) which contain racial, ethnic, religious slurs or insults based on the student's gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- Treatment of a student in a more or less favorable way because the student submitted to or rejected sexual advances or requests for a social relationship; and
- Unwelcome sexual advances, including same-gender harassment.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment in any form is strictly forbidden in school, on school grounds or at school related activities. Sexual harassment refers to behavior which is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which debilitates morale and which therefore interferes with work effectiveness and individual learning. Sexual harassment in the educational setting is also prohibited by law and is defined, in part, as follows with respect to students, "sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature...such conduct having the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment for the person towards whom the harassment is directed. Any student who believes he/she is a victim of sexual harassment should talk to the building principal or another adult in the school.

### **Anti-Discrimination Policy**

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the [Erica Brouillet](#), Title IX Compliance Offices, Director of Educational Services, 1062 Pleasant Street, Athol, MA 01331, 978-249-2400.

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## **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF A HATE CRIME, HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION**

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The Athol-Royalston Regional School District reaffirms that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or exercise of civil rights in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs or activities. The Athol-Royalston Regional School District also affirms its commitment to maintain a school and work environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or exercise of civil rights. Any discrimination, Central office can be reached at 1062 Pleasant Street and at 978-249-2400 [speak to Erica Brouillet, Title IX Compliance Officer](#). Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or exercise of civil rights will not be tolerated.

If you should have a complaint or concern that there has been discrimination, you may also utilize the following procedure:

1. Report the violation to the building principal. The building principal will meet with you and other persons who might have information about the issue promptly and will attempt to resolve the issue. Any additional investigation will be commenced within a reasonable period of time. The building principal will issue his/her decision in writing to you within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the investigation.
2. If the complaint is not resolved, it can then be appealed to the [Erica Brouillet](#), District's Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator. This appeal must be in writing, describe the circumstances, and the relief you seek. This appeal should be taken within one week after receipt of the principal's decision.
3. The Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. Coordinator will meet with you within a reasonable time. Following a review of the materials presented to the principal and any additional investigation, which will be conducted promptly, the Coordinator will make a final determination on whether there has been a violation of the district's policy within ten (10) days after the conclusion of any additional investigation. If there has been a violation, the Coordinator will indicate the steps to be taken to correct it.

Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack POCH, Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557

The District's Equal Opportunity/Title IX/Section 504/A.D.A. has been designated to respond to any questions about the district's policy, and is part of the review process for complaints or concerns about discrimination. Central office can be reached at 1062 Pleasant Street at 978-249-2400.

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## **WHERE ELSE CAN YOU TURN FOR HELP?**

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Your school should take appropriate action to protect you from physical harm and to stop hate-motivated harassment or intimidation and prevent it from happening again. If it does not, you should report the incident to one or more of the agencies listed below:

**Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE)**

350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148  
(617) 388-3000

The state DOE's Problem Resolution System allows you, your parents and others to file a complaint if you believe you have been harassed or discriminated against.

**Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Civil Rights Division**

One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 727-2200

The Attorney General's Civil Rights Division reviews complaints of harassment, intimidation and discrimination in schools and determines appropriate legal action, including obtaining a restraining order.

**United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights**

John W. McCormack Building  
Post Office and Court House, Room 701  
Boston, MA 02109  
(617) 223-9662

The Office for Civil Rights receives and investigates complaints of discrimination and harassment.

**Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)**

One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 727-3990 or (413) 739-2145

The MCAD investigates complaints about discrimination in any public school program or course of study. Filing must occur within 6 months of the alleged discriminatory educational practice or harassment incident.

**Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS)**

1-800-KIDS-508: State-wide Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Line  
1-800-792-5200: Child at Risk Hotline/evenings, nights and weekends

DSS investigates reports involving a student under 18 years old who suffers physical or emotional injury from abuse (including sexual abuse) or severe neglect (including malnutrition).

**United States Department of Justice**

Community Relations Service (CRS)  
99 Summer Street, Suite 1820  
Boston, MA 02110  
(617) 424-5715

CRS is a specialized federal conciliation service that assists school districts to manage and prevent racial and ethnic conflicts and disruptions in schools.

**OTHER RESOURCES**

**American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Massachusetts**

(617) 482-3170

The ACLU provides free legal advice and advocacy to students and educates students on issues of discrimination, harassment, civil rights and civil liberties.

**Anti-Defamation League (ADL)**

(617) 457-8800

The ADL provides advocacy, support and legal referral services to victims of hate crimes, harassment and discrimination.

