

AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL



MR. SCOTT LAWNICZAK - PRINCIPAL

MR. DEREK KISE - ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

MRS. JULIE DOYLE – ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL/DEAN OF STUDENTS

2025-2026 Amherst Middle School Student Handbook

This handbook is published so that all students at Amherst Middle School can have easy access to information regarding the processes and procedures that will ensure safety and a positive learning environment for all. It is essential that parents and students read the Student Handbook. We are more than happy to answer any questions or address any concerns that you may have.

A constructive partnership between families and school is vital to high student achievement. We look forward to working with each student and their family throughout the school year so that each student can be successful.

Any policy or procedure contained herein is subject to change at any time without notice.

This agenda belongs to:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Home Base Teacher: _____

Calculator ID Number (if applicable) _____

DO NOT REMOVE ANY PAGES FROM THIS ACADEMIC PLANNER

T.I.G.E.R.S C.A.R.E

Challenge yourself to demonstrate and embody what it means to be a TIGER at AMS each and every day.

Tolerance - accept others for who they are

Integrity - quality of being honest

Gratitude - being thankful

Empathy - understanding the feelings of others

Respect - a way of treating or thinking about someone or something.

Self-Control - control your impulses

Courage - overcoming fear by being brave

Accepting Responsibility - owning up to your actions

Reliability - doing what you say you will do

Excellence - strive for mastery



THE MISSION OF AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL IS TO NURTURE AND EDUCATE EACH STUDENT TO HIS OR HER HIGHEST POTENTIAL. It is understood that parental involvement, community support, and student commitment is essential. We all must be responsive to the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional needs of our students, creating an atmosphere of respect and value for each individual. By encouraging curiosity, creativity, and initiative through a variety of outlets, Amherst Middle School students will become responsible, resilient and confident lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Contact Information

Main Office	362-7100
Scott Lawniczak, Principal	362-7190
Derek Kise, Assistant Principal	362-7191
Julie Doyle, Assistant Principal/Dean of Students	362-7103
Traci Froehlich	362-7192
Lisa Naegely	362-7193
	362-7194
Counseling Office	
Donna DiSilvestro-Young	362-7177
Julie Terry (6 th grade)	362-7174
Tammie Hobler (7 th grade)	362-7173
Amanda Hallmark (8 th grade)	362-7171
Attendance (Erin McHugh)	362-7157/ Absence#-362-7249
Health Office (Nicole Perna)	362-7104
Fax	836-0193
Name	Email
Allaire, Mariah	mallaire@amherstschools.org
Amato, Amber	aamato@amherstschools.org
Ayer, Erin	eayer@amherstschools.org
Barnes, Catherine	cbarnes@amherstschools.org
Barnes-Ryan, Sarah	sbarnes-ryan@amherstschools.org
Beck, David	dbeck@amherstschools.org
Beckman, Jason	jbeckman@amherstschools.org
Benesch, Hillary	hbenesch@amherstschools.org
Biddle, Paul	pbiddle@amherstschools.org
Bologna, Jessica	jbologna@amherstschools.org
Bradford, Michelle	mbradford@amherstschools.org
Bush, Elizabeth	ebush@amherstschools.org
Buziak, Kayleigh	kbuziak@amherstschools.org
Campagna, Richard	rcampagna@amherstschools.org
Caparaso, Shawna	scaparaso@amherstschools.org
Chomen, Jennifer	jchomen@amherstschools.org
Claxton, Nancy	nclaxton@amherstschools.org
Clemons, Laura	lclemons@amherstschools.org
Colantino, Susan	scolantino@amherstschools.org
Cole, Kirsten	kicole@amherstschools.org
Currie, Shelly	scurrie@amherstschools.org
Dauria, Hannah	hdauria@amherstschools.org
DiMaria, Regina	rdimaria@amherstschools.org
Downie, Briana	bdownie@amherstschools.org
Edmonds, Kelsey	kedmonds@amherstschools.org
Eisenhauer, Kim-Marie	keisenhauer@amherstschools.org
Fildes, JoAnna	jfildes@amherstschools.org
Fildes, Kevin	kfildes@amherstschools.org
Froman, Bill	bfroman@amherstschools.org
Geibel, Maureen	mgeibel@amherstschools.org
Gerbec, Alexandra	agerbec@amherstschools.org
Goldman, Maria	mgoldman@amherstschools.org

