

# RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

## STUDENT - PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK 2023 – 2024

Welcome to the new school year! We are grateful that you are part of the Ramapo Ridge Middle School family. Please review the important information in this handbook to help ensure that this year is a great year! The middle school experience at “The Ridge” will be a collaborative journey and we look forward to our partnership with you.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to read the handbook with their child(ren) and use the opportunity to foster meaningful conversation regarding the 2023-2024 school year. Whether you are a returning or a new family to The Ridge, reviewing the important policies, procedures, updates/changes, and information included in the handbook is essential.

Please contact the main office at 201-762-2380 with any related questions. You can also access updated information on our school website.

Students and parents/guardians are required to acknowledge that they reviewed the handbook as part of our annual summer questions/permissions. We look forward to learning and working with you.

Brian P. Cory    Suzanne B. Whalen  
Principal        Assistant Principal

### Table of Contents

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	8
ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS	10
ADMISSION CRITERIA TO AN HONORS COURSE – RAMAPO RIDGE	17
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION	10
ANNUAL INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION	19
ATTENDANCE	4
BASIC STUDENT EXPECTATIONS	16
BELIEF STATEMENTS	2
BELL SCHEDULE/BUILDING HOURS	3
BUS REGULATIONS	12
CELL PHONES	12
CHRONIC ILLNESS	4

CO-CURRICULAR AND / OR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	10
COMMUNICATION	8
CONSENT FOR VIRTUAL SETTING FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES	17
CRITERIA FOR HONOR ROLL ACHIEVEMENT	8
DISCIPLINE	11
DISCIPLINE MATRIX	20
DISCIPLINE MATRIX NARRATIVE	12
DRESS CODE	13
EARLY DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY	6
FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS	7
GRADING	8
HALL PASSES	13
HARASSMENT INTIMIDATION, BULLYING	15
HEALTH SERVICES	7
HOME BOUND INSTRUCTION	4
HOME SCHOOL ORGANIZATION	3
HOMEWORK	10
I&RS /504	17
IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS	3
LATENESS	6
LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER	15
LOCKERS	15
LOST AND FOUND	15
LUNCHROOM-CAFETERIA	13
MAHWAH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 5200	5
MISSION STATEMENT	2
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	14
REALTIME GRADEBOOK / REPORT CARDS	8
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS	5
REPORT CARDS	8
SATURDAY DETENTION	12
SCHOOL CLOSING / DELAYED OPENING INFORMATION	7
SCHOOL COUNSELORS	10
SCHOOL DANCES /SOCIAL EVENTS	10
SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS	13
STUDENT COUNCIL	10
STUDENT MEDICATION K-12	7
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	11
STUDENTS' RIGHTS	3
TELEPHONE USE/MESSAGES	14
TEXTBOOKS	15
WELCOME	2

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Suzanne B. Whalen ..... Assistant Principal

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Maureen Lynch ..... Language Arts Supervisor  
Danielle Poleway ..... Math Supervisor  
Dennis Jarvis ..... Science Supervisor  
Courtney Carrelha ..... World Language, ESL,  
G&T Supervisor  
Nikki Van Ess ..... Social Studies Supervisor  
Joseph Cozine ..... Special Education  
Supervisor  
Robert Kalman ..... Supervisor of Technology  
Integration, PreK-12

**RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL  
GUIDANCE**

Grade 6 School Counselor ..... Marykate Coakley  
(201) 762-2394  
Grade 7 School Counselor ..... Cassidy Sarka  
(201) 762-2387  
Grade 8 School Counselor ..... Peter Gangemi  
(201) 762-2388

**WELCOME**

Welcome to Ramapo Ridge Middle School! We are looking forward to a successful and exciting school year for all of you. Our goal is to provide an enriching and inclusive middle school experience for you and to provide a learning environment in which our students build self-confidence, discover interests and passions, develop decision-making and critical thinking skills and grow social skills.

The information contained in this student handbook will provide you with important information about our school. Expectations for student conduct at school and on school campus, traveling to and from school, and at school functions are outlined.

The entire staff is committed to helping and supporting all students meet and exceed expectations, but students must do their part. Students are encouraged to be active learners. Students will achieve their maximum potential by giving the maximum effort in each class. Students are also encouraged to seek advice and assistance from staff members. There are many layers of supports and resources in place for students and their parents / guardians. Information and contacts regarding supports and resources are accessible on the RRMS school website.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Mahwah, derived from the Lenni Lenape *mawewi*, is a place where people and paths meet. Ramapo Ridge Middle School and Mahwah High School are the “meeting place” where various neighborhoods converge as one community. We will ensure that rigorous and relevant curricula will pave the way for challenging and diverse opportunities for all students. Small learning communities will be the vehicle through which we pursue our mission by focusing on strong relationships, learning preferences, performance levels, and interests. Students, staff, parents, and community members will remain dedicated to supporting one another in achieving these essential goals.

**BELIEF STATEMENTS**

We believe that:

- Each and every individual deserves to be respected and valued.
- Diversity and culture enrich learning and our community.
- Communities are identifiable by the words and actions of its members.
- Individuals can have the most impact by sharing their ideas, beliefs, opinions, and perspectives.
- Learning must be relevant, rigorous, and ongoing.
- Accountability and responsibility apply to all stakeholders.

## STUDENTS' RIGHTS

Every student has the right to:

- A safe and respectful learning environment
- An educational experience free of any form of discrimination
- Work towards individual goals and follow their passions

## BELL SCHEDULE/BUILDING HOURS

Each day the building opens at 7:30 AM. Students report to the gymnasium upon arrival. Students are dismissed to homeroom at 7:50 AM. Students are expected to be in homeroom at 8:00 AM. Students who are not in homeroom at 8:00 AM will be marked late.

### Regular Bell Schedule

PERIOD	TIME
HOMEROOM	8:00 - 8:08
1	8:12 - 8:57
2	9:01 - 9:46
3	9:50 - 10:35
4 (LUNCH 6)	10:39 - 11:24
5 (LUNCH 7)	11:28 - 12:13
6 (LUNCH 8)	12:17 - 1:02
7	1:06 - 1:51
8	1:55 - 2:40

### Single Session

PERIOD	TIME
HOMEROOM	8:00 - 8:08
1	8:11 - 8:42
2	8:46 - 9:17
3	9:21 - 9:52
4 (LUNCH 6)	9:56 - 10:28
5 (LUNCH 7)	10:32 - 11:04
6 (LUNCH 8)	11:08 - 11:40
7	11:44 - 12:15
8	12:19 - 12:50

## Two Hour Delay

PERIOD	TIME
HOMEROOM	10:00 - 10:16
1	10:20 - 10:49
2	10:53 - 11:22
3	11:26 - 11:55
4 (LUNCH 6)	11:59 - 12:28
5 (LUNCH 7)	12:32 - 1:01
6 (LUNCH 8)	1:05 - 1:34
7	1:38 - 2:07
8	2:11 - 2:40

## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Attendance.....201-762-2380  
 School Counselors:  
 Gr. 6 Marykate Coakley .....201-762-2394  
 Gr. 7 Cassidy Sarka .....201-762-2387  
 Gr. 8 Peter Gangemi.....201-762-2388  
 Transportation,  
 Tracy Spindler .....201-762-2407  
 Nurse, Kristen Zrebiec.....201-762-2384  
 Affirmative Action Officer,  
 Dennis Fare, Ed.D .....201-762-2405  
 Child Study Offices .....201-762-2287  
 Ramapo Ridge Middle School  
 Main Office .....201-762-2381

## HOME SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

The RRMS Home School Organization (HSO) is an integral part of our school community. The HSO fosters communication in our school community between and among administration, staff, parents/guardians, and students. All Ramapo Ridge parents/guardians and staff are members of the HSO. Membership dues are requested in September.