The ADL's "World of Difference" Program works with schools to fight anti-Semitism, prejudice, bigotry and racism.

**Asian American Resource Workshop: SafetyNet Hate Violence Prevention Project**

(617) 426-5313

SafetyNet assists Asian Americans in reporting hate crimes and obtaining access to police, prosecutors and the court system, and provides free and confidential support and referral services. Interpretive services are available.

**Boston Alliance of Gay & Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)**

1-800-42-BAGLY or (617) 227-4313 (Main Office)

BAGLY is a youth-run, adult-advised social support group to discuss issues of concern to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) youth. BAGLY also offers a peer counseling program and referrals to professional services.

**Boston Asian: Youth Essential Services (YES)**

(617) 482-4243

Boston Asian YES provides violence prevention, counseling, crisis intervention, gang prevention and substance abuse services for Asian youth in the Greater Boston area.

**Boston Gay and Lesbian Adolescent Social Services (GLASS)**

(617) 266-3349

Boston GLASS provides social services, peer support, educational opportunities and health promotion activities for GLBT and questioning young adults ages 25 and under.

**Child Help USA National Child Abuse Hotline**

1-800-4-A-CHILD

The Child Abuse Hotline provides crisis counseling and referral to any caller in an abuse-related situation.

**Children's Law Center of Massachusetts**

(781) 581-1977

The Children's Law Center represents students and provides advocacy and training on issues affecting the civil and legal rights of students and their education.

**Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY)**  
**(617) 287-5689**

CAPAY is a youth-run organization that focuses on improving race relations, providing peer support and developing leadership skills for Asian Pacific-American youth.

**Domestic Violence Ended (DOVE) Youth Hotline**  
**(617) 773-HURT or (617) 471-1235**

DOVE's Youth Hotline provides a safe, confidential and anonymous place for young adults to talk about domestic violence issues and receive support and referral services.

**Fenway Community Health Center**  
**(617) 267-2535 (Gay and Lesbian Peer Listening Line)**  
**(617) 267-0900, ext. 6250 (Violence Recovery Program)**

The Peer Listening Line is staffed by volunteers who provide support to callers with questions regarding their sexual orientation and access to community services. The Violence Recovery Program provides support and referral services to victims of hate crimes and harassment.

**Gang Peace**  
**(617) 989-1285**

Gang Peace provides peer-based education and training to youth ages 9 through 25, with an emphasis on rehabilitating gang members and youth at risk, providing programs in violence prevention and intervention, crisis management, mediation and HIV education.

**Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)**  
**1-800-455-GLAD or (617) 426-1350**

GLAD provides legal information, referrals and may provide direct legal representation to students and their families to assist students who have been harassed or discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and/or HIV status.

**Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth**  
**(617) 727-7200, ext. 312**

The Commission provides information about how to start a Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) and how to find out about existing GSAs and other GLBT support services.

**Governor's Task Force on Hate Crimes,**  
**Student Civil Rights Project of the Governor's Task Force on Hate Crimes**  
**(617) 727-6300, ext.25339 Web site: <http://www.StoptheHate.org>**

The Student Civil Rights Project receives reports of hate incidents and provides assistance and referrals for civil rights issues in schools.

**La Alianza Hispania - Youth Outreach Program**  
**(617) 427-7175**

La Alianza Hispana provides programs and services to the Latino community of Greater Boston, including intervention and referral services to victims of violence and harassment.

**Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights - Project to Combat Racial Hate**  
**(617) 482-1145**

The Lawyers' Committee provides free legal services to children and their families who have been harassed or discriminated against on the basis of race or national origin.

**Massachusetts Advocacy Center**  
**(617) 357-8431**

The Advocacy Center provides legal representation to income-eligible youth with special needs or disabilities and who face suspension or expulsion from school due to disciplinary concerns.

**Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD)**  
**1-800-322-2020 or (617) 727-7440 (Voice and TDD)**

MOD sponsors recreational and educational programs for youth with disabilities to share concerns about day-to-day issues and coping strategies, independence and self-care.

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**  
**Boston (617) 427-9494**

**New Bedford (508) 991-4416**  
**Springfield (413) 734-2765**  
**South Middlesex (508) 879-7612**  
**Merrimack Valley (978) 975-5177**  
**Cambridge (617) 661-9223**

The NAACP provides counseling and legal referral services to African-American youth and empowers youth to resolve problems relating to violence, harassment and discrimination.

