

# John J. Ahern Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook 2019-2020



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*Foxborough Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.*

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## Foxborough Public Schools

### Core Values:

- **C**hallenging and innovative educational experiences promote academic excellence by meeting the needs of students in ways that engage them in their learning.
- **A** safe, supportive, and collaborative environment fosters positive attitudes among students and school staff.
- **R**espect for the diversity and dignity of individuals and cultures enriches learning and supports the development of responsible citizenship.
- **E**nsuring a quality education, cultivated by ongoing communication and shared resources among parents, teachers, town organizations, and residents, is the responsibility of the entire community.

### Mission statement:

The mission of the Foxborough Public Schools, guided by its core values, is to engage students in a rich, diversified education, thereby empowering them to challenge themselves as they become productive, responsible citizens.

### Vision:

The Foxborough Public Schools, in collaboration with the community, will provide students with intellectual, artistic, and character building educational experiences to inspire them to achieve.

Dream and as you do,  
remember that with our help  
your dreams can come true.

Reach, and as we make you reach further,  
remember that success takes time, devotion,  
and sometimes disappointing failures.

Believe in us. Trust us, and as you do,  
you will find that your reach gets easier,  
setbacks more manageable,  
school more meaningful.

There's a wonderful dream waiting for you  
and together we can make it come true.  
by Clyde DeBay

## **I. MISSION**

The Community of the Ahern Middle School is dedicated to maximizing the opportunity for each student to fully challenge her/his intellectual capacity while developing social responsibility and a healthy physical and emotional well-being.

## **II. CORE VALUES AND OBJECTIVES**

**C**hallenging and innovative educational experiences promote academic excellence by meeting the needs of students in ways that engage them in their learning.

The Ahern Middle School, as a community of learners, holds firm to the belief that all children will learn. We expect each student to take learning seriously. Ahern provides a rigorous academic program with supports to insure that all students will succeed.

- Students will know how to acquire, organize, and analyze information.
- Students will develop critical and creative thinking skills.
- Students will be able to express their understanding through multiple mediums.
- Our curriculum, instruction, and assessments will be reviewed regularly to maximize student achievement.

**A** safe, supportive, and collaborative environment fosters positive attitudes among students and school staff.

**R**espect for the diversity and dignity of individuals and cultures enriches learning and supports the development of responsible citizenship.

Students are expected to show respect of others. Our community is intolerant of any form of disrespect. Harassment of another student or adult on the basis of race, sex, class, national origin, religion, physical, emotional, or cognitive limitations that include (but limited to) disabilities, appearance or sexual orientation is not acceptable.

- Students will gain an understanding of the rights of others.
- Students will integrate various viewpoints.
- Students will be exposed to diverse cultures.
- Students will develop an appreciation for the importance of personal commitment and perseverance.

**E**nsuring a quality education, cultivated by ongoing communication and shared resources among parents, teachers, town organizations, and residents, is the responsibility of the entire community.

Part of each student's education includes developing a sense of responsibility. In maturing, students learn to be accountable for their own behavior, be responsible for the school and community environment, and be an active participant in the learning process.

- A symbiotic relationship between the school, parents, and greater Foxborough Community will be fostered.
- Student achievement will be celebrated.
- The importance of physical and mental fitness will be emphasized.

### **III. STUDENT SCHEDULE**

#### **A. Student Schedule of Courses:**

##### **1. Six-Day Cycle**

##### **2. Summary of Subjects/Periods Per Cycle**

Ahern students are expected to attend a full schedule of courses for each year. The courses presented below provide students with a challenging and balanced experience.

All classes are scheduled over a six-day period. Students will have a schedule showing exactly how classes rotate during each six-day cycle.

	<b>GRADE:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Subject:</b>					
Eng/Lang Arts/Reading		12	12	6	6
Math		7-9	7-8	6	6
Science		6	5	6	6
Social Studies		4	5	6	6
For. Lang. or Developmental Reading		2	3	6	6
Art		3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)
Music		1	1	3(¼ yr)	3(¼ yr)
Wellness		3	3	3	3
BCORE*		3	3	3	3
Technology		3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)	3(½ yr)
Enrichment <sup>7</sup> /Elective <sup>8</sup>				3	3

\*Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Remediation, Enrichment

## **B. Student/Teacher Houses and Teams**

### **1. Student Houses**

The purpose of the House/Team System is to provide students with a small class group within a much larger school. Each grade is divided into Houses/Teams.

The students' teachers and counselors determine student placement in the House/Team.

The primary goal of the house placement process is to provide all students with an optimum learning environment. Placement into houses is done in late spring and summer.

### **2. Teacher Teams**

Teams of teachers are assigned to each house of students. The team provides all of the academic instruction for the house of students.

The team and house teacher/student organization is fundamental to the quality and effectiveness of the Ahern Middle School. The teams of teachers are better able to concentrate their collective attention to the individual needs of a specific group of students.

## **C. Guidance Program**

Our guidance department has three counselors. They help students make choices with their academic program, educational development, and personal concerns. This involves working with individual students, their parents, and teachers.

The guidance counselor can provide information regarding educational opportunities and choices for the future. The guidance office maintains a library containing information about occupational, vocational, agricultural, and private high schools as well as our own Foxborough High School.

## **D. School Nurse**

1. The school nurse helps children with health problems that interfere with their ability to take part in the everyday school activities. Some of the nurse's services include: first-aid care, vision, hearing and postural screenings, counseling on health problems, communicable disease control, and maintaining cumulative health records on every student.

### **2. Health Room Procedure For Student**

- a. In non-emergency situations, a pass is necessary. A teacher will make out a pass to the health room to be given to the nurse.
- b. If a student feels sick at any time, she/he should ask for permission to go to the nurse's office.

### **3. General Information on Medication for Parents:**

- a. Only medication that is prescribed by a physician will be administered to students and only in the nurse's office.
- b. Physician's order must accompany all medications to be given during the school day, including over-the-counter drugs.
- c. A parent note is also required, stating the name of medication, the dose and the time to be administered.
- d. With proper physician and parent permission, the nurse may authorize a student to carry asthma inhaler medication.

- e. Prescribed life-saving emergency medication, such as an epi-pen, will be carried by the student, if responsible, or by a staff member to recess, P. E., and on field trips.
- f. Appropriate forms are available from the nurse for your convenience.

**Immunizations:**

Immunizations must be kept up to date. **In seventh grade, students must comply with state mandated immunization information and will not be allowed to attend school unless state mandated immunizations are kept current.**

**E. Special Education Services**

The Ahern School has a full staff of special education professionals. The special education program provides a range of services varied to the learning needs of the students it serves. Chapter 766 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines eligibility for special education services.