The HSO convenes meetings throughout the school year. All interested persons are encouraged to attend. The HSO sponsors various events and fundraisers that promote a positive middle school experience. Please visit our school website for HSO information and updates. The HSO page can be found under the "Organizations" tab. We look forward to your active participation in our school community as a member of our HSO.

## ATTENDANCE

The Board of Education requires that the students enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of our state. The educational program is predicated on students being present in school and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.

The regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and their participation in activities with teachers and classmates is a vital component to the learning process.

### **Reporting Absences**

Students are either present, absent, or tardy to class.

There are three options for reporting absences: Realtime Parent Portal, email, or phone call. Please report your student's absence to Ms. Beth Pollock, Attendance Office by 8:30 AM.

To report an absence using the Realtime Parent Portal:

- Log into the Realtime Parent Portal.
- Select Daily Attendance from the menu.
- Click on the blue button called "Report Student Attendance."
- Complete the prompts.
- Click on the Review Attendance Request button to submit.
- This submission will serve as your written note.

To report an absence via email, please email: RRAttendance@mahwah.k12.nj.us by 8:30 AM. Please include a telephone number that you can be reached at for verification purposes; this submission will act as your written note.

To report an absence via phone call, please call: 201-762-2380 (and select prompt 2) or 201-762-2392. If you call, written notes are required within five (5) school days of your return for each instance of absence. These notes should be sent directly to the Attendance Office. Related medical documentation, if applicable, should be submitted to the Health Office.

Students returning from an absence of any duration must provide a written statement, dated, and signed by their parent/guardian, indicating the reason of the absence.

Students who are absent from school cannot participate in or attend extracurricular activities after school or in the evening on the day they were absent. Family vacations taken during days when school is in session are considered unexcused absences and will be indicated as such on school records.

## CHRONIC ILLNESS

A student who has a chronic medical concern that will impact school attendance may be placed on the Chronic Illness List. Forms are available in the Health Office. The physician documentation must state the nature of the concern and that this medical issue impacts school attendance. Documentation must be obtained annually at the start of each school year, or upon new diagnosis.

After verification of this information and submission of a completed parental release form, absences and/or tardiness to school shall be excused pending the submission of a parent note to the Attendance Office within 5 days of the absence or tardiness. The note must refer specifically to the chronic illness and specify the actual dates of absences or tardiness to school. These parental notes will be considered as non-countable medical excuses. Notes not received within 5 days of the absence will remain unexcused absences.

When a student's attendance reflects 10 absences or tardies to school related to the chronic medical condition, the school nurse may contact the student's physician regarding the medical condition and its impact on the student's attendance, and the subsequent loss of instructional time.

## HOME BOUND INSTRUCTION

Medical issues can arise which create the need for instruction outside the classroom. If it is determined by the school medical inspector that a student requires confinement at their residence, a hospital, a convalescent home, or other medical facility for a period of at least two (2) weeks, or if a student is classified as educationally disabled and no other program option is feasible at that time, the home bound instruction procedure can be implemented.

Parents/guardians will be required to provide a current and detailed physician's report, which, includes the diagnosis and a request that the student receive such academic instruction. In addition, parents/guardians will need to furnish their own letter requesting such services as well.

The medical inspector will receive the medical documentation, evaluate it and then make a determination. Once home instruction has been granted, a specific timeline for home instruction will be set. The student will begin to receive home instruction based on instructors' availability.

A student receiving regular education services will receive one (1) hour of home instruction per academic core class and/or foreign language. Students receiving special education services will receive two (2) hours of home instruction per week per academic class.

The Board of Education reserves the right to withhold home instruction under certain specified conditions, as well as restrict information disclosure as delineated in Mahwah Board of Education Policy #2412

## **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

The law provides that:

1. Any pupil absent from school because of a religious holiday may not be deprived of any award or of eligibility or opportunity to compete for any such award because of such absence.
2. Pupils who miss a test or examination because of absence on a religious holiday must be given the right to take an alternate test or examination.
3. To be entitled to the privileges set forth above, the pupil must present a written excuse signed by a parent or person standing in place of a parent.

## **MAHWAH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 5200 STATES:**

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25, every parent, guardian, or other person having control and custody of a child between the ages of six and sixteen shall cause the child to regularly attend school. The Board of Education requires students enrolled in the school district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. In accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C.6A:16- 7.6, a student's absence from school may be excused, unexcused that counts toward truancy, or unexcused that does not count toward truancy.

Students that are absent from school for any reason are responsible for the completion of assignments missed because of their absence. A student who is absent from school for observing a religious holiday shall not be deprived of any award, eligibility, or opportunity to compete for any award, or deprived of the right to take an alternate test or examination that was missed because of the absence provided there is a written excuse of such absence signed by the parent. Prolonged or repeated absences excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive students of the educational and classroom experiences deemed essential to learning and may result in retention at grade level or loss of credit or removal from a course that would count toward the high school diploma in accordance with policies of this Board.

Students shall be subjected to the school district's response for unexcused absences that account toward truancy during the school year as outlined in N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.6(a)4 and Regulation 5200. Unexcused absences from school or from classes within the school day may subject a student to consequences

that may include the denial of a student's participation in co-curricular activities and/or athletic competition. Repeated absences from school interfere with efforts of this Board and its staff in the maintenance of good order and the continuity of classroom instruction and such absences may result in the removal of the student from a class or course of study.

The Superintendent shall calculate and monitor the average daily attendance rate for the district and for each school in the district. Whenever the average daily attendance rate does not meet the New Jersey Department of Education requirements the Superintendent or designee shall develop a district improvement plan to improve student attendance pursuant to N.J. A.C. 6A:30-5.2.

The mere presence of a student at roll call (homeroom) shall not be regarded as sufficient attendance for compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:32-8.3. In a school which is in session during both the forenoon and the afternoon, a student shall be present at least one hour during both the forenoon and the afternoon in order to be recorded as present for the full day. In a school which is in session during either the forenoon or the afternoon, a student shall be present at least two hours in the session in order to be recorded as present for the full day.

Unexcused Absences That Count Toward Truancy/Excused Non-Countable Absences / Unexcused Countable Absences "An unexcused absence that counts toward truancy" is a student's absence from school for a full or a portion of a day for the following reasons:

- Unverified Absence (no documentation or parent contact)
- Cutting school

"An excused absence" is a student's absence from school for a full day or a portion of a day for the observance of a religious holiday pursuant to N.J.S.A.18A:36-14 through 16, or any absence for the reasons listed below:

- The student's illness supported by written verification from a physician upon the student's return to school;
- The student's required attendance in court;
- Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans;
- The student's suspension from school;
- Death in the family supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student's return to school;
- Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day;
- Take Our Children to Work Day;

- An absence considered excused by a New Jersey Department of Education rule;
- Required by nurse to go home;
- Chronic medical condition that has been previously documented by a physician, supported by a written letter submitted by a parent with 5 school days upon the student's return to school.

### **Unexcused Countable Absences**

The following absences are unexcused countable absences. At the secondary level, denial of credit on the thirteenth absence in a full year course; on the seventh in a semester course.

- Family business/vacation with note from parent or guardian upon return to school.
- Occasional illness with note from parent or guardian upon return to school.
- Unverified absence-no documentation with 5 school days.

“Truancy” means ten or more cumulative unexcused absences that count toward truancy of a student between the ages of six and sixteen as determined by the Board’s Attendance Policy and Regulation pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:16-7.6(a)4.iii. and the definition of school day pursuant to N.J.A.C.6A:32-

8.3. Any absence not listed in C.2. above shall be an unexcused absence counted toward truancy.

#### **Notice to School of a Student’s Absence**

- The parent or adult student is requested to call the school office before the start of the student’s school day.
- The parent of the student or an adult student who will attend the morning session but will not attend the afternoon session should call or provide notice to the school office before the start of the afternoon session.
- The parent or adult student who anticipates a future absence or anticipates that an absence will be prolonged should notify the school office to arrange make-up work.

