

RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT - PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK 2024 – 2025

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 2024-2025 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
Principal

Suzanne B. Whalen
Assistant Principal

Table of Contents

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	10
ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS	12
ADMISSION CRITERIA TO AN HONORS COURSE – RAMAPO RIDGE	20
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION	12
ANNUAL INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION	21
ATTENDANCE	4
BELIEF STATEMENTS	2
BELL SCHEDULE/BUILDING HOURS	3
BUS REGULATIONS	14
CELL PHONES	14
CO-CURRICULAR AND / OR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	12
COMMUNICATION	9

CONSENT FOR VIRTUAL SETTING FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES	19
CRITERIA FOR HONOR ROLL ACHIEVEMENT	10
DISCIPLINE	13
DISCIPLINE MATRIX	22
DISCIPLINE MATRIX NARRATIVE	13
DRESS CODE	15
EARLY DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY	7
FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS	7
GRADING	10
HALL PASSES	15
HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING	18
HEALTH SERVICES / MEDICATION	7
HOME INSTRUCTION	4
HOME SCHOOL ORGANIZATION	3
HOMEWORK	12
I&RS /504	19
IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS	3
LATENESS	7
LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER	17
LOCKERS	17
LOST AND FOUND	18
LUNCHROOM-CAFETERIA	15
MAHWAH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY 5200	5
MEDICAL/ILLNESS PROCEDURES	4
MISSION STATEMENT	2
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	16
REALTIME GRADEBOOK / REPORT CARDS	10
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS	5
REPORT CARDS	10
SATURDAY DETENTION	14
SCHOOL CLOSING / DELAYED OPENING INFORMATION	7
SCHOOL COUNSELORS	11
SCHOOL DANCES /SOCIAL EVENTS	12
SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS	14
STUDENT COUNCIL	12
STUDENT MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION	8
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES	12
STUDENTS' RIGHTS	3
SUMMARY OF BASIC STUDENT EXPECTATIONS	18
TELEPHONE USE/MESSAGES	17
TEXTBOOKS	17
WELCOME	2

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RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Brian P. Cory Principal
Suzanne B. Whalen Assistant Principal

RAMAPO RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT SUPERVISORS

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

WELCOME

Welcome to Ramapo Ridge Middle School! We are looking forward to a successful and exciting school year. Our goal is to provide an engaging and inclusive middle school experience and to provide a learning environment for students to build self-confidence, discover interests and passions, decision-making and critical thinking skills and develop social skills and healthy relationships. The information contained in this student handbook provides 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.

Our 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 healthy, safe, and respectful learning environment
- An educational experience free of any form of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying
- 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 8)	10:39 - 11:24
5 (LUNCH 7)	11:28 - 12:13
6 (LUNCH 6)	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 8)	9:56 - 10:28
5 (LUNCH 7)	10:32 - 11:04
6 (LUNCH 6)	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 8)	11:59 - 12:28
5 (LUNCH 7)	12:32 - 1:01
6 (LUNCH 6)	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 Peter Gangemi.....	201-762-2388
Gr. 7 Marykate Coakley	201-762-2394
Gr. 8 Cassidy Sarka.....	201-762-2387
Transportation, Tracy Spindler.....	201-762-2407
Nurse, Kelly Duffield.....	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.

A student is considered chronically absent if they miss ten percent or more of the school days in session for which the student is enrolled.

MEDICAL / ILLNESS PROCEDURES

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. Medical documentation must state the nature of the concern and indicate the impact on 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 parent/guardian 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.

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

HOME INSTRUCTION

Home instruction may be provided when the student is confined to the home or another out-of-school setting due to a temporary or chronic health condition or a need for treatment that precludes participation in their usual education setting.

A parent's request for home instruction shall include a written determination from the student's physician documenting the projected need for confinement at the student's residence or other treatment setting for more than ten consecutive school days or twenty cumulative school days during the school year. The written determination from the student's physician shall be forwarded to the school physician, who shall either verify the need for home instruction or provide reasons for denial.

When the provision for home instruction for a student with disabilities will exceed thirty consecutive school days in a school year, the IEP team shall convene a meeting to review and, if appropriate, revise the student's IEP.

When the provision for home instruction for a student without disability will exceed sixty calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the Child Study Team for evaluation, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14.

If home instruction is approved, a specific timeline and schedule for home instruction will be set and 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 world language. Students receiving special education services will receive two (2) hours of home instruction per week per academic class.