Services can be provided only to students after a Core Evaluation. Parents and students who would like more information should contact the Ahern School or the Director of Special Education.

**F. Palladino Library & Media Center**

The Palladino Media Center/Library at the Ahern School has a diverse collection of printed and non-printed materials appropriate for middle school students. The collection of over 18,000 items includes: videos, filmstrips, films, recordings, computers, computer software, periodical magazines, newspapers, as well as classic literature and the latest in fiction and non-fiction books.

The facility provides students, teachers, and parents with an exceptional resource for learning and enrichment. The center is open to students daily from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Parents are encouraged to stop by the Media Center and look over the collection.

**G. BCORE (Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Remediation, & Enrichment)**

During BCORE a number of activities take place:

Instrumental and vocal music is available for all students. Students in any grade may elect to be part of the orchestra, band, or chorus. Students in these programs are required to participate in small ensemble and individual rehearsals during the school day.

All students not participating in an ensemble may take a general music class offered at this time for a portion of the school year (term, semester, or full year). Students in grades 7 and 8 will participate in a 'rotation' of 10-week (one term) courses that have been developed to enhance and enrich the educational experience.

Instrument lessons are given during non-academic periods, primarily in Art/Computer or Wellness. Thus, students involved with an instrument will have a slightly different program of study than other students.

Classroom teachers and specialists provide remedial and enrichment activities during this time period. Students involved in the music program have less access to these opportunities.

## **H. After School Activities and Extracurricular Activities**

Students are encouraged to participate in a wide variety of activities such as clubs, student government, student newspaper, and intramural sports. In order to participate in after-school activities, students must sign a waiver form. *Attendance in school is mandatory. In order to be eligible to participate in after school activities or events, students must be in attendance for more than half a school day.*

### **1. Clubs**

A variety of clubs to suit all interests are offered at the Ahern. Some examples include drama club, art club, computer club, chess club, ski club, community service club, and the ABC Broadcast club.

### **2. Intramural Sports**

The intramural sports program is currently grade 7/8 Basketball. The opportunity to try out for this team is available to all interested students in the seventh and eighth grade.

### **3. Student Council**

Each homeroom elects representatives to student council. These representatives have voting rights. Any other student who would like to participate in student council may do so.

Student Council at the Ahern Middle School has 5 objectives:

- a. To provide learning and training for students in democracy and nomination-election processes.
- b. To provide training ground for student leadership.
- c. To provide an organization to promote good citizenship, responsibility, scholarship, human values, and service to our school community.
- d. To provide a means for a student voice in school decisions and management.
- e. To promote services and activities that will improve the school, the student, and the total community in which we live.

## **I. Homework Guidelines and Expectations:**

All students typically receive home assignments each night. The school provides each child with an agenda to help organize the student and to provide a means of communication between home and school. In addition, teachers have websites that list daily assignments. PowerSchool Parent Access is a tool by which parents can check that homework is received by the teacher.

**Students are expected to complete homework assignments as assigned. Difficulty in meeting this expectation can be caused by any number of reasons and may be handled through parent conference, staying after school to complete the assignment or other measures deemed appropriate for the particular instance.**

**Inability to complete homework assignments in a timely manner negatively impacts a student's ability to comprehend the concepts presented and generally results in a lower grade in the course. Parents can support student achievement by checking the homework agenda daily, checking teacher websites and PowerSchool Parent Access to follow up on homework completion.**

## **Expectations for Work Habits, Study Skills, and Homework K-12**

### **1. Work Habits:**

- a. Come to school and class prepared to learn.
- b. Take responsibility for your own learning.



- c. Develop and maintain good organizational skills:
  - Keep track of homework and other assignments.
  - Bring appropriate materials/agendas to and from school.
- d. Read and follow directions on all assignments (grade 3 and up).
- e. Establish an appropriate place/routine at home to do your homework.

These work habits are modeled for students in grades 1-6. Students develop independent organizational and planning skills in grades 5-9. Students are expected to be responsible for their learning and organization in grades 9-12.

“A student’s work habits are good when he or she is willing to persevere, contribute to group tasks, and follow tasks to completion. These valuable skills are used in nearly every career. To assess work habits, it’s important to ask questions, such as “Are the students able to organize and summarize their work?” and “Are the students progressing in becoming independent learners?”

~ The NCTM Principles and Standards 2000 ~

## 2. **Study Skills:**

- a. Test preparation
  - Use teacher-provided study guides, etc., for formal tests (gr. 4-8).
  - Use flash cards for key vocabulary and information.
  - Think of questions that might be asked (gr. 6-8).
  - Review homework, notes, etc. (gr. 5-8).
  - Students in grades 5-12 should prepare more than one night ahead!
- b. Organization and Study Skills
  - Gr. 5: Organizational Systems – Label/organize expandable, use of calendar/agenda for project planning and time management  
 Studying Techniques – Apply active reading strategies to all texts, effective highlighting, use of 2 and 3 column notes, text features, organizational structures, corresponding graphic organizers, SQ3R, power outlining
  - Gr. 6: Organizational Systems – Use of tabbed 3-ring binder or expandable, use of calendar/agenda for project planning and time management  
 Studying Techniques – All study techniques in grade 5 plus effective use of study guides and notes, interactive notebooks
  - Gr. 7-8: Organizational Systems – Use of tabbed, 3-ring binder and clean out system, use of calendar/agenda for project planning and time management  
 Studying Techniques – All study techniques in grade 6 plus summarizing chapters in student words

## 3. **Grade Level Homework Guidelines:**

### **Grade 5**

Total time for assigned homework on a weekly basis would be approximately five (5) hours. This may not equate to one hour per night, due to weekly assignments given on Mondays or projects. The five hour guideline would include core curriculum work and reading.

*If a student is spending significantly more time than 5 hours weekly, please contact the teacher.*

## **Grade 6**

Total time for assigned homework on a weekly basis would be approximately seven (7) hours. This may not equate to 1½ hours per night, due to weekly assignments given on Mondays or projects. The 7 hour guideline would include core curriculum work, foreign language, and reading. *If a student is spending significantly more time than 7 hours weekly, please contact the teacher.*

## **Grade 7**

Total time for assigned homework would be approximately 1½ -2 hours per night. The variations would depend on both the level of the Math course and the planning of weekly assignments and long-term assignments on the part of individual students. The total time includes all core courses. *If a student is spending significantly more time than the guidelines above, please contact the teacher or guidance counselor.*

## **Grade 8**

Total time for assigned homework would be approximately 1¾ -2 hours per night. The variations would depend on both the level of the Math course and the planning of weekly assignments and long-term assignments on the part of individual students. A student in the Honors Math course may exceed the 2 hour guideline due to the rigor of the course. The total time includes all core courses. *If a student is spending significantly more time than the guidelines above, please contact the teacher or guidance counselor.*

### **4. Homework for Absentees**

When a student is absent from school, he/she is responsible for finding out what work has been missed and arrange for extra help.