**National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCAS)**  
**(617) 357-8507**

NCAS seeks equal access to quality public education for children of vulnerable groups, including children of color, children recently immigrated to the United States and children with disabilities.

**National Conference for Community and Justice**  
**(617) 451-5010**

The National Conference trains youth from diverse racial, ethnic and religious groups to develop leadership skills to address prejudice and intolerance and develop strategies for inclusion.

**Samariteens  
1-800-252-TEEN**

Samariteens provides a free and confidential service staffed by teenage volunteers dedicated to assisting teenagers in need and also provides suicide prevention and intervention strategies.

**Sociedad Latina  
(617) 442-4299**

Sociedad Latina offers treatment and counseling services to Latino youth and programs designed to prevent HIV/AIDS transmission, substance abuse, teen pregnancy and domestic violence.

**Urban League  
Eastern Massachusetts Office (617) 442-4519  
Springfield Office (413) 739-7211**

The Urban League provides services and advocacy programs relating to education for people of color, with a focus on poor and low-income urban areas.

**HATE CRIMES**

You have the right to attend school without being the victim of physical violence, threats of harm, intimidation or damage to your personal property. A hate crime occurs when you or a fellow student is targeted for physical assault, threat of bodily harm or intimidation, at least in part because you are a member of a different race, color, religion, ethnic background, national origin, gender or sexual orientation from the offender or because you have a disability.

**Certain types of language or conduct may indicate that a hate crime has occurred. Some indicators that a crime was hate-motivated include:**

- Use of racial, ethnic, religious, sexual or anti-gay slurs;
- Use of symbols of hate, such as a swastika or a burning cross;
- Similar behavior by the wrongdoer towards other students from the same racial, ethnic or religious group or against students of the same sexual orientation or gender; and
- The incident occurs while the victim was participating in an activity promoting a racial, religious, ethnic/national origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation group, such as attending a meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a students' gay rights alliance, or a disability rights demonstration.

**Hate crimes most frequently occur in the following ways:**

- A physical attack or a threat of bodily harm, on the basis of a student's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- Intimidating or threatening language based on a student's race, color religion, national origin, ethnic gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- Damage to a student's personal property or belongings because of the student's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken when there is a violation of the hate crime policy/rules. All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the administration. These may range from a warning, to lunch suspension, to in-school suspension, to out of school suspension.

**Erasing Hate  
A Guide to Your Civil Rights in School:  
Your Right to be Free From Discrimination, Harassment, and Hate-Motivated Violence**

Attorney General Martha Coakley  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
617.727.2200

[www.ago.state.ma.us](http://www.ago.state.ma.us)

By joining together, we can erase hatred in our schools. I believe that all of us – students, teachers, school administrators, and law enforcement officials – share the responsibility to create a safe, diverse, and positive, learning environment that prepares young people for the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We must celebrate our people for the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We must celebrate our differences and applaud our diversity.

You have the right to learn in an environment that is free from hate-motivated violence, harassment, and discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. This guide is designed to inform you of the laws protecting you against hate based crimes, as well as the resources available for reporting bias-motivated harassment, discrimination, or violence.

I am confident that, working together, we can ensure that all students in Massachusetts have access to an educational experience free from harassment and victimization by hate crimes.

Sincerely,  
Martha Coakley

**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.

#### **Breakfast and Lunch Program**

Breakfast and lunch are served daily by the cafeteria staff. Students eligible for the federal school breakfast and lunch program are encouraged to apply at any time during the year. **Forms are provided in the opening of school packet of information but can be requested at any time. Forms also may be found on the ARRS website.** Anyone needing help with forms please contact the Principal's Office.

#### **Lunch Rules**

1. Students must show respect to all cafeteria workers at all times.
2. Students are not allowed to leave their seats except to get lunch, return their tray, and at dismissal time.
3. Only eight students are allowed per table, four on each side.
4. Students may not take food out of the cafeteria.
5. All lunches must be eaten in the cafeteria, unless designated by the Principal.
6. Students should not be in the academic areas during lunch.
7. Students may not throw, toss, or forcefully slide food or drink.
8. Students must follow lunch supervisors' and cafeteria workers' directions in the food lines and at all times during lunch.
9. Students must walk quietly to and from lunch staying to the right in the hallways.
10. 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. These may range from a warning, to lunch suspension, to in school suspension, to out of school suspension.

#### **Beverages**

Water, drinking bottles, twist-off bottle containers, or open containers of any kind are not permitted in school during school hours unless approved by 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.