Home instruction may also be provided if:

1. The student is mandated by State law and rule for placement in an alternative education program, but placement is not immediately available.
2. The student is placed on short-term or long-term suspension from participation in the general education program; or
3. A court order requires the student receive instructional services in the home or other out-of-school setting.
4. There is an exclusion from school for non-medical health or rehabilitation related purposes.

The Board of Education reserves the right to withhold home instruction under certain specified conditions, 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 will be excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences will 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 excused or unexcused absences 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.

A student shall be recorded in the school register as present if the student participates in instruction or instruction-related activities for at least half the day in session whether the student is physically on school grounds, at an approved off-grounds location, or in a virtual or remote instruction setting, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-12.

A student shall be recorded in the school register as absent, unless the student is recorded as a State-excused absent pursuant to below. State excused absences shall be as follows:

1. Religious observance, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14, 15, and 16.
 - a. The Commissioner, with approval of the State Board of Education, shall annually prescribe a list of religious holidays on which it shall be mandatory to excuse students for religious observance upon the written request signed by the parent or person standing in loco parentis;
2. Participation in observance of Veterans Day, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-13.2;
3. Participation in district board of election membership activities, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-33;
4. Take Our Children to Work Day;

5. Closure of a busing school district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school.

Absentee and Chronic Absenteeism Rates (N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.6)

A student's absentee rate shall be determined by subtracting the student's total number of days present from the student's days in membership and dividing the result by the student's days in membership.

1. State-excused absences shall not be included in a student's days in membership for purposes of calculating a student's absentee rate.
2. If a student's absentee rate is equal to or greater than ten percent, the student shall be identified as chronically absent.

Unexcused Countable Absences

Unexcused Absences That Count Toward Truancy/Excused Absences for Board Policy

- a. "An unexcused absence that counts toward truancy" is a student's absence from school for a full or a portion of a day for any reason that is not an "excused absence" as defined in B.2.b. below.
- b. "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:
 - c. The student's illness supported by written verification from a physician upon the student's return to school;
 - d. The student's required attendance in court;
 - e. 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;
 - f. The student's suspension from school;
 - g. Family illness or death supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student's return to school;
 - h. Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day;
 - i. Take Our Children to Work Day;
 - j. An absence considered excused by a New Jersey Department of Education rule;
 - k. Field Trips
 - l. Guidance/Child Study initiated appointment;
 - m. Approved athletic competition and performances;
 - n. Scheduled music lessons
 - o. Related services appointments
 - p. Administrative meetings
 - q. Counseling support groups

- r. Required restorative practices/conflict management sessions;
- s. Other critical reasons approved by administration
- t. Required by nurse to go home
- u. Required by nurse to miss class to due illness, injury or required appointment
- v. Testing/course conflicts
- w. Religious observance, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16;
- x. Participation in observance of Veterans Day, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-13.2;
- y. Participation in district board of election membership activities, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-33;
- z. Closure of a busing school district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school;
 - aa. An absence considered excused by the Commissioner of Education and/or a New Jersey Department of Education rule;
 - bb. Chronic medical condition that has been previously documented by a physician, supported by a written letter submitted by a parent or legal guardian within 5 school days upon the student's return to school.

Notice to School of a Student's Absence

1. The parent or adult student shall notify the school office before the school day when the student will not be in school.
2. The parent of the student or an adult student who will attend the morning session but will not attend the afternoon session shall provide notice to the school office before the start of the afternoon session.
3. The parent of a student or an adult student shall notify the school office of a future absence if the absence is foreseeable.
4. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25.6, if a student is determined to be absent from school without valid excuse, and if the reason for the student's absence is unknown to school personnel, the Principal or designee shall immediately attempt to contact the student's parent to notify the parent of the absence and determine the reason for the absence.

Readmission to School After an Absence

1. A student returning from an absence of any length of time must provide a written statement to the Principal or designee that is dated and signed by the parent or adult student listing the reason for the absence.
2. A student who has been absent by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable

disease may be required to present to the school nurse written evidence of being free of a communicable disease.

3. The Superintendent of Schools or designee may require a student who has been absent from school due to a suspension or other reason concerning the student's conduct to receive a medical examination by a physician regarding the student's physical and/or mental fitness to return to school.
 - a. The Superintendent or designee will notify the student's parent of the specific requirements of the medical examination prior to the student's return to school.