In the event a student is absent for several days for reasons of illness or family emergency and is unable to do homework, parents may call the Ahern Guidance Office before 8:30 a.m. to request home assignments. It is doubtful that we will be able to gather homework if a child is going to be out only one day.

*Teachers cannot be expected to arrange for homework in anticipation of absence. In particular, children who are taken out of school for vacation should not expect teachers to prepare materials before their trip.*

### **5. Religious Holidays and Vacations**

The Ahern community is sensitive to the religious and cultural needs of our families. Although we make every effort to be sensitive we sometimes need to be reminded of individual needs. Please contact your child's teachers or guidance counselor if you have a need. Teachers will be sensitive to families' religious and cultural observances and will provide reasonable accommodations and opportunities to make homework and/or class work that may have been missed due to such observances."

No homework will be given over school vacations or religious holidays, excluding long term assignments. [State and federal laws require schools to make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of students.]

### **6. Homework Assignment Emergencies**

Occasionally, students experience genuine difficulties in completing and turning in homework assignments. The Ahern School staff recognizes that unexpected circumstances can arise in our students' lives that can prevent completion of a homework assignment. If this happens, your child should approach the teacher for an extension or exemption. Another option is for you to contact your child's teacher or guidance counselor.

## 7. Chronic Homework Difficulties

While study skills curriculum is incorporated throughout the classes, some students still struggle to develop effective study habits. When students routinely experience difficulties in completing homework assignments, both teachers and parents should confer about the nature of the student's difficulties. Teachers, counselors, and administrators assist students with work through study dilemmas. The development of study habits is an important goal of the Ahern School. Collaborative school-home efforts can be successful for students' achievement of that goal. Please contact the school with your questions/concerns when you believe your child is experiencing chronic homework difficulties.

## J. **Academic Reporting Practices**

### Academic Reporting/Non-Custodial Parent

As required by M.G.L. Ch. 71, Sec. 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to student records in accordance with the law and Department of Education regulations unless there is a court order, state statute, or legally binding document relating to matters such as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes this right.

Non-custodial parents who want copies of their children's student records must submit a written request to the school Principal annually. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-oriented information regarding the child.

If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with a court certified copy of the court order.

### 1. Grade Reporting and Academic Progress Information

PowerSchool enables parents/guardians access to grades via the internet. To view your child's current grades, first go to the Foxborough Public School's home page, [www.foxborough.k12.ma.us](http://www.foxborough.k12.ma.us), and click the PowerSchool link. If you need to acquire a log-in and password, please contact the Ahern guidance office. If you do not have internet access, please request a print out from your child's teacher.

If a parent wishes to receive information about a child's progress, they may call the guidance counselor and a copy of the PowerSchool information can be printed. In addition, guidance counselors, along with classroom teachers, are happy to discuss progress.

**For the 2018-2019 school year, report cards will be issued electronically. Parents may request paper report cards at the end of each term by calling the Guidance Office.**

### 2. Team Meetings

Appointments may be arranged through your guidance counselor to see your child's team of teachers. This may be done at any time of the school year.

### 3. Honor Roll for Grades 6, 7, and 8

The grades for each term determine if a student qualifies for the honor roll.

High Honors:	All A's
Honors:	All A's and B's

**Note:** *All subjects are included in qualifying for Honor Roll.*

*An incomplete grade disqualifies a student from the honor roll.*

4. **Promotion/Attendance**

Promotion is dependent upon proper attendance and academic performance. Students may be required to attend summer school in order to be promoted.

**K. School Hours and Attendance**

1. **School Day**

The school doors open at 7:55 a.m. Attendance is taken in homerooms at 8:04 by the teachers. **Students arriving to homeroom after 8:04 will be marked absent and will need a pass from the office.** If a student is not in the homeroom, for whatever reason, he or she is marked absent. This list is sent to the office, and the office staff begins the steps for checking on absentees and those tardy.

Dismissal **from last period** is 2:24 p.m. After school activities begin at 2:30 p.m. and end at 3:25 p.m. when the late buses arrive. Students taking the late bus must sign-up for the bus ahead of time. The routes are longer and are posted so each student can find out which late bus to take.

2. **Absence from School**

When a student will be absent or tardy to school, you are asked to **call 508--543-1661**. When you call, you will need to give the student's name, homeroom, reason for absence, your name, and the length of time the student will be out of school. **If a student is absent from school, the student is considered to be absent from all activities on that calendar day.**

*We telephone the parents of those students who are listed as absent, but for whom no telephone call has been received. This method of monitoring absentees is done for safety reasons and is **VERY** time consuming. Please call 508-543-1661.*

**Absenteeism removes a student from the classroom instruction. As per the changes to MGL Chapter 76, Section 1B, on July 1, 2014, parents and an administrator will have a conversation after five (5) unexcused absences in an academic year.**

3. **School Absences Because of Religious Observances**

The Ahern School recognizes the right of parents to determine when their children shall be absent from school because of religious observances. Ahern students will not be penalized nor deprived of make-up opportunities for such absences.

4. **Tardiness**

Tardiness should be handled in the same manner as an absence. If, however, someone is bringing a student into school and a call has not been made, the person bringing the student should accompany the student to the office to verify his or her tardiness.

***Persistent tardiness will result in office detention the day after the 4<sup>th</sup> day of tardiness. On the day after the 4<sup>th</sup> tardy a student will be asked to stay after school on that day. Chronic tardiness may require a meeting of parents and school administration.***

5. **Early Dismissal**

If a student is to be dismissed early, you must **call 508-508-543-1661** to make the request or send a note in the morning. Students are dismissed only to a parent or guardian. Students cannot leave the building unescorted. On returning, the student should report to the office with a parent or guardian.

*In cases where a person other than parent or guardian is to pick up a student, advance written notice must be given to the principal.*

## 6. School Cancellation

During the winter months, when school is canceled or delayed because of weather conditions, generally a ConnectEd call is made to the phone designated by current PowerSchool information. You can also obtain information via radio or television. In the event of a delay, the period(s) missed will not be made-up. If school is cancelled, the day in the cycle will be skipped.

## 7. Emergency School Cancellation

Because of weather or some unforeseen event, school may occasionally be dismissed early. Arrangements should be made for each student to have a place to go if parents are not at home and the student does not have access to the home.

The PowerSchool Student Profile sheet in the school office should have updated telephone numbers for the “Primary and Emergency Contacts”.