#### **Public Display of Affection**

Students are to refrain from displaying and/or participating in inappropriate public illustration 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 discipline as determined by the administration.

#### **Disciplinary Terms used at the Middle School**

##### **Disciplinary Referral Slip**

If a student is sent out of a classroom for disciplinary reasons the teacher will send a white Request for Administrative Assistance form to the office explaining the problem. The Assistant Principal or Principal will process this discipline slip with the student and consequences may follow. A copy will be sent to a parent within 48 hours.

##### **Teacher Detention**

If a student is late to class or has other behavioral problems, or has not completed an assignment in a timely manner, the teacher may assign the student an after school detention. The teacher may also inform your parents of the situation. It is required that the students show up for this detention.

##### **Suspension Code**

The Principal or Assistant Principal, or designee may suspend a student for acts of a serious nature.

**Some acts for which suspension may be considered are as follows:**

1. Open or persistent defiance of authority and/or school rules and regulations. This includes failure to report to the main office
2. Not complying with a teacher's request
3. Threatening, striking, and/or assaulting a student
4. Threat of physical assault on another student or school employee
5. Damaging or defacing the property of students, teachers, or the school district, including computer hardware and software
6. Profanity/Obscenity (word, materials, gesture, writing, drawing, or deed)
7. Verbal harassing, intimidating, or provoking another student
8. Theft or attempted theft
9. Failure to abide by corrective measures, such as detention for previous acts of misconduct
10. Possession or use of tobacco or smoking products-lighters, matches
11. Possession or use of alcohol, drugs or intoxicants
12. Possession of weapons or dangerous objects or substances
13. Gambling in any form
14. Leaving school without permission (Students must sign out with office personnel before leaving campus.)
15. Cutting class or leaving class without permission
16. Being truant from school
17. Continually being deceitful, i.e., lying and/or forging information

18. Harassment-gender, sexual, physical, hate, speech
19. Hazing
20. Certain computer violations
21. Unauthorized use of the elevator
22. Possession of disruptive products
23. Releasing strong or obnoxious odors
24. Bullying

### **Suspension Procedures**

All students referred to the office for disciplinary reasons will receive due process. The following procedures will be followed prior to the removal of the student from school unless the student's continued presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process. In such circumstances the student will be immediately removed from school and the following procedures will be followed as soon as practicable.

#### A. Suspensions of Less Than Ten (10) Days

The following procedure will be implemented in cases of suspension for less than ten (10) days.

1. Notify the student of the charge against him/her
2. Explain the evidence against him/her
3. Give student the opportunity to present his/her story and explain the situation
4. Notify parent-guardian by phone or phone message, letter, or in person
5. Hold conference with all concerned parties
6. Impose removal from class or school for up to ten (10) days through internal or external suspension
7. Impose additional consequences if appropriate. These include: revoking extracurricular privileges from the time of student notification until reinstatement in school; notify police when required by law and/or school policy.
8. Request parent/guardians to accompany student upon return to school.

#### B. Suspensions of More Than Ten (10) Days

The following procedure will be implemented in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) days.

1. Notify the student in writing of the charges against him/her.
2. A written explanation of the evidence against him/her.
3. A statement as to the date, time, and place of hearing.
4. A notice of the right to be represented by legal counsel (at the student's or parent(s) own expense), to present evidence, to cross-examine any witnesses presented by the school, and to present their own witnesses.
5. Notify parent-guardian by phone or phone message, with a copy of the notification given to the student.
6. Hold the hearing with all concerned parties.
7. Give the student the opportunity to present his/her story and explain the situation. Counsel and the parent(s) may also make statements.
8. A written decision is issued after the hearing stating the reason for the determination, the length of any internal or external suspension, or permanent expulsion from school.
9. Impose additional consequences, if appropriate, such as conditions to be met before returning to school, revoking extracurricular privileges; and notifying police when required by law and/or school policy.
10. Request parent(s)/guardian(s) to accompany student up on return to school.

#### C. Appeal to Superintendent of Schools

In any case of an internal or external suspension of a student, he/she or the parent(s)/guardian(s) may request an appeal to the Superintendent of Schools in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent may review the information already presented, seek additional information, and/or hold any additional meeting or hearing as he/she deems appropriate.

The Superintendent will give a written determination after he/she has completed the above process. His/her determination shall be the final determination of the School System.

### **Expulsion Code**

The Principal or school district can expel a student for serious acts.