Hall, Patricia	phall@amherstschools.org
Hunter, Michelle	mhunter@amherstschools.org
Jasinski, Amy	ajasinski@amherstschools.org
Jesse, Kelly	kjesse@amherstschools.org
Johnson, Steve	sjohnson@amherstschools.org
Jones, Krista	kjones@amherstschools.org
Keith, Anna	akeith@amherstschools.org
Klein, Christina	cklein@amherstschools.org
Leshney, Christina	cleshney@amherstschools.org
Lyons, Kristen	klyons@amherstschools.org
Marko, Renee	rmarko@amherstschools.org
Marone, Jessica	jmarone@amherstschools.org
McCrossan, Pam	pmccrossan@amherstschools.org
Metz, Erin	emetz@amherstschools.org
Morse, Thomas	tmorse@amherstschools.org
Mucha, Paula	pmucha@amherstschools.org
Murphy, Kelly	kmurphy@amherstschools.org
Musolino, Mark	mmusolino@amherstschools.org
Nelson, Terese	tnelson@amherstschools.org
Newman, Mary	mnewman@amherstschools.org
O'Donnell, Patrick	podonnell@amherstschools.org
Olvera, Alexandra	aolvera@amherstschools.org
Ortman, Michael	mortman@amherstschools.org
Palmer, Jeffrey	jpalmer@amherstschools.org
Panella, Rosamaria	rpanella@amherstschools.org
Primerano, Pam	pprimerano@amherstschools.org
Roeser, Jillian	jroeser@amherstschools.org
Rupp, Kelly	krupp@amherstschools.org
Ryder, Jessica	jryder@amherstschools.org
Sarigiannis, Eliza	esarigiannis@amherschools.org
Schmidle, Andrew	aschmidle@amherstschools.org
Schupp, William	wschupp@amherstschools.org
Starks, Deborah	dzstarks@amherstschools.org
Suflita, Angela	asuflita@amherstschools.org
Susi, Stacey	ssusi@amherstschools.org
Taylor, Beth	btaylor@amherstschools.org
Walling, Kerrin	kwalling@amherstschools.org
Wheeler, Lisa	lwheeler@amherstschools.org
Whitten, Melissa	mwhitten@amherstschools.org
Wilger, Maria	mwilger@amherstschools.org
Zubairi, Sana	szubairi@amherstschools.org

****This list will be updated and included in the annual Parent Handbook****

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

SCHOOL HOURS

8:15 AM - Only those students who have pre-arranged appts with teachers can be admitted
8:50 AM - Earliest time for general student admittance
9:01 AM - Students report to homebase
9:05 AM - School begins
3:45 PM - School ends (Monday– Friday)

*If you arrive after 9:05 AM, you must report to the Attendance Office.

LOCKERS

Lockers are the property of the school. Lockers will be assigned to you for the school year. You will have one in the hallway outside your homebase room and one in the gymnasium locker room. **Students are required to secure their hallway locker with a lock purchased from Amherst Middle School. No other locks will be permitted for this purpose.** Each student is responsible for keeping his or her locker clean both inside and out. **Decorating lockers for any reason (i.e. birthdays) is not permitted.** For security reasons, students MUST keep their lockers locked at all times, and are not to give out their combinations to other students, or share their locker with another student. The school will NOT BE responsible for items stolen from lockers or left in locker rooms.

HALLWAY PASSES

Hallway passes are required when students are out of a classroom at all times other than regularly scheduled passing times. Students must exhibit appropriate behavior in the halls at all times. A hallway passport must be signed by a teacher or other Amherst staff member to be allowed in the hallway, health office, or lavatories during times other than passing times.

Students who exhibit unsafe behavior, loitering, excessive tardiness, or any other related misconduct may be placed on “pass restriction.” Students already on pass restriction who continue to exhibit such behaviors will be subject to further disciplinary actions.

LATE BUSES

Late buses are available Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday only for students who are eligible for bus transportation and who wish to stay after school for extra help or to participate in a club or activity.

Students who do not stay after school for a school-sponsored activity or club supervised by an ACSD staff member, or who leave the building or school grounds, will not be permitted to ride the late bus.

Late Buses depart AMS at 4:30pm.

The AMS Code of Conduct is still in effect for all after-school activities. After-school privileges may be suspended by an administrator for violations which occur after school, including conduct on late buses.