# **IV. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND DIGNITY OF INDIVIDUALS**

Through core curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and standards of behavior that are required, our students are given the clear message that all people must be treated in the same way they would like to be treated. The Ahern Middle School currently uses Second Step in grades 6-8 and Caring School Communities in grade 5. Starting in the 2018-2019 school year, we are enhancing connection to the Ahern community and understanding differences by offering a grade 5 orientation program called WEB.

## WEB Program (Boomerang Project)

“WEB, which stands for ‘Where Everybody Belongs’ is a middle school orientation and transition program that welcomes 5th graders and makes them feel comfortable throughout the first year of their middle school experience. Built on the belief that students can help students succeed, the program trains mentors from the 8th grade class to be WEB Leaders. As positive role models, WEB Leaders are mentors and student leaders who guide the 5th graders to discover what it takes to be successful during the transition to middle school and help facilitate 5th grade success. This is a year-long transition program with four components:

- **Middle School Orientation** - WEB Leaders and 5th graders start building the mentor relationship and receive information about how to be successful in middle school
- **Academic Follow Ups** - WEB Leaders support 5th grade academic success and character development through classroom visits
- **Social Follow Ups** - WEB Leaders and 5th graders connect outside the classroom at social events to increase student engagement and promote positive school climate
- **Leader Initiated Contacts** - WEB Leaders connect with their 5th graders on a more individual basis”

# **V. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY**

## **A. Cafeteria Guideline for Ahern Students**

The cafeteria should be viewed as a large dining room. The same behaviors we expect at home should carry over at school. **Food must not leave the cafeteria.**

### **In the cafeteria, students will:**

- Behave in an appropriate manner
- Select one seat for the entire lunch period
- Clean their table and floor areas
- Dispose of trash properly
- Enter and exit the cafeteria in an orderly fashion

- Not throw objects or food
- Not make excessive noise
- Not push or cut in the lunch line
- Not move from table to table
- Not use electronic devices (iPads, etc. Phones are not permitted.)

**Students who do not meet behavioral expectations are subject to consequences that may include, but are not limited to, removal from the cafeteria, detention, or suspension.**

## **B. Lockers**

Each student is assigned his/her own locker. If there are any problems, they should be reported to the homeroom teacher or to the main office.

It is important to remember certain things about your locker:

1. **Keep your locker combination to yourself! Valuables should not be left in the locker! All personal items should be placed in lockers when not being used.**
2. Keep your locker clean.
3. Keep your books and clothing toward the rear of the locker. If things get caught in the door hinges it makes the locker difficult to open.
4. Do not preset your locker so that you only have to lift the handle or move it to one number to open. This is like leaving a key in a locked door.
5. If you receive a top locker that you can't reach, report it immediately to your homeroom teacher so that it can be changed.
6. If anything goes wrong with your locker and you are unable to operate it properly, report it to the secretary in the main office.
7. Do not kick your locker in order to close it.
8. Lockers may be searched with a reasonable cause.
9. Students can go to their lockers only during those times designated by the teaching teams. In general, this should only occur before school, before and after lunch, and at the end of the school day.

## **C. Transportation**

### **1. Buses and Bus Conduct**

Students in our system who ride a bus to school are subject to regulations while riding on the school bus. **All the rules and regulations in the Ahern School Code of Conduct apply while on a school bus and waiting for the bus.**

**Any misbehavior that distracts the driver is a very serious hazard to the safe operation of the vehicle and jeopardizes the safety of all passengers. Behaviors which would not be allowed on school buses include: failure to remain seated, refusing to obey the driver, throwing objects on or out of the bus, or hanging out the windows of the bus, behaving disrespectfully to students or driver, profanity. Misbehavior on the bus will be treated with consequences as though it occurred in school. Loss of bus privileges may also occur.**

Every school bus driver has a copy of the Ahern School Code of Conduct. Violations of safety procedures and other inappropriate behavior will be reported to the Principal and Assistant Principals. Bus drivers will issue warnings to students and assign new seats if necessary. Serious disciplinary infractions will be handled by the Principal and Assistant Principals.

*Students are assigned to ride on a specific bus for the ride to and the ride home from school.*  
**Students may not take an unassigned bus.**

## 2. **Late Bus**

Late buses begin operating Monday - Thursday a week or two after the opening of school. The buses leave the school at 3:30 p.m. Bus routes are posted. Late bus routes differ from regular bus routes.

**NOTE:** There are no late buses the day before vacations, the third Thursday of the month, due to staff meetings, and on Fridays.

## 3. **Walkers, Bikers, Boarders, Bladers**

Students going to and from school represent the Ahern Middle School. The rules of the school apply during this time. Please respect the property of others and use safety precautions.

All bikes should be chained to the bike racks that are provided.

## 4. **Drivers**

Cars should enter the Ahern School from the Chestnut Street entrance and either park or let people off following signs and directions of the teachers and/or crossing guards on duty. The first car in line should pull up to the sign to allow 7 cars the ability to discharge passengers safely and quickly. At no time should parents drive into the teacher lot to drop off students. At the beginning of school students can enter at the front circle. People entering the building after 8:05 a.m. will have to enter the administrative entrance, door #1. Please follow the signs and directions of our staff when dropping off and picking up your children.

**The front circle is used as a fire lane. It is important that everyone respect the parking and traffic restrictions and posted signage.**

## D. **Fire Drill Conduct**

A fire drill is conducted with certain rules for the safety of all. Each student is expected to walk out and remain quiet for further directions.

## E. **Corridor Passes/Bathroom Sign Out**

Bathroom sign out sheets are available in each room. Once a student has permission from the teacher to use the restroom, he/she should print his/her full name and the times left and returned on the bathroom sign-out sheet. If a student leaves the room for any other reason, a written pass from the teacher is necessary.

## F. **Lost and Found**

If a student loses a book or piece of clothing, the first place to look for it is the main office. Many articles of clothing, musical instruments, etc. are left unclaimed. Students and parents are urged to check with the lost and found collection in the main office.

### **G. Visitors**

All visitors to the school must sign-in in the main office and receive a visitor's pass. Students cannot bring friends from other schools with them to visit for the day.

### **H. Field Trips**

All chaperones must have an approved CORI on file before going on a field trip.

When attending a field trip, our students represent the Ahern School to the public. At these times, students should be on their best behavior. Students attending field trips must be given permission by their parents/guardians before attending. Disciplinary issues may result in a student being unable to attend a field trip.

## **VI. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

Positive student commitment and behavior are essential for effective learning. It is expected that students will conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect the core values of the school; learning is the central purpose of school, respect for human differences and responsibility for personal behavior. Students are expected to fulfill the behavioral expectations of the school community and to:

- Be prepared mentally and physically for the process of learning.
- Demonstrate respect for people and property.
- Take responsibility for personal behavior and learning.
- Use time and other resources wisely
- Meet the unique requirements of each class.