Action Taken

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

- Ten Absences:
 - Letter of concern
- Fifteen absences:
 - Attendance by parent at meeting
- Twenty absences:
 - Mandatory action by the Principal (e.g., 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).

LATENESS

Students are expected to arrive to school on time. Students must be in homeroom by 8:00AM. Students arriving late must sign in and obtain a late pass to class. When a student's tardiness reaches the levels below, the following actions will be taken:

- 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
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 / MEDICATION

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, Kelly Duffield, BSN RN 201-762-2384.

Administration of Medication

Please review district policy 5330 and regulation in its entirety.

In order for many students with chronic health conditions and disabilities to remain in school, medication may have to be administered during school hours. Parents are encouraged to administer medications to children at home whenever possible as medication should be administered in school only when necessary for the health and safety of students. The Board will permit the administration of medication in school in accordance with applicable law.

Medication will only be administered to students in school by the school physician, school nurse, a substitute school nurse employed by the district, the student's parent, a student who is approved to self-administer in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.3 and 12.4, and school employees who have been trained and designated by the school nurse to administer epinephrine in an emergency pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.5 and 12.6.

Self-administration of medication by a student for asthma or other potentially life-threatening illness or a life-threatening allergic reaction is permitted in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.3.

All student medications shall be appropriately maintained and secured by the school nurse, except those medications to be self-administered by students. In those instances, the medication may be retained by the student with the prior knowledge of the school nurse.

Students self-administering medication shall report each incident to a teacher, coach, or other individual designated by the school nurse who is supervising the student during the school activity when the student self-administers.

Permission for the administration of medication in school or at school-related events will be given only when it is necessary for the health and safety of the student.

Parent requests for the administration of medication in school must be made in writing and signed by the parent.

The parent must submit a certified statement written and signed by the student's physician. The statement must include:

- a. The student's name;
- b. The name of the medication;
- c. The purpose of its administration to the student for whom the medication is intended;
- d. The proper timing and dosage of medication;
- e. Any possible side effects of the medication;
- f. The time when the medication will be discontinued;
- g. A statement that the student is physically fit to attend school and is free of contagious disease; and
- h. A statement that the student would not be able to attend school if the medication is not administered during school hours.

The request for the administration of medication must be made to the principal or designee prior to any administration of medication or delivery of the medication to the school. The principal or designee may consult with the school nurse and the school physician in making his/her final determination to allow or deny the request.

Permission for self-administration of medication of a student with asthma, other potentially life-threatening illness, or a life-threatening allergic reaction may be granted under the following conditions:

1. Parent of the student must provide the Superintendent or designee written authorization for the self-administration of medication;
2. The parent of the student must also provide the Superintendent or designee with a signed written certification from the physician of the student that the student has asthma or another potentially life-threatening illness or is subject to a life-threatening allergic reaction and is capable of, and has been instructed in, the proper method of self-administration of medication. The written certification must include:
 - a. The student's name;
 - b. The name of the medication;
 - c. The purpose of its administration to the student for whom the medication is intended;
 - d. The proper timing and dosage of medication;
 - e. Any possible side effects of the medication;
 - f. The time when the medication will be discontinued;
 - g. Physically able to attend school; and
 - h. A statement the medication must be administered during the school day or the student would not be able to attend school.
3. The parent of the student have signed a statement acknowledging that the school district shall incur no liability as a result of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication by the student and that

the parent shall indemnify and hold harmless the school district, the Board, and its employees or agents against any claims arising out of the self-administration of medication by the student.

4. The parent's written authorization and the physician's written certification shall be reviewed by the principal or designee with the school nurse and the school physician. The school nurse and the school physician must agree the student is capable of self-administration of the medication. If it is determined the student may self-administer medication in accordance with the request:

- a. The request will be signed by the principal and given to the school nurse and the student's parent;
- b. The parent will be informed of the reason for a denied request; a denied request may be appealed to the Superintendent.

5. Permission to self-administer one medication shall not be construed as permission to self-administer other medication.

6. Permission shall be effective on the school year for which it is granted and shall be renewed for each subsequent school year upon fulfillment of the requirements in 1. through 4. above.