#### **Readmission to School After an Absence**

- A student returning from an absence of any length of time must provide a written statement that is dated and signed by the parent or adult student listing the reason for the absence.
- A note explaining a student’s absence for a non-communicable illness for a period of more than 5 school days must be accompanied by a physician’s statement of the student’s illness with medical clearance to return to school.

#### **Grade Kindergarten Through Eight**

When a student’s unexcused countable absences reach the following levels, the procedures are:

- Ten Absences:
  - Letter of concern
- Fifteen absences:

- Letter of Concern/Attendance by parent at meeting
- Twenty absences:
  - Mandatory action by the Principal Mandatory visit by social worker Referral to court; or Retention; or Completion of two courses in approved summer program; or Thirty hours in a tutorial program which encompasses three courses

\*Parents are required to contact the attendance officer by phone on the morning of the day on which an absence occurs indicating if your child is ill or it is a family situation (201-762-2380). Parents are required to follow every absence with a written note.

### **LATENESS**

Punctual arrival to school is the responsibility of each student. You must be in homeroom by 8:00 A.M. Students arriving late must report to the attendance office in the library to sign in and obtain a late pass to class. If a student continues to be late, disciplinary action will be taken.

When a student’s tardiness reaches the following levels, the procedures are:

- Twelve Tardies:
  - Letter by school personnel
- Fifteen Tardies:
  - Denial of recess on the day tardy
- Twenty Tardies:
  - Parent or guardian conference with the Principal
- Twenty-five Tardies:
  - School detention and/or further loss of school privilege

Routine medical appointments before school are “countable” tardies.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Every effort should be made to schedule appointments for students outside of school hours. An early dismissal should be requested only when no other reasonable alternative is available. If you know in advance that you will need to sign your child out early, please email Beth Pollock, bpollock@mahwah.k12.nj.us and Cheryl Epstein, cepstein@mahwah.k12.nj.us. If you prefer to submit a handwritten note, please have your child drop it off at the Main Office upon their arrival to school.

Please indicate reason for the early dismissal and include a phone number to contact a parent/guardian for verification. To ensure the safety of our students, no student will be released early without such a note or a direct telephone call from a parent/guardian. A parent/guardian must sign a student out in the school

counseling office. Please try to avoid last minute requests or pop-in requests for an early dismissal. Please note: In order for a student to be marked present for the school day, they must be present at least 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the afternoon.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING / DELAYED OPENING INFORMATION**

When weather conditions prevent us from opening schools at the regular time, the following procedures will be put into effect:

1. Announcement of the closing or two-hour delayed opening will be made through the automated One Call Now notification system and our website: [www.mahwah.k12.nj.us](http://www.mahwah.k12.nj.us)
2. On a delayed opening day, students who use bus transportation should report to their assigned bus stop two hours later than usual. Transportation will be provided.
3. On delayed opening days, all schools will provide a cafeteria lunch, but the menu may change.
4. Please do not call the local police.

### **FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS**

We conduct monthly fire and emergency drills to prepare students and staff for various emergency situations. Students should follow the direction of their teacher or staff member. Teachers will review specific guidance for each drill with students at the beginning of the school year as well as throughout the school year at the beginning of marking periods and cycles. Parents/Guardians will be notified after we run our monthly emergency drills.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school health program has been designed to improve, protect, and promote the health of the school children. Please note the following important aspects of the health program. If you have any questions pertaining to the health program, please call our school nurse, Kristen Zrebiec, BSN RN 201-762-2384.

### **STUDENT MEDICATION K-12**

We consider it important to remind you of our district policy (#5330) concerning the administration of medication to students. The policy reads in part as follows:

“The administration of prescribed medication to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the student or the student would not be able to attend school if the medicine were not made available to

him/her during school hours. For purposes of this policy, 'medication' shall include all medicine prescribed by a doctor.”

In order to comply with this policy, we ask you to follow these steps:

1. Try to schedule the medication so that it can be given before the child leaves for school and/or after the child returns home.
2. If your doctor requests that medication be given in school, please note:
  - \* The medicine should be brought to the school by a responsible adult in the original container.
  - \* You must give written permission for the medicine to be administered by the nurse. The certified school nurse or parent/guardian is the only person permitted to administer medications in the schools (ruled on by Commissioner of Education in September 1981).

When the nurse is not available you will have the option of coming to school to administer the medicine yourself. If your child has to use an inhaler or an EpiPen, he/she may now carry it if the proper form is on file in the health office. This form may be obtained from the nurse.

\*You must also send to the school a written order by the prescribing physician including the dosage, the time at which the medication shall be administered, the length of time for which the medication is prescribed, and the possible side effects of the medication.

In addition, please note that the school nurse cannot administer over-the-counter drugs, such as Tylenol, aspirin, cough medicine and decongestant tablets, unless written under a doctor's prescription.

DO NOT give any child medication to take him/herself. We ask you to follow these steps for the protection and wellbeing of your child and other children if the medication should fall into the wrong hands. This policy applies to all school related activities.

### **RELATED HEALTH SERVICES**

1. Physical examinations are recommended for all 6th grade students and are required for new students. All physicals must be done by your own provider (doctor, advanced practice nurse, or a physician's assistant).
2. Students will be measured and weighed yearly.
3. Students will have a hearing screening in 6th, scoliosis screening in 7th grade, and vision screening in 8th grade.

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORMS**

The annual Emergency Medical Information forms must be updated each September by all families. They must be completed and returned during the first week of school. The form is accessible on our school website under Ramapo Ridge Daily Announcements.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We encourage parents/guardians to maintain open communication with their child's teacher. Please visit the Effective Communication section under the "Parents" tab on our school web site. If you would like to schedule a conference with a teacher and/or with your child's team, please email the appropriate teacher / team leader or call the office to request an appointment.

One of the best ways to maintain communication with your teachers is via e-mail. We use the One Call Now system to communicate information. Our school website is also regularly updated with information.

At Ramapo Ridge and Mahwah High School, you have instant access to how your child is performing in school through the Realtime Parent Portal. The students also have a Student Portal. The portals provide parents/guardians and students with access to grades, report cards, progress reports, assignments, documents, etc. To access the portal, click on the Realtime link on our school website.

## **GRADING**

Students are assigned numerical grades in their assigned classes. Students must earn a 65 or higher to earn a passing grade. If a student fails three or four of the following classes: language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics as their final grade for the year, he/she must either retake those courses and pass two of the three in an out-of- district summer school program or be retained at that grade level.

### **FIRST MARKING PERIOD**

September 6, 2023 – November 8, 2023

### **SECOND MARKING PERIOD**

November 13, 2023 – January 26, 2024

### **THIRD MARKING PERIOD**

January 29, 2024 – April 12, 2024

### **FOURTH MARKING PERIOD**

April 15, 2024 – June 20, 2024

## **REALTIME GRADEBOOK / REPORT CARDS**

Access to your child's progress is at your fingertips each day. Students and parents can log into the Real Time Portal to view homework and assignments each day. Additionally, grades on assignments including tests and quizzes are viewable daily. At the midpoint and end of each marking period, comments and the class average

on that date is made available. Report Cards and Progress reports are not mailed home, as this access is available daily. A final report card will be mailed at the end of the school year that includes all marking period grades.

## **CONDUCT GRADES**

- S Satisfactory - a student who conducts him/herself in a mature responsible manner.
- N Needs Improvement - a student who sometimes conducts him/herself in a mature, responsible manner.
- U Unsatisfactory - a student who often does not conduct him/herself in a mature, responsible manner.

## **CRITERIA FOR HONOR ROLL ACHIEVEMENT**

High Honor Roll All numeric grades of 90 or above and conduct grades of S in all classes.

Honor Roll All numeric grades of 80 or above and conduct grades of S in all classes.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Ramapo Ridge Middle School is committed to the intellectual and moral development of its students. Development in these areas will be realized through the personal honesty of each student and the bond of mutual trust that exists between and among faculty and students.

Our expectation is that students will fulfill all course requirements by work that is the exclusive product of their own effort, without unauthorized help from any other person or source.