CAFETERIA

It is everyone's responsibility to keep the cafeteria clean. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and make sure that their table is wiped and the floor is clean underneath. Only reading books and agendas are permitted in the cafeteria during lunch.

FOOD AND DRINKS

Food and drinks are not allowed anywhere other than the cafeteria unless authorized by a teacher and/or administrator.

NO FOOD DELIVERIES

Students, or family members on a student's behalf, are not allowed to order food from any outside vendor, nor will AMS accept a food delivery for a student by a second party (ex. Restaurant, DoorDash, GrubHub, etc).

WATER BOTTLE USAGE

Students are able to bring their own water bottles to school and store them in their locker during the school day. Classroom water bottle usage is at the discretion of each teacher.

EXTRA HELP

Students may receive help with their work in the following ways:

- Each teacher reserves one morning or afternoon per week for extra help after school or one morning per week prior to the start time of school. Students should check the extra help schedule posted in all classrooms for each teacher's assigned day and time. Morning Office Hours begin at 8:15am and end at 8:50am. Afternoon Office Hours begin at 3:50pm and end at 4:30pm.
- Open Library hours is a place for enriching, developing and remediating skills and getting help with homework. It is open before school each day from 8:15 AM to 8:50 AM.

OPEN LIBRARY HOURS

- Our Library Media Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:15 AM to 8:55 AM.
- It is also open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 3:45 PM to 4:30 PM.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled every fall. Dates and times are posted on the AMS school calendar. The format for conferences is more general during Fall conferences, and very specific to address areas of significant academic need during our Winter conferences. While parents are able to sign up for conferences in the Fall, AMS contacts parents for conferences in the Winter. Parents who would like to meet with teachers at a time other than formal Parent/Teacher conference time can call the counseling center for an appointment.

VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

Students are responsible for their own personal property. Personal property should be taken home after school and when at school kept in your locked locker. Items of significant monetary or personal value should not be brought to school. Amherst Middle School is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

VISITORS

To ensure the safety of our learning environment, all doors to the school are locked to the outside at 9:05 AM. Everyone entering school after 9:05 AM will be required to state their name and purpose at school before being admitted.

Students - If you wish to bring a visitor to school, you must make arrangements with the Assistant Principal at least three school days prior to bringing your guest to school. Such requests may not always be granted. Visitors will secure a pass from the Assistant Principal. Students who abuse visitor privileges will be asked to turn in their passes and leave the building.

Adults - Visitors will be directed to either the Main Office or Attendance Office.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students have the privilege of using the transportation services of the Amherst Central School District. While on the bus, the bus driver is in charge. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding district buses. This will ensure the safety and well-being of all passengers on the bus and will avoid distracting the driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Students are required to ride the bus assigned to them.

The bus loading area is at the entrance to the corridor leading to the gym and music rooms. All bus students must use only this corridor when arriving at or leaving the school by bus, except if they are boarding our late buses which are located outside our main entrance. The same school rules apply for good behavior and courtesy when you use the school bus. You must ride only your assigned bus and permission cannot be granted to leave the bus at any place except the stop nearest your home.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

School attendance is mandatory in New York State from the age of six (6) until the age of seventeen (17). By law, parents are held responsible for their child's unexcused absences.

Excused Absences, Tardies and Early Departures:

- Personal illness
- Illness or death in family
- Unsafe travel condition (may not be used when buses are running)
- Religious observance
- Medical appointment
- Quarantine
- Required court appearance
- Late bus

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/LATENESS

Examples of unexcused absence or lateness to school include, but are not limited to:

- Family vacation
- Hunting
- Babysitting
- Haircut
- Oversleeping
- Missed bus
- Private instruction

If your child is going to be absent or coming in late to school, parents should call the attendance office at 362-7249 before 8:00 AM or as soon as possible and leave a message. In order for an absence to be recorded as an “Excused Absence”, an absent note must be received in the Attendance Office within five (5) days of the student’s return to school. The note must include the child's name, reason for absence, date and signature of a parent, or person in parental relation. Calls to the Attendance Office do not take the place of an absent note. Any absence without a note is considered illegal. Students are considered “Present” for the day only when a student is present for more than 50% of the instructional day. The literature on student achievement clearly indicates that regular attendance is one of the most essential elements to academic success and every effort should be made to schedule appointments outside of the school day.