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

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

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

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

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the Superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion. The ARRSB Handbook Supplement contains the full procedural requirements for expulsion under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sections 37H and 37H1/2.

## **Chapter 71, Section 37H1/2**

*Felony Complaint or Conviction of Student; Suspension;*

*Expulsion; Right to Appeal*

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

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

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

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

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

decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student. *Added by St. 1993, c380, s2. 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.

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 its 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.

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 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 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 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 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.

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/](http://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/basca/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/basca/) or can be requested from the Director of Special Education AT 978-249-2400.

### **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 a code of student 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 Plans**

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.

### **Home/Hospital Tutoring**

The school Principal will provide Parent/Guardian with the Physician Statement (28R/3) form to be completed and signed by the student's physician. The person signing this form must be a medical doctor, not a psychologist. Once this has been returned to the Special Education Office and approved by the Director of Special Education, the Special Education Office will initiate contact with a home tutor to plan services or contract with a hospital-assigned tutor and inform the Principal whom the tutor will be. There is no waiting period (required absence days) for services to begin. The school Principal will direct the Guidance Counselor to contact each of the student's classroom teachers and assist the tutor in contacting teachers for materials, transferring grades, etc. and to change attendance status. The completed Physician Statement will remain on file in the Special Education Office.

In the case of students attending private school at parent expense, Home/Hospital services are available if the child has been found to be a student with special educational needs. In cases where a child is not a child in need of special educational services, the District will consider the Physician's Statement and the impact of that statement on the child's status. Services can be provided or a determination to make a referral for testing or additional information may be requested depending on the circumstances. Each request will be considered on an individual basis. The Physician's Statement must be completed and sent to the Special Education Office.

### **Title 1 Purpose of School Wide Model**

The underlying purpose of the school-wide approach is to enable schools with high numbers of at-risk children to integrate the services they provide to their children from Federal, State, and local resources. A growing body of evidence shows that it is possible to create schools where all of the students achieve high standards even when most are poor or disadvantaged. Such schools are most likely to be effective if they can make significant changes in the way they deliver services. By making systematic changes that knit together services funded from into a comprehensive framework, schools will have a better chance of increasing the academic success of all their students.

A school-wide program school may consolidate funds from Federal, State, and local sources to implement the school's comprehensive plan to upgrade its entire educational program. [Section 1114(a)(1)] In consolidating State and local funds from Title I, Part A and most other Federal elementary and secondary programs administered by the Department, a school-wide program school does not need to meet most of the statutory and regulatory requirements of the Federal programs included in the consolidation as long as it meets the intent and purposes of those programs. [Section 1114(a)(3)(A)-(B)] Moreover, the school is not required to maintain separate fiscal accounting records by program that identify the specific activities supported by those particular funds in order to demonstrate that the activities are allowable under the program. [Section 1114(a)(3)(C)] Each school, however, must identify the specific programs being consolidated, and the amount each program contributes to the consolidation [Section 1114(b)(2)(A)(iii)], and maintain records that demonstrate that the school-wide program addresses the intent and purposes of each of the Federal programs whose funds are being consolidated to support the school-wide program. [Section 1114(a)(3)(C)] Each SEA must encourage schools to consolidate funds from Federal, State, and local sources in their school-wide programs and must eliminate State fiscal and accounting barriers so that these funds can be more easily consolidated. [Section 1111(c)(9)-(10); see generally 34 CFR 200.29]

### **Parent Participation**

Athol-Royalston School District recognizes that parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. Involvement of parents helps children to learn more effectively. By working with teachers and reinforcing and promoting learning objectives in the home, parents can dramatically improve their children's educational achievement.

#### **Athol-Royalston School District will do the following:**

Involve parents in the joint development of a written parental involvement policy that describes ways of meeting the following requirements of Title I of NCLB.

- Parents will be asked to participate in a Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The purpose of this council will be to acquire feedback and information from parents and consultations in the development of the total program. The group may consist of the Title I Director, Title I Teacher/Tutor, a parent coordinator, and parents receiving Title I services.
- Notification to parents of the policy in an understandable format and language.
- Periodic updates of the policy to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

Hold an annual meeting, at a convenient time, for all parents. The purposes of this meeting are to:

- Inform parents of their school's participation in the Title I program.
- Explain the requirements of Title I.
- Explain the rights of parents to be involved.

Parental involvement meetings will take place at various times, such as morning or evening.

Involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including the school parental involvement policy and the School-wide Program Plan.