### **Examples of Cheating**

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents mastery of material on an assessment or assignment. Some examples of cheating are:

- Copying from another student's work, including homework.
- Using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, online resources/online translator, or notebook during an assessment.
- Using specifically prepared materials such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an assessment.
- Attempting to give or receive assistance, or otherwise communicate with another person about an assessment, during or after its administration. Students who are suspected of



engaging in such behavior may receive a warning. If a student continues to engage the concerning behavior after the warning, or if the teacher is sure information has been shared, the behavior will then be considered cheating.

- Referring to, looking through, or working on an assessment, or assessment section, other than during the timed testing period for that assessment or assessment section.
- Presenting work (i.e., projects, artwork, written assignments) completed by someone other than yourself and/or with the use of an online resource/online translator as your own work.
- Using text written by an A.I. platform and submitting it as your own work.
- Submitting identical or significantly similar assignments to previously submitted work.

### Examples of Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct is an act of deception by which a student violates assessment security protocols/procedures. Some examples of academic misconduct include:

- Leaving the testing room without permission.
- Attempting to remove any part of the assessment or any notes relating to the assessment from the testing room.
- Allowing another student to copy work and/or sharing answers, including sharing work electronically.
- Attempting to take the assessment for someone else.
- Breaching test security by creating a disturbance during an assessment.
- Bringing an activated cell phone, MP3 player, camera, pager, Apple watch, or PDA into the testing room.
- Utilizing an unauthorized electronic device (including wireless e-mail devices or cell phones) during the administration of an examination, test, or other class assessment.
- Bringing and/or utilizing an unauthorized calculator into the testing location.
- Encrypting written work to prevent electronic review of that work by a teacher or computer program.
- Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct such as photocopying, texting, removing part of or an entire assessment from the classroom or testing location without permission, or selling work/answers.

**Plagiarism** occurs when a person represents someone else's words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one's own work.

- Plagiarism is defined as stealing or use without acknowledgment of the ideas, words, formulas,

textual materials, on-line services, computer programs, etc. of another person, or in any way presenting the work of another person as one's own.

- When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate and specific citations.
- Plagiarism is prohibited in all forms of academic work.

### Fabrication

Fabrication refers to the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

- Citing information not taken from the source indicated.
- Citing of sources in a "works cited" that were not used or consulted.
- Altering, stealing, and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations.
- Submitting as one's own academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another's identity.
- Falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

***When cheating, academic misconduct, plagiarism, or fabrication occurs*** - A zero for the academic work (assignment, project, assessment, etc.) will be recorded as the grade.

When a teacher deems that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, the teacher will communicate with the student and department supervisor. The teacher and department supervisor will meet with the student to discuss and review the situation. The teacher will notify the student's parent/guardian.

As with all matters of discipline, students have rights of due process. These include notice of the charge, statement of the evidence, hearing the student's explanation, and the right to appeal. A written appeal may be made by the student to the department supervisor within ten (10) school days.

All incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the principal and recorded as part of a student's disciplinary record. Students may be removed or barred from holding or being a candidate for any leadership position where character, honesty, or integrity are stated or implied qualifications, including athletic teams and clubs. Additionally, the student may be denied or lose membership in the National Honor Society, subject-area honor society, or Student Council. Any further incidences involving academic integrity will be referred to the principal for additional disciplinary measures.

(Note: Some of the preceding material is adapted from [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com))

## **SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

Each student is assigned a grade-level school counselor. The school counselors remain with their cohort of students until the students are promoted to high school. School counselors support students in all aspects of the middle school experience and during these important years of students' lives. Our school counselors collaborate with their counselees and parents/guardians in promoting and fostering academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development. Students and parents/guardians can request appointments with their school counselor by emailing or calling the school counselor directly.

## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

It is the policy of the Mahwah school district not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status in its educational programs or activities and employment policies as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, N.J.A.C. 6:14-1.1 et seq. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Affirmative Action Officer:

Dr. Dennis Fare, Assistant Superintendent  
60 Ridge Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430  
201-762-2405

## **ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents or eligible students have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education records.
- Seek to amend the student's education records if they believe they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of privacy rights.
- Give consent before personally identifiable information in the records is disclosed, except to the extent that FERPA and its regulations authorize the disclosure without consent.
- File a complaint with the DOE concerning alleged violations of FERPA or its regulations. (BOE Policy 8330).

Parents/Guardians may arrange to review cumulative records pertaining to their children by calling the principal. Records of students who have been evaluated by the district Child Study Team may be reviewed at the Child Study offices by calling 201- 762-2287.

## **CO-CURRICULAR AND / OR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Co-curricular and/or extracurricular activities are an important component of the middle school experience. These activities promote and support special interests and social activities and are supervised by school personnel. It is understood that participation in these activities is a privilege. Students who demonstrate an inability to adhere to the code of conduct and who do not meet general school expectations may be ineligible to participate in these activities.

A list of available clubs, athletic teams, and activities is accessible on our school website. Students are encouraged to get involved with all that RRMS offers, including activities beyond the classroom!

## **SCHOOL DANCES /SOCIAL EVENTS**

The Student Council and Home School Organization (HSO) sponsor school dances and social events throughout the school year.

Students who demonstrate an inability to adhere to the code of conduct and who do not meet general school expectations may be ineligible to attend such dances/events.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

The Student Council provides an opportunity for members to develop leadership skills and to promote school spirit and pride. Elections are held early in the school year for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. In addition to the officers, representation in the Student Council is included from each grade level and homeroom. The Student Council engages in service activities in partnership with various outside organizations and serves as a liaison between administration and students. The Student Council sponsors activities throughout the school year such as dances, spirit days/weeks, and other social events.

## **HOMEWORK**

Teachers will review expectations for homework, including where to check for assignments and the process for submitting completed assignments. In general, students who complete homework assignments are successful in their classes. Students are encouraged to manage their time and review their upcoming assignments. Procedures for accepting late assignments, as well as the grade impact for late assignments are determined by individual teachers and supervisors.

If a student is absent due to illness, the number of days out equals the number of days a student is allowed to hand in an assignment beyond the due date without penalties.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are responsible for their words and actions. The right to a free public education carries with it corresponding obligations and duties to respect the rights of others and adhere to the school code of conduct. Students have a responsibility in creating a learning environment that is safe, inclusive, and healthy for others.

The following list highlights some of the responsibilities RRMS students are expected to fulfill:

- Attend school and classes regularly and on time.
- Follow the procedures and rules that have been established for the cafeteria, library media center, classrooms, hallways and lockers, locker rooms, bathrooms, hallways, buses, field trips, dances, and social events etc.
- Listen and follow the direction of school staff members.
- Remain respectful of both fellow students and staff members at all times.
- Respect school and personal property.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Discard paper and litter in the appropriate designated receptacles.
- Remain on school grounds during school hours.
- Adhere to the dress code and dress appropriately. (See Dress Code page 13/14)
- Be prepared for each class (pencil/pen, paper, laptop/charger, and other required materials).
- Do not bring the following items to school: knives, chain drive wallets, smoke bombs, poppers, firecrackers, toy pistols, water pistols, cigarettes, matches, or lighters.
- Do not use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.
- The New Jersey State Board Association endorses the Comprehensive Tobacco-Free School Policy #5121.6, which prohibits all tobacco use all the time, anywhere, by anyone, on all school property, and at all school sponsored events.
- Do not fight, threaten, harass, or bully others. (See Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying page 15).
- Do not destroy, deface, or vandalize school property.
- Do not use profane, obscene, or insulting language or gestures at any time.
- Do not sell any merchandise to other students including candy, cookies, etc. without administrative permission for an authorized function.