MAKING UP MISSED WORK

In the case of an excused absence, students will have the opportunity to make up work that is assigned or collected on the day of that absence. The student will be responsible for meeting with teachers regarding missed assignments. Parents may contact the Attendance Office to request assignments in cases of prolonged (three days or more) absence. Less than three days of absences, students should check in Aspen and the school’s website under the Homework section for assignments. Teachers will update the homework by 4:00 PM every day. If a student misses a class due to a music lesson, field trip, special activity, etc., he/she is responsible for checking with his/her teacher(s) PRIOR to this absence to obtain work that will be covered that day. Each student will be expected to complete all work that was missed.

If a student misses school because of a trip, he/she should ask teachers in advance for assignments. Teachers are not required to give out work for an unexcused absence.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early Dismissal from school for reasons other than medical or dental appointments are discouraged. If an early dismissal is necessary, a written request giving a brief explanation, signed by a parent or guardian needs to be presented in the Attendance Office before 9:05 AM. A pass to leave the building will be issued for the time requested. Students returning to school after an early dismissal are to report back to the Attendance Office for re-admittance. If no specific reason for early dismissal is given, the absence resulting from the early dismissal may be recorded by the Attendance Office as an “Unexcused Absence.”

Early Dismissals should take place no later than 3:30pm, except for emergency situations. Any requests for a student to be dismissed between 3:30-3:45 pm may not be able to be accommodated due to our regularly scheduled PM dismissal procedures.

HEALTH OFFICE

A Registered Nurse is always available to students from 8:45 AM until 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Students needing to see the nurse should ask their teacher to sign a pass, and then report directly to the health office.

For the safety of your child, any relevant health information should be included, and kept up to date, in your child's medical file. This information is kept confidential.

Any request for an elevator key, or questions regarding health policies and procedures should be referred to the health office at 362-7104.

If a student is to be excused from Physical Education for one to two days, please send a note to school with your child. If a student is to be excused from Physical Education for more than two days, a physician's note is required. Once a student is excused from P.E./sports by a physician, he/she must receive clearance by the physician to resume activities. **PLEASE NOTE: THE NURSE DOES NOT EXCUSE STUDENTS FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION.**

To control the spread of illness, please keep your child at home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature in excess of 100 degrees
- Acute sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Inflammation of the eyes or crusting of the eyelids

MEDICATION POLICY:

FOR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION:

Written orders from your child's physician must be on file stating:

- a) Student's name
 - b) Name of drug
 - c) Dosage
 - d) Purpose of the medication
 - e) Time of day medication is to be given
 - f) Number of days it needs to be given
 - g) Possible side effects
- The medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy by a parent/guardian. No medication should be transported by students.
 - Any prescription medication administration will be recorded in the student's medical file.
 - Medication will be stored in a clean, locked cabinet or container. Any exceptions (i.e. asthma inhalers/student may self-carry) to this provision must be specifically stated by the physician on the written form.
 - Unless these requirements can be met, medications will not be administered at school.
 - Medication needs to be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the school year. No medication will be sent home with students, this includes diabetic supplies.
 - New written orders must be on file for each school year.

FOR NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION:

Please request or download the non-prescription form included in Health Services.

In order to comply with NYS laws and the physician for the Amherst Central School District, the following information is required for non-prescription medications:

- a) Written permission from a parent or guardian
 - b) The name of the medication
 - c) Dosing instructions
 - d) Specific symptoms for which the medication is to be given
- The medication must be in the original container or package.
 - Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough drops, throat lozenges, non-drowsy alcohol free decongestants, antacids and eye drops are the only medications that may be given without a medical provider's written order.
 - Herbal/alternative remedies are not allowed.
 - New written orders must be on file for each school year.
 - Any non-prescription medication administration will be recorded in the student's medical file.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS

After-school activities and clubs will be announced in the daily bulletin, on our digital sign, and on morning and afternoon announcements. A full listing of all clubs and activities for 2025-2026 will be published in September of 2024. Interested students should watch for these announcements. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities during the school year.

The following requirements must be met for a student to participate:

- Students must be marked "Present" by 12:15 p.m. for the school day to participate in an after school activity. Under certain conditions an administrator may issue special permission for participation.
- A student who does not participate in their regularly scheduled physical education class may be ineligible to participate in that day's intra/extramural activity or any club, which is sport-related. Please see your physical education teacher immediately regarding questions.
- All Amherst Middle School students are subject to the requirements of the ACSD ExtraCurricular Eligibility Policy.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council consists of officers from all three grade levels. It conducts activities designed for the entire school.