Provide the following items to the parents:

- Timely information about Title I programs

- A description and explanation of the curriculum used at the school, the academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to reach.
- Opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents to:
  - Make suggestions
  - Received timely responses to them
  - Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children

Develop jointly with the parents or caregivers of participating students a school-parent compact that outlines:

- The shared responsibility of parents, students, and the entire school staff to improve students' academic achievement
- The shared responsibility between the school and parents to help children achieve the statewide academic content standards.
- The school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that helps children served under Title I meet the statewide academic content standards.
- The ways in which parents will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in their children's classroom; participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to the education of their children and the positive use of their children's extracurricular time
- Reasonable opportunities to volunteer at the school, participate in their children's class, and observe classroom activities
- The importance of ongoing communication between teachers and parents through (at a minimum):
  - Parent-teacher conferences
  - Title I Progress Reports
  - Reasonable access

#### **Evaluation of the Title I Program**

Parents of students participating in the Title I program will have the opportunity to evaluate the Title I program. The evaluation will include a section pertaining to the effectiveness of the parental involvement policy, areas of strengths and weaknesses, and barriers to overcome. The Title I staff, with the help of PAC, Parent Advisory Council, will use this information to evaluate the program and to make changes within the program as needed.

#### **NCLB Teacher Quality**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act defines new standards for teacher quality. Under NCLB, teachers must hold a Massachusetts teaching license at the Preliminary, Initial, or Professional level and demonstrate subject matter competency in the areas they teach. NCLB standards apply to the subject matter taught by teachers. For example, a teacher may be qualified to teach one subject but not another. With this in mind, we are doubling our efforts to make sure all teachers at our school are appropriately assigned to teach classes that reflect their qualifications.

Under the law, school districts must annually notify the parents/guardians of each student attending any Title I School that they may request information about the qualifications of their child's teacher and teachers:

#### **Parent Involvement Policy: Athol-Royalston Regional School District**

##### **Title I Parent Involvement Policy**

The Title I program values the role parents play as their children's first and most influential teachers. Parents will be asked to participate in a Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The purpose of this council will be to acquire feedback and information from parents for consultation in the development of the total program. The group may consist of the Title I director, Title I teacher/tutor, parent coordinator, and parents of students receiving Title I services.

**The Title I program will provide the following with support offered by the Title I director, teachers, and parent coordinator:**

- Title I fall informational meetings at each school.
- Children's progress and assessment results through parent-teacher conferences, written progress Reports, informal conferences, telephone calls, and classroom observation.
- Parent workshops and family events to promote and support parent skills.

**Parent will play an important role in their child's learning and success:**

- Parents as Teachers: monitor homework, listen and read to their child, review the Title I Parent/Teacher compact with their child.
- Parents as Learners: Participate in home-school communication, workshops, and meetings.
- Parents as Decision Makers: give informed consent for children's participation in Title I, respond to surveys, if possible, participate in the Title I Parent Advisory Council, school PTO, school improvement council.
- Parents as Supporters/Advocates: attend school functions, volunteer at school, organize school activities.

**A Title I spring evaluation will be conducted by the Parent Advisory Council to:**

- Review the Home-School Compact and Title I program.
- Review the Parent Involvement Policy to determine how to reach more families.

- Whether your child's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether your child's teacher is teaching under an emergency license or waiver through which the State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of your child's teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field or discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so give their qualifications.

Athol Regional School District is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above for your child's teacher, please contact Kyle Alves, Principal at 978-249-2430.

**Title 1 Supplemental, Not Supplant Policy and Procedures**

The district Supplemental, Not Supplant and Procedures describe how the district ensures that Title 1 funds are used only to supplement, and not supplant, state and local funds that would, in the absence of Title 1 funds, be spent on the Title 1 students.

The procedures must include a description of the means by which the policy is disseminated to personnel involved with Title 1.

**Please bring this handbook home and review it with your parent/guardian. Use it as a reference book when you have questions. You and your parent/guardian are required to sign a statement on the Middle School Registration Sheet, as well as the Handbook Sign Off below, indicating you have read this handbook and understand its content.**

**\*Do not tear this sheet out of the handbook. There is a place on the back of the Registration Sheet to sign off on. Thank you.**

**ATHOL-ROYALSON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**HANDBOOK SIGN OFF FORM**

**2012/2013**

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**H.R. TEACHER**

**Date**

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**PARENT** **Date**

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**STUDENT** **Date**