## **VII. RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The rights and responsibilities for all students and staff members must be respected at all times. In an effort to strive for excellence, it is important for students to be aware of the basic rules and regulations that govern these rights and responsibilities. Failure to adhere to the rules and regulations within the school building, on the school grounds, on the school bus, and at school sponsored events will result in disciplinary action.

In addition to teacher reports of inappropriate behavior, students may report these behaviors to any staff member with whom they feel comfortable: teacher, guidance counselors, assistant principal, or principal. Students may also fill out a Mediation form or Bully Report Form, which can be found in the Guidance office. These reports will be investigated.

### **A. Courtesy and Following Directions**

Students must be respectful of each other and of all adults in the building. Rude, disrespectful, and discourteous behaviors are intolerable regardless of the particulars of the situation **and may result in disciplinary action.**

A student is considered to be insolent or insubordinate if they refuse to obey a reasonable request made by a teacher or staff member.

### **B. Classroom and School Environment**

1. Students are expected to adhere to the rules of each classroom and in all areas of the school. It is a very serious matter to interfere with the educational process by being disruptive in class or by creating disturbances in and around school. Behavior which disrupts the educational process may have consequences. These include, but are not limited to:



- Inappropriate classroom behavior
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Making excessive noise
- Misuse of equipment
- Wearing hats, hoods or other informal head coverings
- Causing unsafe conditions
- Ignoring reasonable request by a staff member
- Disrespectful behavior
- Inappropriate language
- Intentionally derogatory statements
- Physical altercation
- Verbal harassment or intimidation
- Threats.

**Failure to abide by these behavioral rules/expectations will result in progressive discipline.**

Based upon the nature of the disturbance, the range of discipline responses may include:

- a. Office Detention
  - b. In-School Suspension
  - c. Out of School Suspension
2. Students are expected to follow the Cafeteria Guidelines during lunch as outlined in the Student Handbook.
  3. To leave the classroom students must ask permission from their teacher and sign out from their room. Students must carry a pass in the hallways.
  4. Pushing, shoving, running, **excessive noise**, and "play-fighting" are forms of unacceptable behavior.
  5. Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate behavior in school.
  6. **Cell Phones and All Other Electronic Devices**  
Due to the potentially disruptive nature of electronic games and electronic apparatus such as; remote control items, digital cameras, **smart watches**, etc., students are not permitted to bring such items to school unless expressly requested and supervised by staff.
  7. The Ahern Middle School recognizes that our students are beginning to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, iPods, iPads, laptops, cell phones, etc.) as part of their daily lives and as part of their education. We also recognize that there can be educational benefits inherent in these devices if the devices are properly monitored and supervised by an educational professional. Because of this, **electronic device usage in the classroom is left up to the teacher's discretion.** Students in grades 7 and 8 are allowed to bring their laptop and iPad, however, the school is not responsible for loss or theft. Students in grades 5 and 6 should refrain from bringing devices to school.

**The use of electronic devices including cell phones outside the classroom (ex: cafeteria, hallways, etc.), during the school day, without direct staff supervision, is NOT permitted.**

**Parents are requested to observe school instructional hours and refrain from texting students during the school day. Texting students during this time is disruptive and can cause the student to be put in a difficult situation. A message can be given to the office and will be given to students during lunches.**

**In grade 8, cell phones are used frequently with direct staff supervision for in-class assignments. Following this supervised use, grade 8 students must power off their cell phones and put them away before moving to the next class. Cell phones should not be in-hand at any time outside the direct supervision of staff.**

**When requesting a hall pass, students will leave cell phones in their possession on the teacher's desk in exchange for the pass. (Though phones should normally be in lockers unless requested for use by the teacher.)**

- Ear buds may not be used in the hallways during the school day as they may block the hearing of necessary/important information and is a safety hazard.
- When not in use, students should place their electronic device in his/her locker or book bag with the power turned off.

If the devices are used during school hours other than with teacher permission, during the lunch period, or during study, the following consequences will occur:

**Discipline Response:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Incident:** Warning - Student is informed by staff member that next offense will result in **an office referral** and a phone call home.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Incident:** Referral to the office. Meeting with administration and phone call home.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Incident:** Electronic device is confiscated, a referral written, and a parent will pick up the device.

**4<sup>th</sup> and Subsequent Incident:** Student will receive a one day suspension for each occurrence.

*Personal electronic devices such as cell phones, iPad, iPod, laptops, kindles and the like, **are the responsibility of students** who must adhere to their limited use at school. **The school does not assume responsibility for misuse, loss, etc.***

The following guidelines apply to all students on school property or at school sponsored events:

1. The use of the camera, video or audio features on any personal electronic device may not be used other than for an education purpose under the supervision of a staff member. Unauthorized postings of any student, teacher, or faculty member in any online forum may result in disciplinary action or legal consequences. It is a felony to record any individual without their consent.
2. Students may use electronic devices during classes ONLY with teacher permission.
3. **The Ahern Middle School is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged personal items, including personal electronic devices. Lost, stolen, or damaged items should be reported to administration and may be reported to the Foxborough Police Department.**
8. *Students may not use features of phones such as the voice recording or camera features on school premises, on the bus, at bus stops, or at school sponsored events. This invasion of privacy can have serious consequences.*
9. The Foxborough Public School District uses security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the safety of students, staff and visitors as well as to protect School District property. Security cameras are installed and used in locations deemed appropriate by the Superintendent in consultation with the Foxborough Police Department. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings, where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy, and may be used at any time.

Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School District policies will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, *in accordance with the disciplinary procedures set forth in the Student and Staff Handbooks*. Violations of the law may be referred to law enforcement agencies and video evidence may be provided to those agencies by the Superintendent.

Please refer to School Committee policy ECAF for more information.

### **C. Tardiness, Cutting Class, and Truancy**

1. State law, Chapter 222, 603 CMR 53.00, mandates school attendance and every student, parent or guardian is expected to be in compliance with this law. **On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of absence, parents may be contacted by school administration.**
2. Students are responsible for reporting to all assigned classes on time and supplying a valid written explanation for any absence or tardiness.
3. Cutting class or skipping school is a serious offense. It is a double offense in the sense that students are away from what is being taught and also usually somewhere they should not be. Any student absent from an assigned class or other activity without permission may be suspended.
4. Tardiness to school, unless it is determined as legitimate by school administration (i.e. doctor's appointment), will result in detention. **On the day after the 4<sup>th</sup> day of tardiness a student will be given a detention.**

### **D. Care of Building and Property**

1. Everyone at the Ahern Middle School should take pride in the appearance of our school.
2. Staff and administration at the Ahern have been impressed with the level of responsibility that students have recently exhibited. This policy may end at any time if it becomes disruptive to the educational process.