- Do not carry food or drink from lunch outside of the cafeteria.
- Refrain from chewing gum on school property.
- Use your inside voice in the building; do not yell, shout, or scream in the building.
- Do not skateboard, rollerblade, or use motorized transportation devices on district and school grounds.
- Leave all toys and non-school issued technology at home (i.e. personal gaming devices, personal music devices, other electronic devices, etc.)
- Secure hats and coats in your lockers until dismissal time.
- Secure cellphones in your locker until dismissal time (see Cellphones pg. 12)
- Audio or video recording of any kind and taking pictures is prohibited during the school day, in the school building, on school transportation, or at school events.
- Secure backpacks in your locker until dismissal time. All students are permitted to visit their lockers between classes in order to put away or retrieve their materials. Backpacks should not be carried during the school day.

## **DISCIPLINE**

- Appropriate behavior in school is a cooperative effort and, for the most part, a matter of common sense. If a student were to adopt the policy that the main purpose of school is education and strive toward that goal, disciplinary problems would not exist. Students must understand that failure to meet their responsibilities will carry consequences.
- Students must always exercise self-discipline to the extent that they do not interfere with the rights of others. Any form of behavior or conduct which is disruptive not only prevents individual learning, but almost always interferes with the learning opportunities of others and, therefore, will not be tolerated. Any student who has been referred to the school administration via a written disciplinary referral or who has been sent to the Time Out room for disciplinary reasons will have administered consequences and/or will have privileges revoked.
- Emphasis must always be given to helping students develop the necessary self-discipline that will allow them to be productive students and citizens. They must be reminded that their actions always reflect on themselves, their family, their school, and their community.

## **DISCIPLINE MATRIX NARRATIVE**

The Ramapo Ridge Middle School Discipline Matrix (final pages of this handbook) is intended to be used as a general guideline when the school administration needs to address student behavior. These consequences may vary depending upon the nature and/or severity of the individual circumstances and situation, at the discretion of the administrator. A combination of outlined consequences may be administered if the incident falls into more than one category. Students will always be provided due process; this is commonly known as the opportunity to explain their side of the situation.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted throughout the process. In the unlikely event that a fourth offense is documented, the school administration will determine the appropriate response. Any inappropriate student behavior not indicated on the matrix will be handled at the discretion of the school administration. Disciplinary situations will be documented in the school management system. In addition to the consequence imposed, in most situations, students will be guided through a restorative practice to help him/her understand who has been wronged and what needs to be done to make things right.

## **SATURDAY DETENTION**

A student who does not attend an assigned Saturday detention will serve lunch detention until such time that the Saturday detention is served. Students may be prohibited from participating in or attending additional school activities/events until their assigned Saturday detention is served.

School rules are expected to be adhered to during Saturday detention. A warning will be given if a student chooses to violate any of the Saturday detention rules/expectations. If a student does not follow the rules and regulations after a given warning, the administration will be informed, and an additional Saturday detention will likely be assigned.

## **CELL PHONES**

Students are not permitted to use any type of cellphones or similar devices during the school day or when in the school building. Cellphones must be turned off and secured in lockers while the student is in the school building. Audio and video recording of any kind and taking pictures is prohibited during the school day, in the school building, on school transportation, or at school events. Cellphones and similar devices (including laptops) are prohibited in locker rooms and bathrooms. Additionally, no video images or audio recordings of

any students or staff members may be taken without the permission of the supervising staff members.

Students who use cellphones and are found to be in violation of policy #5516 may be referred to the administration. Staff members reserve the right to confiscate a student's cellphone if they deem it necessary and appropriate to do so, depending on the situation they are addressing. If a staff member confiscates a cellphone, they will turn the cellphone over to the administration with an accompanying disciplinary referral.

## **BUS REGULATIONS**

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. While buses are in operation, the bus drivers have the same authority as teachers - including the assignment of seats, supervision of conduct, and if necessary, the removal of a student from the bus and the reporting of such action to the principal's office. Students are only to ride on the bus to which they have been assigned. Students may not ride to school or home from school on a friend's assigned bus under any circumstances.

In the interest of both safety and good citizenship, Ramapo Ridge students are expected to adhere to the following bus regulations:

- Be on time. Stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Respect the right of property owners near the bus stop.
- Behave responsibly and avoid pushing, shoving, and other careless behavior while waiting for the bus and while entering or leaving the bus.
- Keep seated at all times while bus is in motion.
- Keep arms and head inside the bus and do not throw objects out the bus window.
- Obey the driver at all times and do not distract him/her.
- Use courteous language and a normal tone of voice; loud and vulgar language is never acceptable.
- Audio or video recording of any kind and taking pictures is prohibited on school transportation.
- Respect all property. Any damage to the seats or other equipment by the students must be paid for by that student.
- Students who cause disturbances while riding buses to/from school will be subject to the following procedures:
  1. A first offense will result in appropriate disciplinary action and a conference with the student, his/her parent or guardian, and the vice principal/principal.
  2. A second offense will result in the student being prohibited from taking the bus for a minimum of one day and a conference with the student, his/her

parent or guardian, and the vice principal / principal.

3. A third offense will result in the student not being permitted to travel on the bus for a week and possibly for the remainder of the school year.

The administration reserves the right to deviate from steps 1-3 as they deem appropriate for the specific situation.

### **SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS**

There will be various opportunities for students to participate in class trips throughout the year. All trips will require a signed permission slip; some may require a cost to the student. Students who do not participate in a class trip will be provided with a regular school day program. Although field trips are an extension of the curriculum, participation is a privilege.

Students who have displayed inappropriate school behavior during the year and who have multiple failing grades may be ineligible to attend the class trip.

### **LUNCHROOM-CAFETERIA**

Funds can be deposited directly onto the child's school ID card via Pay Schools Central. Please visit our school website for details about this cashless system. Having funds on student ID cards makes it very easy for students to navigate our lunch lines in an efficient manner. Parents/Guardians also have the ability through the system to monitor what their child is purchasing in our cafeteria. Please see the letter and link on our school web page.

Lunch period is a time for students to relax, enjoy their food, and to talk with friends. Students should plan to eat a balanced lunch every day.

Consideration for others, common courtesy, good manners, and respect for cafeteria procedures are expected of students at all times. Some guidelines to follow during lunch period are:

- Eat your lunch with good manners.
- Show courtesy and respect to the lunchroom staff and aides.
- Dispose of remaining food and paper materials in the garbage cans provided. Recycle glass, juice boxes, and other items if possible.
- Take pride in leaving the table and floor in a clean condition for others.
- Do not take food or drink out of the cafeteria.
- After eating, plan to go directly to the recess activity area, depending on the weather and/or programs.
- Students are to remain seated during the course of the lunch period unless they are purchasing food or discarding their garbage.

- Students must obtain permission to leave their seats for any other purpose.
- Students must have a pass to leave the cafeteria.

### **HALL PASSES**

During classes an effort is made to keep student movement to a minimum, to avoid disruption of teaching and learning. Students are required to have a pass when they are out of the classroom except between classes. If students must leave the room, they are expected to request permission from the teacher and obtain a pass. The pass permits students to go from the room to the approved destination and return. A hall pass does not permit students to make any unauthorized stops along the way. Students must sign out on the proper sheet upon leaving the classroom. Students are not permitted in the hallways without a pass while classes are in session.

### **DRESS CODE**

Parents/Guardians have the primary responsibility for determining appropriate dress and grooming for their children. While it is not the intent of these regulations to override parent or student decisions in the selection of clothing styles that frequently change and reflect personal taste, it is necessary to have guidelines and limits of what will be permitted within the school environment. Of paramount importance in this dress code is the health and safety of the students and the avoidance of distractions to the educational process.

The purpose of these dress code regulations is to have standards for what is acceptable dress and grooming within the educational setting. In addition, the guidelines are designed to encourage a style of dress and grooming that is conducive to establishing a positive climate for teaching and learning. Mahwah Township Public Schools is committed to improving the school environment for students, staff, and the community. Dressing appropriately for school reflects a positive image of our uniqueness and lends dignity to our most important task at school—teaching and learning. It allows us to recognize the demands of society regarding professional dress and makes a distinction between school (work) and recreational activities.