Custodianship of Medication

1. Medications to be administered by the school nurse or a registered nurse:
 - a. All medications must be delivered to the school by the parent.
 - b. All medications must be in the original container, with the prescription information affixed.
 - c. The school nurse shall be custodian of students' medication, which will be properly secured.
 - d. No student may possess medication for self-administration unless the proper permission has been granted by the principal or designee and a record of the medication is on file in the office of the school nurse.
 - e. Students who are permitted to self-administer medications must secure their medication in such a manner that the medication will not be available to other students. The medication must be in a sealed container and clearly labeled with the medication name, dosage, and ordering physician. The medication, if ingested by someone other than the student, shall not cause severe illness or death.
 - f. Students who are permitted to self-administer medications shall only have in their possession the quantity of medication necessary for the time period of the student's school day.

g. No medication shall be administered to or taken by a student in school or at a school-sponsored event except as permitted by Board policy and this regulation.

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

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.

Annual Examinations and Screenings

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. Parents/guardians have instant access to their child’s progress in school through the Realtime Parent Portal. Students also have a Student Portal. The portals provide 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 5, 2024 – November 6, 2024

SECOND MARKING PERIOD

November 11, 2024 – January 31, 2025

THIRD MARKING PERIOD

February 3, 2025 – April 11, 2025

FOURTH MARKING PERIOD

April 21, 2025 – June 24, 2025

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)

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 garbage and litter in the appropriate designated receptacles.
- Remain on school grounds and at assigned locations during school hours.
- Adhere to the dress code and dress appropriately. (See Dress Code, page 15 and BoE Policy 5511 in its entirety)
- 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, stink sprays, poppers, firecrackers, toy pistols, water pistols, matches, or lighters.
- Do not possess, distribute and/ or use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products. (review BoE policies 5530 and 5533 in their entirety).
- Do not fight, threaten, harass, or bully others. (See Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, page 18, and review BoE Policy 5512 in its entirety).
- Do not destroy, deface, or vandalize school property.
- Do not use profane, obscene, or insulting language or gestures at any time.
- Do not distribute or sell any goods or 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. Water bottles with a top are permitted.
- Food deliveries to school (such as DoorDash, Uber Eats, Grubhub, etc.) are not permitted.
- 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.) Headphones and earbuds should only be used with permission.
- Secure hats and coats in your lockers until dismissal time.
- Secure cellphones in your locker until dismissal time (see Cellphones pg. 14)
- 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. Failure to meet basic expectations will result in consequences.
- Students must 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. In most cases, teachers and counselors will address initial behavior concerns. Elevated and chronic behavior concerns will be referred to the administration. Any student who has been referred to the school administration for disciplinary reasons will have administered consequences and/or will have privileges revoked.
- Emphasis must always be given to helping students develop the necessary skills that will help them to be productive students and citizens. Student behaviors and actions 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 communicated with when the Discipline Matrix is implemented. In the unlikely event that a fourth offense in any individual category needs to be addressed, the school administration will determine

the necessary action. 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 restorative practices.

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 additional consequences will be determined.

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.

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, their parent or guardian, and the assistant 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, their parent or guardian, and the assistant 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 must be deposited directly onto the child's school ID card via PaySchools 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

Please review BoE Policy 5511 in its entirety. 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:

- A. Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student himself/herself or to others in the school.
- B. Materially interfere with schoolwork, create disorder, and disrupt the educational program.
- C. Cause excessive wear or damage to school property.
- D. Prevent the student from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.
- E. Includes obscenities, substance-related logos, alcohol, tobacco, and/or other offensive slogans are not permitted.

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 and for which each in his or her own way is responsible.

1. Students are expected to be clean and well-groomed in their appearance.
2. Students are expected to avoid extremes in appearance, which are so disruptive or distracting that the reactions of other students are beyond normal control.
3. Appearance which jeopardizes the health or safety of an individual or of other students, or which is injurious to school property cannot be tolerated.
4. In areas of organized activities where students publicly represent the school or one of its organizations, students will be required to dress in full accordance with the reasonable expectations of the staff member in charge of the activity. Students unwilling to comply with these requirements will disqualify themselves from participation.

The following dress code has been developed in accordance with Board Policy #5511 and in consultation with staff members, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and students of this district.

A. General Rules

1. Dress or grooming that presents a hazard to the health or safety of the student or others is prohibited;
2. Dress or grooming that materially interferes with school work by creating disorder, distracting the attention of other students or disrupting the educational program is prohibited;
3. Dress or grooming that causes excessive wear or damage to school property is prohibited;
4. Dress or grooming that prevents the student from achieving his or her own education objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement is prohibited;
5. Clothing that includes obscenities, substance-related logos, alcohol, tobacco and/or other offensive slogans are not permitted.