Gum chewing will be permitted if students adhere to the following practices:

  - Gum must not be seen or heard. (No snapping, popping, etc.)
  - Gum must be discarded in a trash can wrapped in paper.
  - Gum must not annoy fellow students, teacher, or interrupt instruction.

Students who chew gum who do not follow the above are subject to consequences.
3. Food, drink, and candy are only permitted in designated areas and at designated times. Food and beverages, other than water in a closed container, are not permitted outside the cafeteria. Morning beverages (e.g. Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, etc.) must be finished and disposed of before entering the building.
4. Students will be held responsible for the repairs or replacement of school property in the event of theft or vandalism. Further consequences may also be imposed including non-participation in field-trips/activities.
5. A student is responsible for the books and materials that are issued to her/him. Students must pay for lost or damaged books and materials.
6. **Group spaces are an extension of the classroom. These areas must be kept clean and free of clutter.**

## E. Honesty and Integrity

1. Students will be held responsible for standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work and in their dealings with teachers and fellow students.
2. Cheating, plagiarizing written material or electronic media, and forging or misrepresenting a parent or school document is prohibited. Classroom teachers have authority to impose their own rules, so long as they are stated in writing, and due process is provided.

a. **Cheating** includes, but is not limited, to the following:

- communicating with another student during a test, quiz, or any other form of evaluation
- copying or allowing copying in any testing situation
- copying or allowing copying of homework, class work, projects, or other material unless specifically allowed by the teacher
- using unauthorized notes or electronic devices attempting to cheat
- submitting falsified information for grading purposes
- obtaining a copy of information about an examination and/or giving information about any examinations without the knowledge of the teacher

b. **Plagiarism** includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- presenting, as one's own, words, works, or opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment
- borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement

*The following are examples of plagiarism:*

- failure to document with quotation marks any material copied directly from another source
- failure to provide an appropriate bibliographic attribution
- use of another's work as one's own, particularly in the creative arts (e.g. themes, poems, musical compositions, or artwork)

c. **How Can Students Avoid Plagiarism?**

To avoid plagiarism, a student must give credit whenever a student uses the following information:

- another person's ideas, opinion, or theory
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawing or any pieces of information that are not common knowledge
- quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words
- paraphrases of another person's spoken or written words.

Students should be very careful to copy direct quotes exactly when taking notes from another source. Remember, any paraphrasing of another's words and/or ideas must also be given credit.

d. **Discipline Response:**

Violation of Academic Integrity will result in the following disciplinary action:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense - The teacher will hold a conference with the student regarding the infraction.
  - The student(s) who committed the violation will receive a zero for the test, paper, or assignment in which the violation occurred.
  - The student(s) **generally will not** have the opportunity to make up the test, paper or assignment.
  - The teacher will notify the parents and document the incident with a referral to the main office. The referral form will be kept in

the student's discipline file.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - On the second and further offenses, during the student's entire middle school career, students will receive the above responses, as well as, a referral to the administration for disciplinary action.

## **F. Physical Violence, Verbal Intimidation, and Profanity**

1. Physical violence and verbal intimidation or threats directed toward any member of the school community are not tolerated. Each instance will be treated as a serious disciplinary offense.
2. Hazing means any conduct or method of initiation by a student group which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. A student participating in hazing will be subject to disciplinary action.
3. The use of abusive, obscene, or profane language, gestures, and printed or electronic media is not permitted.

## **G. Smoking, Drugs, and Alcohol – Illegal and Banned Substances**

The possession and/or use of tobacco products, alcohol, or other drugs in school or on school property are forbidden for health and safety reasons. The Ahern Middle School is committed to creating a learning environment free of any illegal substances. Cigarettes, alcohol, electronic vaping devices, and drugs of any kind are harmful to students and can create a safety concern for others.

The following items are expressly prohibited:

- Tobacco Products, Including Cigarettes, Cigars, Dip, Lighters, Matches, etc.
- Tobacco Possession/Distribution/Influence
- Alcohol Products
- Alcohol Possession/Distribution/Influence
- Electronic Smoking Paraphernalia
- Electronic Smoking Devices
- Drug Paraphernalia
- Illicit or Prescription Drug Possession/Distribution/Influence

Consequences of possession or use may be as follows: Suspension, parent meeting with administration, and referral to SRO. Anything found/confiscated during a search will be given to the SRO. It is possible that the infraction may warrant a hearing with the building principal for further consequences up to and including expulsion. Progressive discipline will be applied to students who repeat offenses.

### **First Offense Suspensions:**

- Tobacco products/electronic smoking products, possession, and use: 5-Day Suspension
- Alcohol products, possession, and use: 5-Day Suspension
- Drug products, possession, and use: 10-Day Suspension

## **H. Weapons**

1. Students are forbidden to bring weapons or explosives of any kind, including but not limited to guns, knives, firecrackers, and cap guns. Replicas of any type of dangerous weapons are also forbidden.
2. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H  
“(a) Any students who is found on school premises or at a school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.”

## **I. Fire Safety**

Starting a fire (regardless of size), tampering with any part of the fire alarm system, and using fire extinguishers unnecessarily are prohibited. Matches, lighters and other incendiary materials are prohibited. **Aerosol cans (such as used for deodorants) are prohibited.**

## **J. Bus Safety**

All students are expected to adhere to the guidelines in the Ahern School Bus Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## **K. Dress Policy**

It is our belief that school is akin to a place of business for students: the business of teaching and learning. As such, dress is expected to be in good taste, appropriate for academic work and consistent with safety standards. Student dress is a matter of personal pride as well as an indication of respect for the learning environment. Thus, clothing such as pajamas and beach attire are not appropriate for school. While clothing styles will change over time and specific articles of dress and accessories will emerge and require further review, we provide the following general guidelines:

- a. Clothing that displays offensive, profane language or inappropriate images (including logos for substances that minors may not purchase or use) may not be worn.
- b. Hats, hoods or head coverings of any type, except those worn for religious or medical purposes, shall not be worn.
- c. Heavy outer coats should not be worn in the building. Light fleece tops can be worn. Coats, caps, and visors should be placed in the student's locker at the beginning of the school day.
- d. Garments that do not sufficiently cover the torso, chest, legs, or back are not appropriate.
- e. Garments must be opaque and not see through.
- f. Any display of undergarments is prohibited. Pants or shorts must be worn so as not to expose underclothing.
- g. Footwear must be safe and not pose a problem for walking. Oversized footwear (i.e.: slippers and other footwear) that is excessively floppy is not considered safe. "Wheelies" are unsafe and not permitted.
- h. Backpacks may not be carried around the school unless otherwise instructed.