The following guidelines for student dress are provided in order to encourage an atmosphere which respects the opportunities for learning to which every student is entitled. All students are expected to dress appropriately while attending school. Good taste and common sense

should prevail. In addition, school regulations prohibit pupil dress or grooming practices that:

- Are hazardous to health or safety
- Interfere with schoolwork
- Disrupt or distract the educational program
- Advocate illegal or unhealthy behavior
- Contain inappropriate pictures or words
- Cause excessive wear or damage to school property
- May be offensive to the school community

The following guidelines are examples of, but not limited to, unacceptable attire as per Board of Education Regulation #5511:

Shredded, ripped, or cut-off clothing, bare midriff tops, see-through clothing that exposes the torso or any other part of one's anatomy, including half shirts and muscle shirts. Underwear that is visible, beachwear, low cut tops, halter and backless tops, cut-out shirts and pants, tight fitting clothing, tank tops (including oversized basketball jerseys) and tops with straps less than 2" are not permitted. Additionally, tube tops, strapless tops or spaghetti straps worn without an outer shirt are not permitted. Students should keep in mind that clothing should not be too revealing.

Any clothing or patches that have writing or pictures that include the following are not permitted:

- References to violence
- Racist comments
- Anti-religious references
- Profanity
- Sexual connotations or double messages
- Tobacco, alcohol, or drug use
- Patches or decorations that could be construed as offensive or obscene
- Clothing, apparel, and/or accessories that may be construed as gang-related are strictly prohibited.
- Tops and shirts must be long enough so that the midriff is not exposed.
- Skirts, dresses, and shorts that end higher than 5" from the top of the knee are not permitted. An easy check is to see if your fingers can touch the skin of your leg when standing straight.
- Pants are expected to be worn at or above the waist and are not to expose undergarments.
- Shorts and sweatpants that have writing on the seat are not permitted. Shoes must be worn at all times. Heeleys (sneakers with wheels in them) cannot be worn.
- Bare feet, unsafe footwear, shoes with cleats, flip flops, and slippers are prohibited.
- Headwear: Hats, sweatbands, visors, do-rags, bandanas, hoods of any kind, and all other head coverings are prohibited. Head coverings worn for

religious reasons must be approved in advance by a school administrator.

- Sunglasses and tinted non-prescription glasses are not permitted except as prescribed by the student's physician.
- For health and safety reasons, heavy chains, studded collars or bracelets, and other choke collars are not permitted.

Students are expected to cooperate courteously when faculty and/or administration require compliance with these guidelines for appropriate dress. Students who do not comply with the dress code guidelines will be asked to change/adjust/alter clothing so that they are in compliance. This may include a student waiting out of class (unexcused) in the main office while a parent/guardian brings their son/daughter acceptable clothing.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students are required to wear appropriate athletic attire for physical education classes. Sneakers are required. Physical Education classes may be held outdoors, so students should be prepared with sweatpants and sweatshirts on days with cooler temperatures. Jewelry is prohibited in physical education class, including post earrings. It is recommended that students avoid having ears pierced when they are assigned for a physical education class. Students will be issued a lock for PE class. Locker rooms are available. When using locker rooms, students must be responsible to store and lock personal belongings in his/her assigned locker. Students will be graded on preparation (35%), participation (35%), and tests /projects (30%). A written note from the parent must be provided to the school nurse to be excused from physical education class. A physician's note is required for any extended period of time.

## **TELEPHONE USE / MESSAGES**

It is imperative that the telephones in the main office are available to office personnel at all times. In the event that an emergency call needs to be made or received, these phone lines cannot be tied up with students making or receiving personal phone calls. This applies to student use of the phone during the school day as well as after school. Student use of the main office telephone will be limited to emergencies only. A student wishing to use the main office telephone to call home in order to make after school plans does not constitute an emergency. These types of plans should be made in advance. If, however, after

school plans need to be adjusted due to the cancellation of a school function or activity, accommodations can be made.

In the event that a parent/guardian must get an important message to their child during the school day, please call the main office. We will make every effort to forward all messages to students. However, we will not permit classroom instruction to be disrupted by calling students to the office to receive a phone call during class. Nor will students be called to the office during the changing of classes prior to a regular class period, as they risk arriving late to class, and thus, disrupting and missing ongoing instruction. Students will be called to the main office during the changing of classes prior to their lunch period to receive any messages from parents. We will also call students to the main office to receive messages at dismissal. This procedure will also apply to parents dropping off lunch money or lunch, as well as projects, assignments, etc. Our priorities must focus on classroom instruction for all students without disruption.

### **LOCKERS**

Each student is assigned a hallway locker at the beginning of the school year. Since lockers are school property and may be opened and inspected by school personnel, only school authorized combination locks can be used. Students will be issued a lock each year and must return them at the end of the year. A fine will be assessed for locks not returned.

- DO NOT give out your locker combination to anyone.
- Before walking away from your locker, you should make certain that it is locked by closing and spinning the dial.
- Lockers are not to be shared with other students.
- Valuables and money should not be kept in lockers
- Lockers must be kept clean and in neat order. You will be held responsible for keeping your locker clean inside and out.
- Students are only to use the locker to which they have been assigned and must keep the lock on it at all times.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

Issued textbooks are your responsibility and must be cared for. If a book is damaged, marked on, or lost, you will be charged for its repair or replacement. Your report card and/or diploma may be withheld if your obligations are not met. Your teachers will check the

condition of your books at the beginning and end of the school year. For your own protection, you are required to cover all textbooks that are issued to you. Any teacher or administrator can take uncovered books from students.

### **LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER**

A pass is required for all library visits unless an entire class comes with a teacher. A limited number of lunch passes are available to all students daily and may be obtained during homeroom. Passes are to be presented at the checkout desk and each student is required to sign in. Once signed in, students are not permitted to leave the library without permission.

Students may sign out reference books after all classes have ended and these must be returned the next morning before classes begin. The use of our library is a privilege all of our students enjoy; and like all privileges, it comes with certain Responsibilities. Please help to keep borrowed books clean and safe. If a borrower loses and/or damages library materials, he/she will be issued a fine.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Have you lost something? Lost and Found items are located in the cafeteria and in the main office. If students lose an article, they should check both locations. If students find an article belonging to another individual, they should bring the item to the Main Office.

### **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING**

The Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a pupil. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe and disciplined environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication (“Electronic communication” means a communication transmitted by means of any

electronic device, including, but not limited to: a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager), and that:

1. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
2. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
3. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion of pupils, as set forth in the Board's approved Code of Pupil Conduct pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1. Consequences for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of problem behaviors and performance and must be consistent with the Board's approved Code of Pupil Conduct and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7, Student Conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, protect and provide support for the victim of the act, and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

## **BASIC STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

Students have an essential role in creating and sustaining a safe and respectful learning environment.

The following basic student expectations will help students to successfully embrace this role:

1. Arrive to school and class on-time. This includes limiting time in between periods to the designated built-in passing time reflected on the bell schedule.
2. Secure personal items in assigned locker during the school day. Examples of personal items include backpacks, cellphones, hats, food/drinks (except during assigned lunch period).
3. Food/Drink should only be consumed in the cafeteria during the school day. Students should not eat/drink in the gymnasium when they report to school in the morning.

4. Attend and remain in-class (including homeroom). If students are not in-class, they are expected to be able to communicate which staff member granted them permission to report to another specific destination. Wandering and loitering in the hallways are prohibited.
5. Walk at all times in the hallways and respect the personal space of others. Students must keep their hands and feet to themselves.
6. Maintain conversational voices and appropriate language at all times.
7. Use garbage and recycling receptacles in our school and on our campus.
8. Respect school property. Examples include refraining from touching or writing on hallway displays/bulletin boards, defacing/vandalizing desks, computer stations and laptops, or bathroom walls/stalls. Take care of our home.
9. Be prepared for each class. Being prepared includes having all necessary materials/resources, completing, and turning in all assignments and projects by their due date, and studying/reading as assigned.
10. Allow kindness to guide conversation and inform behavior at all times. Foster a community of kindness.