B. Examples of Prohibited Clothing and Articles

The following garments and articles are examples of prohibited clothing in the school and at school-sponsored events:

1. Low-cut or see-through clothing, bare midriffs, and suggestive clothing;

2. Undershirts (underwear), tank tops (including oversized basketball jerseys and those with straps less than two inches), tube tops, strapless tops, backless tops, or spaghetti straps worn without an outer shirt;
3. Skirts, dresses and shorts that end higher than mid-thigh. Shorts with an inseam less than five inches. Clothing that have writing on the seat, as well as any clothing that exposes undergarments;
4. Headwear: Hats, sweatband, visors, do-rags, bandanas, hoods of any kind, and all other head coverings. Head coverings worn for religious reasons must be approved in advance by a school administrator;
5. Outdoor jackets or coats, except when entering or leaving the building, or upon approval by the building principal;
6. Bare feet, unsafe footwear, cleated shoes, flip-flops, slippers;
7. Patches and decorations that are offensive or obscene;
8. Clothing that is overly soiled, torn, shredded, worn or defaced;
9. Non-prescription sunglasses, glazed and tinted glasses, except as prescribed by the student's doctor;
10. Portable audio or video devices;
11. Clothing, apparel and/or accessories which indicate affiliation with any gang associated with criminal activity;
12. Torn-off, half shirts, and muscle shirts, are not permitted;
13. Because of health and safety concerns, heavy chains, studded collars or bracelets, and choke collars are not permitted.

Students are expected to cooperate courteously when faculty and/or administration address non-compliance concerns as related to 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 in the main office while a parent/guardian brings a change of 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. Students should check both locations for their belongings. If students find belongings of another individual, they should bring the item(s) to the Main Office.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING

Please review BoE Policy 5512 in its entirety. 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.

SUMMARY OF 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. Water bottles with a top are permitted.
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. Refrain from recording audio/videos or taking pictures unless permission is obtained from a staff member.
11. Allow kindness to guide conversation and inform behavior at all times. Foster a community of kindness.

Staff members will respond to the majority of 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 13) and Discipline Matrix (pages 22-29) 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 on our school website. 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:
 - a) Demonstrate persistence, accountability, and maturity
 - b) Take responsible risks
 - c) Question and pose problems
 - d) Remain open to continuous learning and think flexibly
 - e) Communicate through listening and responding with evidence

HONORS MATHEMATICS COURSES

1. **Unit test average** of 90% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods in present academic course.

2. Recommendation of the current mathematics teacher.
3. Demonstrates proficient levels of the Habits of Mind as indicated in the Standards of Mathematical Practice (NJSLA 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

1. **Unit test average** of 90% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods present academic science **and** mathematics course.
2. Recommendation of the present science & mathematics teachers.
3. 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

1. Mid-year average of 92% in the present academic social studies course.
2. **Unit test average** of 88% for the 1st and 2nd marking periods in common assessments/writing.
3. Recommendation of the present social studies Teacher

4. 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

1. Mid-year average of 93% in the present academic world language course.
2. 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.
3. 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:

1. 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>

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
Abusive language, gesture or behavior directed toward staff	1st				X					X				X	
	2nd				X						X			X	
	3rd				X						X			X	
Aggressive physical behavior resulting in injury to another	1st						X							X	X
	2nd							X						X	X
	3rd									X				X	X
Aggressive recess behavior	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
Assault	1st									X			X	X	
	2nd										X		X	X	
	3rd										X		X	X	X
Harassment/ Intimidation / Bullying	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	*** 15 ***	*** *** ***	*** SEE ***	*** PG. ***	** 15 **
Breaking in to another student's locker	1st		X											X	
	2nd					X								X	
	3rd							X						X	
Breaking / vandalizing the property of another student or teacher	1st			X										X	X
	2nd						X							X	X
	3rd							X						X	X

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Bus Misbehavior	1st	X													
	2nd				X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	X
Classroom Disruption/ General Misbehavior	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
Disrespectful / Insubordinate to a faculty or staff member	1st						X							X	
	2nd							X						X	
	3rd								X					X	
Dress Code Violation	1st	X													
	2nd		X											X	
	3rd					X								X	
Emergency Drill / Fire Drill Disruption	1st		X		X									X	
	2nd			X	X									X	
	3rd				X		X							X	
Fighting	1st						X						X	X	
	2nd									X			X	X	
	3rd									X			X	X	X

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

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

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

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

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

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Vandalism to school property	1st						X					X	X	X	
	2nd									X		X	X	X	
	3rd										X	X	X	X	