Any student dressed inappropriately will be advised of the unsuitability of the items of clothing. A student may be asked to change his/her dress before returning to class and this may necessitate a phone call home.

Students violating the dress policy on a chronic basis will be sent home for the day and will not return without a parent conference.

## **L. Phone Use**

1. Use of school/room phones during the school day will be permitted at the teacher's discretion. Going into an empty classroom to use a phone is not allowed. **Calls to a parent of an important nature, may also, be made in the cafeteria during lunch.**
2. Cell phone use is not permitted in school unless directed by a teacher for an education purpose.

3. *We will not interrupt instruction during the day to give information to students. During lunch we will attempt to get all messages to students.*

## **M. Computer Use**

In order to use a school computer, students must sign that they have read the Foxborough Schools Computer Acceptable Use Policy. Computer use is limited to assignments for the class the student is in. Misuse of the computer will, at the very least, result in the loss of computer privileges.

## **N. HARASSMENT**

Harassment is annoying, threatening, or unwanted behavior causing fear and/or limiting another's behavior and actions. Harassment dehumanizes and causes pain to the individuals or group being attacked. It is taken very seriously and it is expected that all students will treat each other with respect. Harassment can include:

- **Verbal harassment** involves words that hurt and/or humiliate, including, but not limited to; teasing, name calling, and/or insults. The following are categories of verbal harassment:
  1. Careless hurtful remarks appear to be thoughtless rather than malicious; repetitive "careless hurtful remarks" are probably not thoughtless, but in fact may be "verbal or written teasing/taunting" (see below).
  2. Verbal or written teasing/taunting is the expression of language which is deliberately hurtful to a target's feelings, and can either be made directly to the target or within his/her or other children's hearing or sight.
  3. Verbal or written threats or taunts are explicit remarks threatening future harmful behavior. Encouraging such harassment is also a type of verbal harassment.
- **Physical harassment** involves physical actions that are hurtful. The following are categories of physical harassment:
  1. **Physical threats** include physical gestures used to convey to a target that s/he will be hurt, such as but not limited to raising a clenched fist or drawing a finger across the throat.
  2. **Physical aggression** involves physically touching a target in a hurtful way that is unlikely to cause injury, including, but not limited to, pinching, pulling off hats, grabbing books, and/or blocking one's way. Taking or damaging someone's property is another form of physical aggression.
  3. **Physical attacks** include, but are not limited to, pushing, shoving, kicking, hitting, punching, or pinning down.
- **Relational harassment** involves convincing one's peers to exclude or reject certain persons and cut them off from their social connections.

Verbal, physical, and relational harassment is bullying if it also meets the three criteria identified in the definition of bullying (below).

## **O. BULLYING**

"Bullying" is systematically or chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. Bullying may involve but is not limited to:

1. unwanted teasing
2. threatening/intimidating behavior
3. stalking or cyberstalking
4. cyberbullying

5. physical violence
6. theft or destruction of school or personal property
7. sexual, religious, or racial harassment
8. public humiliation
9. social exclusion, including incitement and or coercion
10. spreading of falsehoods or rumors

**Student behavior must meet three criteria to be considered bullying:**

1. The behavior is repetitive. If a behavior occurs only once, it may constitute harassment, but it is not bullying.
2. The behavior is either unwanted, offensive, threatening, insulting, or humiliating; or the behavior causes the target to feel stressed, injured or threatened to the point that it impacts his/her educational experience or affects the school environment.
3. There is an imbalance of power between the target and the aggressor. Children who engage in peer aggression have more power than the target. The power advantage may be due to social status, age, size, and/or popularity.

**HOW TO REPORT HARASSMENT OR BULLYING**

Any suspicion of harassment or bullying should be reported. A student, or the parent/guardian of any student, who has been a target of harassment or bullying, or who has witnessed, or who has a reasonable belief that harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity should promptly report the incident(s) to a classroom teacher, principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, or school nurse.

If a student is not sure whether or not an incident constitutes harassment or bullying, he/she should speak to any of the above school staff members.

Upon receipt of an oral or written complaint, the principal or designee will investigate and will take appropriate disciplinary action.

**DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR HARASSMENT AND BULLYING:**

When a report is filed the following steps are followed:

- Administrative intervention
- Parent/police notified
- Referral to police for possible prosecution
- Out of school suspension

**P. ANTI-HAZING**

**Massachusetts Hazing Law: M.G.L. Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18, 19)**

**Section 17.** Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one, [sic] year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other



brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

**269:18 FAILURE TO REPORT HAZING.**

**Section 18.** Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

**Section 19.** Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team, or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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

## **Q. Students Charged With/Convicted of a Felony**

(Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H ½)

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

## **VIII. CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO ABIDE BY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The consequences for breaking school rules depend on the seriousness of the behavior and the overall disciplinary record of the individual student. Every effort will be made to balance fairness with consistency in the application of this code.

The Ahern disciplinary guidelines and policies include procedures that insure that students receive their due process rights. Any student involved in a disciplinary action is entitled to an opportunity to express their position on the incident leading to disciplinary action and an explanation of the reasons for any actions taken. Teachers, counselors, and administrators make every effort to inform parents of infractions.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Warning
- Parent meeting
- Mediation
- Teacher detention
- Office detention
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion

### **A. Explanation of Consequences**

#### **1. Warning**

If an administrative warning is given, this indicates that the student's behavior is inappropriate and that continuation of this behavior may result in serious consequences.

#### **2. Conferences/Home Contact**

Every effort is made at all levels within the school environment to help students adhere to the academic and behavioral expectations at the Ahern School. Many matters can be more

effectively resolved in conferences that take place with teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, fellow students, and parents/guardians.

3. **Detentions**

Detentions are assigned by teachers or administrators for not following classroom or school rules. Detentions take priority over all other activities.

4. **Classroom Removal**

Unacceptable classroom behavior will be handled in a variety of ways including verbal warnings, conferences, detention, and suspension. Referral to the Office for discipline will be considered a last step and will result in additional consequences.

5. **Community Service**

Students may be required to clean or perform a task as a punishment. Such consequences will be discussed with parents/guardians prior to action.

6. **Police Intervention/Court Involvement**

Some of the behaviors that are not allowed in school are also illegal. In some instances it may be necessary to contact the Foxborough Police and/or file a petition with the court system.

7. **Loss of Privileges**

Chronic office referrals or detentions may result in loss of privileges including, but not limited to, after school activities and field trips.

8. **Failure to Meet Academic Expectations**

Students who earn an “F” for the final grade in English or Math may be required to enroll in a summer academic program in the area of failure. Enrollment fees will be the responsibility of the students and parent(s). Currently the fee is \$250.00 per course.