Staff members will respond to initial incidents in which the above basic student expectations are not adhered to/met.

Response to initial incidents will include the staff member speaking with the student and reporting the incident to the appropriate school counselor and/or case manager if warranted.

If a staff member addresses repeated "basic expectations" incidents with a student, the staff member will contact the student's parent/guardian regarding the incidents.

After responding to more than three "basic expectations" incidents involving a student, the staff member will refer the student to the Principal and/or Assistant Principal.

If the Principal and/or Assistant Principal receive referrals for a student from multiple staff members, the Principal and/or Assistant Principal will engage Team Leaders to initiate a holistic review of the student's progress/status, which may include a complete team meeting including Administration and/or student's school counselor and/or child study team member.

Consequences for "basic expectations" incidents will be progressive as determined by Principal and/or Assistant Principal. Consequences may include lunch detentions, Saturday detention, revocation of privileges (including attending school activities and class trips), in-school and out-of-school suspension. Students are expected to



review the Discipline Matrix Narrative (page 11) and Discipline Matrix (pages 20- 27) which outlines incidents which initiate an automatic referral to the Principal and/or Assistant Principal.

### **CONSENT FOR VIRTUAL SETTING FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES**

During online virtual settings, students may be visible/audible to other participants (students and Mahwah staff) in the conference session using available technology. Expectations during virtual learning environments for students can be found at [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KqkbGgqXOyfARp\\_ji\\_suQF6b-DPLI98Wg/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KqkbGgqXOyfARp_ji_suQF6b-DPLI98Wg/view) . Further, we expect that the content/videos that will be used in these learning experiences will not be copied, altered, or redistributed by any of the students taking part in that session. It is our expectation that our students will follow our code of conduct in order to ensure a successful and productive learning experience. Participants can/will be removed from a session if deemed necessary, and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken by building administration.

### **I&RS / 504**

The Intervention and Referral Services Team process is a proactive one. Comprehensive and well- coordinated prevention and early intervention approaches have proven to be effective in enabling school communities to decrease the frequency and intensity of youth behavior problems. A key to the success of our I&RS team interventions and operations is the maintenance of an emphasis on the dynamics of the process. The goal of every I&RS action plan is to maximize the chances for short and long term success. As necessary, to achieve the desired outcomes, a plan needs additional work, and therefore, the emphasis on process. The intervention and referral services procedure was developed by the state board of education providing standards for the delivery of intervention and referral services for pupils in the general education program. Under N.J.A.C. 6:26-2.1(a) school districts are required to provide building- based functions in support of intervention and referral services for general education pupils.

By design, the I&RS Team invites requests for assistance from school staff or parents. I&RS programs are intended to be used as a primary mechanism in a school building for assisting general education staff and expanding their skills and abilities to successfully accommodate the needs of increasing numbers of students in the general education program who are at

risk for school failure. Requests for help from the I&RS Team for educational problems can be made by any individual who works with students on behalf of the school district, as well as parents.

Special programs for students are conducted at Ramapo Ridge for those who have an identified disabling condition and/or a measurable developmental delay in physical, social, communication, and/or emotional areas, and who may require and would benefit from special education and related services. If you would like to request an evaluation for special education and related services, send a written request for an evaluation to Office of Special Services of the Mahwah Township Public Schools or call 201-762- 2282. After the written request, the child study team will have a meeting with you the parent(s) and determine if an evaluation is needed and what the evaluation will include. To the maximum extent appropriate students with disabilities receive their education with children who are not disabled. Additional information may be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/specialed> or telephone 1-800-322-8174 or TTY: 609-98432.

For those students who suffer from a less-disabling condition, but who manifest a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life function” that is either physical, emotional, neurological, or cognitive, 504 services are available.

### **ADMISSION CRITERIA TO AN HONORS COURSE – RAMAPO RIDGE**

Mahwah High School has asked us to provide the following information regarding academic placement in ninth grade. You will see that your child’s performance in middle school, not only in his/her course work, but also on the NJSLA, are an important part of the criteria for placement in honors classes. Please review the criteria below:

Honors courses require intensive reading, writing computational, and critical thinking skills. In addition, students will be required to complete independent reading and written assignments outside the designated class meeting times. Students must meet all of the following criteria:

#### **HONORS ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS COURSES**

1. Mid-year average of 92% in the present academic English course.
2. **Unit test average** of 88% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods in common assessments/writing. Recommendation of the present English language arts teacher.

3. Demonstrates proficient levels of the Habits of Mind as stated in Compare and Contrast, by Harvey F. Silver, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate persistence, accountability, and maturity
  - Take responsible risks
  - Question and pose problems
  - Remain open to continuous learning and think flexibly
  - Communicate through listening and responding with evidence

#### HONORS MATHEMATICS COURSES

- Unit test average of 90% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods in present academic course.
- Recommendation of the current mathematics teacher.
- Demonstrates proficient levels of the Habits of Mind as indicated in the Standards of Mathematical Practice (NJSLS 2016).

#### Habits of Mind

- ◇ Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- ◇ Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- ◇ Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- ◇ Model with mathematics.
- ◇ Use appropriate tools strategically.
- ◇ Attend to precision.
- ◇ Look for and make use of structure.
- ◇ Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

#### HONORS SCIENCE COURSES

- Unit test average of 90% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods present academic science and mathematics course.
- Recommendation of the present science & mathematics teachers.
- Demonstrates proficient levels of the Science and Engineering Practices as indicated in the Science Framework for K-12 Science Education (2011).

#### Science and Engineering Practices

- ◇ Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering).
- ◇ Developing and using models.
- ◇ Planning and carrying out investigations.
- ◇ Analyzing and interpreting data.
- ◇ Using mathematics and computational thinking.

- ◇ Construction explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering).
- ◇ Engaging in argument from evidence.
- ◇ Obtaining, evaluation, and communicating information.

#### HONORS SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES

- Mid-year average of 92% in the present academic social studies course.
- Unit test average of 88% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods in common assessments/writing.
- Recommendation of the present social studies Teacher
- Demonstrates proficient levels of the Habits of Mind as stated in Compare and Contrast, by Harvey. Silver, students will be able to:
  - ◇ Demonstrate persistence, accountability, and maturity
  - ◇ Take responsible risks
  - ◇ Question and pose problems
  - ◇ Remain open to continuous learning and think flexibly
  - ◇ Communicate through listening and responding with evidence

#### HONORS WORLD LANGUAGE COURSES

- Mid-year average of 93% in the present academic world language course.
- An acceptable performance in an oral proficiency interview and a writing assessment Such as the STAMP test. These will serve as indicators of the student's proficiency at the particular level he/she has completed.
- Recommendation of the present world language teacher.

#### WAIVER PROCESS

Students who meet specific criteria may waive into a higher-level course. One waiver is permitted per year for incoming Grade 9 students.

- ◇ Has earned at least a cumulative average of **88** at the time of recommendation from his/her teacher for the next level honors level.

#### NEW STUDENTS ENTERING FROM OTHER SCHOOLS

New students transferring from other schools are to be accepted into honors courses as follows:

- If no honors section was offered, they must have earned 90% (science, social studies, and world language) or 95% (mathematics, English

language arts) on the final examination and in the last marking period in their previous school; if scores are available, they must meet the requirements as stated above.

2. If an honors section was available, they must have enrolled in that section and must have earned 85% in the last marking period and 85% on the final examination. There may be students who do not meet the criteria for entry into the honors classes but have the potential for success because they are highly motivated. Therefore, after the initial selection process, the counselor may recommend these students to the department supervisor. The supervisor will make the final decision after reviewing their records.