Students in grade 8 who are experiencing academic difficulty may be supported in a variety of ways, including both in-school support and after school help and support. Additionally, in an effort to optimize academic success and achievement, parent meetings with the school will play a vital role in aligning support services offered.

**Generally, students who complete assignments in a timely manner and who utilize after school extra-help opportunities earn passing grades. Students on the Grade 7/8 Basketball teams must have passing grades in all subjects in order to be eligible and to remain on the team.**

9. **Suspension**

Depending on the circumstances, suspension may be in school or out of school. The Principal or Assistant Principals will attempt to notify parents by telephone of a student's suspension. The reason and date(s) of suspensions are confirmed by mail.

- a. Out-of-school suspension will not exceed ten days. Students who are suspended out-of-school are not allowed on school property throughout the duration of the suspension.
- b. A student who is suspended will not be allowed to attend classes or any school sponsored activities for the duration of the suspension.
- c. Students on suspension will be expected to make up all missing work.

- d. Because suspension disrupts the continuous progress of the child's education, suspension is used as little as possible. However, because it is the responsibility of the school to maintain an atmosphere where all students can reach their potential, this consequence will be imposed.
- e. Chronic misbehavior, no matter the severity of the behavior, may result in suspension.
- f. Re-entry meetings with parents may be required before a student is allowed to return to school.

10. **Exclusion and Expulsion**

The Principal of the Ahern Middle School has the power to exclude or expel a student for behaviors that are outlined in the Educational Reform Act of 1993.

**EXPULSION POLICY** (Required by "Education Reform" Act of 1993)

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

- **Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H**

“(a) Any students who is found on school premises or at a school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C, 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 suspended out of school for 10 days, during which time he/she shall be notified in writing of an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, the principal may 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/her 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) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under Section 21 of Chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residences shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under Section 21 of Chapter 76.

(f) Students are also subject to long term suspension/expulsion by the Principal when charged/convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2.

Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H½ for more than ten consecutive days will have an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress during the period of removal.

## **B. Alternative Interventions**

The school may require or suggest a variety of alternatives to help address particular concerns.

### **1. Mediation**

A student may be asked to discuss an interpersonal conflict with another student in the hopes of resolving the problem before it escalates.

### **2. Support Groups and Classes**

Students with chronic problems may be provided with resources from outside sources.

### **3. Educational Projects**

A student may be asked to do a project that would help him/her to better understand the issue that the school is concerned about.

## **C. Due Process**

Before any consequence is determined, a student has the right to due process in which she/he is given the opportunity to provide his/her “side of the story”.

## **D. Authority**

The Principal or her/his designee has the authority to impose consequences that she/he deems appropriate. In addition, the Ahern School Principal has the authority to impose the provisions of Mass. Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H and 37H1/2.

## **IX. REWARDS**

Through a variety of methods the Ahern School attempts to reinforce the behaviors that reflect our core values. Examples of these methods are as follows:

1. Honor Roll – At the end of first, second and third term, students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who qualify for the Honor Roll are recognized.
2. Grade 8 Class Day Awards
  - ***Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence*** - The Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence award recognizes academic success in the classroom. To be eligible for the award, students must earn a grade point average of 90 on a 100-point scale during grades 6-8 at the Ahern.
  - ***The Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement*** - The purpose of this award is to recognize students who show outstanding educational growth, improvement, commitment, or intellectual development in their academic subjects, including art and music, during their years at the Ahern.
  - ***Citizenship Award*** - This award is given to students who have displayed exemplary respect and responsibility.
  - ***Leadership Award*** - This award is given to students who are consistently respectful and responsible, have the ability to organize to accomplish goals and who are also able to inspire others.
  - ***Edward E. Juergens Award*** - This award is given to a student who, with an unassuming manner, has distinguished him or herself through their hard work and contributions to the school.
  - ***Francis F. Toomey Award*** - This award is for a student who shows leadership, participates in school activities, is a good student, and a contributor to all aspects of the many communities in which he/she belong.
  - ***Joan Haley Award*** - This award is for a student whose work for the school and/or community behind the scenes makes a difference in the lives of everyone.

## SYNOPSIS OF FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND DISTRICT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

### SYNOPSIS OF LAWS

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** Coordinator: Mr. William F. Yukna, School Business Administrator (508) 543-1665

Statute prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This statute ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation in programs or activities receiving federal funds (or the benefits of) on account of their membership in one of these protected categories (42 USC S2000d). This statute has been interpreted to prohibit the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

Dr. Jon DeMarco, Ahern Middle School (508) 543-1610

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** Coordinators: Ms. Michele McCarthy, Burrell School (508) 543-1605

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX requires that schools adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination and have grievance procedures through which students can complain of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. State law requires Massachusetts employers to have a policy against sexual harassment. (M.G.L. Ch 151B, S3A)

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** Coordinator: Dr. Sandra Einsel, Director of Special Education (508) 543-1645

Section 504 provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The regulations implementing Section 504 require that public schools provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in the recipient's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap. (34 CFR 104.33)

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** Coordinator: Mr. William F. Yukna, School Business Administrator (508) 543-1665

The regulations implementing the ADA proved that: "A public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this part, including any investigation of any compliant communicated to it alleging its noncompliance with this part or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by this part. The public entity must make available to all interested individuals the name, office address and telephone number of the employee or employees designated pursuant to the paragraph." (34 CFR 35.107(a))

### EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES LAWS

**Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974** Coordinator: Dr. Amy A. Berdos, Superintendent of Schools (508) 543-1660

This federal statute prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunities to an individual based on certain protected classifications including national origin. It specifically prohibits denying equal educational opportunities by failing to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. (20 USC S 1203(f))

**Mass. General Laws CH. 76, S5 (also known as Chapter 622)** Coordinator: Mr. William F. Yukna, School Business Administrator (508) 543-1665

This state law provides that "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, or sexual orientation.

**Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965** Coordinator: Ms. Susan Shea, Title 1 Director (508)543-1610

Designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. Staff should know that special education students are not deemed ineligible for Title I services simply because they receive special education services. Also, school districts must ensure that Title I funds are not being misused (e.g. referring a limited English proficient student to a Title I program in order to meet the student's language needs rather than providing an ESL program/class).

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

**Chapter 688 (transition planning)** Coordinator: Dr. Sandra Einsel, Director of Special Education (508) 543-1645

School districts file a Chapter 688 referral for students with severe disabilities who will need continued services and supports after their eligibility for special education ceases. School districts must make Chapter 688 referrals at least 2 years before the student is expected to graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This allows time to determine the student's eligibility for adult services and for agencies to include the anticipated cost of services for the student in its budget request that it submits to the state legislature each year.