### **Annual Integrated Pest Management Notification**

The Mahwah Board of Education has adopted an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy and has implemented an IPM Plan to comply with this law. IPM is a holistic, preventive approach to managing pests that is explained further in the school's IPM Policy included with this notice. All schools in New Jersey are required to have an Integrated Pest Management Coordinator (IPM Coordinator) to oversee all activities related to IPM and pesticide use at the school. The IPM Coordinator for the Mahwah Township Public School District is Mr. Gregory Romero (201) 762-2402 at 60 Ridge Road, Mahwah, NJ, 07430. The IPM Coordinator maintains the pesticide product labels, and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) (when one is available), to each pesticide product that may be used on school property. The label and the MSDS are available for review by a parent, guardian, staff member, or student attending the school. The IPM Coordinator is available to parents, guardians, and staff members for information and to discuss comments about IPM activities and pesticide use at the school.

A copy of Mahwah Township Public School's IPM Policy can be found online at: <https://www.mahwah.k12.nj.us/Page/1809>

<b>Student Behavior</b>	<b>Offense Occurrence</b>	<b>Warning/Conference</b>	<b>Detention 1-3 days</b>	<b>Detention 4-10 days</b>	<b>Temporary Removal from class (Time Out Room) or bus</b>	<b>Saturday Detention – 2 hour</b>	<b>Saturday Detention – 4 hour</b>	<b>In School Suspension 1-3 days</b>	<b>In School Suspension 4-10 days</b>	<b>Out of School Suspension 1-3 days</b>	<b>Out of School Suspension 4-10 days</b>	<b>Confiscation / Restitution</b>	<b>Police / NJ Violence Report Filed</b>	<b>Prohibited from next Social Event (dance, variety show, field day, etc)</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Abusive language, gesture or behavior directed toward staff</b>	1st				X					X				X	
	2nd				X						X			X	
	3rd				X						X			X	
<b>Aggressive physical behavior resulting in injury to another</b>	1st						X							X	X
	2nd							X						X	X
	3rd									X				X	X
<b>Aggressive recess behavior</b>	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
<b>Assault</b>	1st									X			X	X	
	2nd										X		X	X	
	3rd										X		X	X	X
<b>Harassment/ Intimidation / Bullying</b>	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	** 15 **
<b>Breaking in to another student's locker</b>	1st		X											X	
	2nd					X								X	
	3rd							X						X	
<b>Breaking / vandalizing the property of another student or teacher</b>	1st			X										X	X
	2nd						X							X	X
	3rd							X						X	X

<b>Student Behavior</b>	<b>Offense Occurrence</b>	<b>Warning/Conference</b>	<b>Detention 1-3 days</b>	<b>Detention 4-10 days</b>	<b>Temporary Removal from class (Time Out Room) or bus</b>	<b>Saturday Detention – 2 hour</b>	<b>Saturday Detention – 4 hour</b>	<b>In School Suspension 1-3 days</b>	<b>In School Suspension 4-10 days</b>	<b>Out of School Suspension 1-3 days</b>	<b>Out of School Suspension 4-10 days</b>	<b>Confiscation / Restitution</b>	<b>Police / NJ Violence Report Filed</b>	<b>Prohibited from next Social Event (dance, variety show, field day, etc)</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Bus Misbehavior</b>	1st	X													
	2nd				X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	X
<b>Classroom Disruption/ General Misbehavior</b>	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
<b>Disrespectful / Insubordinate to a faculty or staff member</b>	1st						X							X	
	2nd							X						X	
	3rd								X					X	
<b>Dress Code Violation</b>	1st	X													
	2nd		X											X	
	3rd					X								X	
<b>Emergency Drill / Fire Drill Disruption</b>	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
<b>Fighting</b>	1st						X						X	X	
	2nd									X			X	X	
	3rd									X			X	X	X

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<b>Failure to report to Saturday Detention</b>	1st			X			X							X	
	2nd			X			X							X	X
	3rd			X				X						X	X
<b>Failure to report to teacher detention or lunch detention assigned by administrator</b>	1st		X											X	
	2nd			X										X	
	3rd			X			X							X	
<b>Failure to report to an assigned class including lunch/recess (Purposeful)</b>	1st				X	X								X	
	2nd				X		X							X	
	3rd				X			X						X	
<b>Flipping Locks</b>	1st	X													X
	2nd		X											X	X
	3rd			X										X	X
<b>Gang activity</b>	1st									X			X	X	
	2nd										X		X	X	
	3rd										X		X	X	
<b>Hitting/Smacking/Slapping</b>	1st					X								X	
	2nd						X							X	
	3rd							X						X	

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<b>Inappropriate touching</b>	1st		X											X	X
	2nd			X										X	X
	3rd						X							X	X
<b>Inappropriate use or possession of a technology device (cell phone, MP-3 player, camera, etc)</b>	1st	X													X
	2nd		X											X	X
	3rd			X										X	X
<b>Instigating a fight</b>	1st					X								X	
	2nd						X							X	
	3rd							X						X	
<b>Instigating or participating in a food fight</b>	1st				X	X								X	
	2nd				X		X							X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
<b>Leaving a class without permission or before dismissal (including lunch/recess)</b>	1st				X	X								X	
	2nd				X		X							X	
	3rd				X			X						X	
<b>Leaving School Grounds</b>	1st							X						X	
	2nd								X					X	
	3rd									X				X	

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<b>Lying and/or Withholding Information</b>	1st			X										X	
	2nd					X								X	
	3rd						X							X	
<b>Misbehavior in Lunchroom/ Recess</b>	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X	X								X	
<b>Misbehavior at a school function (dance, play, field trip, field day, etc)</b>	1st					X								X	X
	2nd						X							X	X
	3rd							X						X	X
<b>Misbehavior for a substitute teacher</b>	1st					X								X	
	2nd						X							X	
	3rd							X						X	
<b>Misbehavior in Time Out Room or any other detention</b>	1st			X										X	
	2nd						X							X	
	3rd						X							X	
<b>Obscene / insulting language, gesture or behavior</b>	1st			X										X	
	2nd						X							X	
	3rd							X						X	



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<b>Pantsing</b>	1st						X							X	X
	2nd							X						X	X
	3rd								X					X	X
<b>Possession of prohibited items</b>	1st			X										X	
	2nd					X								X	
	3rd						X							X	
<b>Possession or sale of illegal items</b>	1st										X	X	X	X	
	2nd										X	X	X	X	
	3rd										X	X	X	X	X
<b>Punching</b>	1st						X							X	
	2nd							X						X	
	3rd									X				X	
<b>Pushing / Shoving</b>	1st	X													
	2nd		X											X	
	3rd						X							X	
<b>Scuffle</b>	1st						X							X	
	2nd							X						X	
	3rd									X				X	

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<b>Spitting</b>	1st		X											X	
	2nd					X								X	
	3rd						X							X	
<b>Switching lunches without permission</b>	1st	X													
	2nd		X											X	
	3rd					X								X	
<b>Theft</b>	1st						X					X	X	X	
	2nd							X				X	X	X	
	3rd									X		X	X	X	
<b>Threatening to harm another student or teacher</b>	1st							X					X	X	
	2nd								X				X	X	
	3rd									X			X	X	
<b>Throwing an object that may / did cause harm</b>	1st						X							X	
	2nd							X						X	
	3rd									X				X	
<b>Vandalism to another student's or teacher's property</b>	1st					X						X	X	X	
	2nd						X					X	X	X	
	3rd							X				X	X	X	

Student Behavior	Offense Occurrence	Warning/Conference	Detention 1-3 days	Detention 4-10 days	Temporary Removal from class (Time Out Room) or bus	Saturday Detention – 2 hour	Saturday Detention – 4 hour	In School Suspension 1-3 days	In School Suspension 4-10 days	Out of School Suspension 1-3 days	Out of School Suspension 4-10 days	Confiscation / Restitution	Police / NJ Violence Report Filed	Prohibited from next Social Event (dance, variety show, field day, etc)	Other
	Vandalism to school property	1st						X					X	X	X
	2nd									X		X	X	X	
	3rd										X	X	X	X	