Students interested in serving as officers may do so by petitioning the student body for support. In order to qualify, a student needs a number of signatures of the qualified voters. The number is determined by the class size. If they qualify, they may then campaign for office.

All officers must maintain passing grades in all classes. Elections are conducted in June.

When the representatives arrive at the Student Council meeting, they will find that the organization is not a governing body, but simply seeks to cooperate with the administration to make the school a better and happier place. Some of the activities of the Student Council include conducting fundraising campaigns, assisting in PTSA and other civic events, serving as guides for guests and visitors, and in general, exercising all powers given them under the constitution.

WHERE EVERYBODY BELONGS (WEB) LEADERS

WEB Leaders are selected using criteria that are consistent with the WEB Coordinator's Handbook. They are:

- Leaders must represent a cross section of the students in your school.
- Leaders should not be over-committed.
- Leaders should meet the qualities of a leader.

A committee of teachers and counselors will make WEB Leader selections.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Homework

Homework is assigned to help reinforce a skill or concept that was taught that day, review a previously learned concept, or introduce new information. The amount of homework assigned will grow incrementally each year and will vary with each subject area.

If your child struggles with a particular assignment at home and cannot complete it, **please call or email the teacher** to explain the difficulty your child experienced. Teachers can help when they are aware that your child made a sincere attempt to complete the assignment, but was confused and could not go on.

Grading

All report card grades will be reflected numerically. In the event that a student's actual quarterly grade is below a 50, the grade will be reflected as a 50 and a report card comment will indicate that the actual grade was lower than a 50. In the event that a student's actual quarterly grade is above 100, the grade will be reflected as a 100 with a comment indicating that the actual grade was higher than 100. The same is true for all final assessment marks, with the exception of Regents exams in Honors Earth Science and Honors Algebra."

Students whose overall quarterly average is 85 – 92.4 will be placed on the Honor Roll for that quarter. Students whose overall quarterly average is 92.5 or higher will be placed on the High Honor Roll for that quarter. For the 2024-25 school year, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students will have all class averages included in their overall quarterly average proportionately according to the number of minutes each class met during the quarter.

Accelerated and Honors Class Placement

Accelerated and/or Honors options are available in 3 subject areas. In Math, we offer Pre-Algebra (Grade 7) and Honors Algebra (Grade 8, weighted and high school credit obtainable). In Science, we offer Honors Earth Science (Grade 8, weighted and high school credit obtainable). Lastly, in Art, we offer Studio-in-Art (Grade 8, high school credit obtainable). Recommendations are based on specific prerequisites. Due to class size limitations, classes may be closed. Please be advised that student performance will be assessed quarterly to determine the continuation of the placement.

Final Assessments

Each June, students participate in final summative assessments. Some final assessments are administered during class periods, while others (Math, Science, Social Studies, English) are administered throughout the last week of school during ½ days of student attendance. Some teachers will choose to give a non-test type of assessment, such as a portfolio, final paper, or a performance assessment.

Final assessments will be a substantial grade for all students. All 6th grade courses are structured to average the final assessment into the 4th Quarter average as a double test grade. All 7th and 8th grade courses are structured to count the final assessment as 20% of the overall course average for the year (1st Q + 2nd Q + 3rd Q + 4th Q + Final Assessment) / 5 = Final Course Average).

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (Plagiarism/Cheating)

Purpose:

Students at Amherst Middle School are expected to take responsibility for their conduct in both their social and academic actions. Academic honesty requires that students turn in work that is their own and shows their best effort. Academic dishonesty includes copying someone else's homework, offering to a student or accepting help from another student on a test or a quiz, and plagiarism. Students who violate the academic honesty policy may be denied credit on the assignment/assessment in question, and may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Definition of Plagiarize: to steal and pass off as one's own (the ideas or words of another); use (a created production) without crediting the source; to commit literary theft; present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source. (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 1986, p. 1728*)

Plagiarism may include:

- Lack of in-text documentation
- Not using quotation marks for, and giving credit for, direct quotes
- Paraphrasing and not giving credit
- Direct copying and submitting as the student's own work
- The use of automated tools, artificial intelligence or machine learning tools, such as ChatGPT

Cheating may include:

- Submitting work obtained or copied from another student or obtained from a teacher without permission
- Allowing another student to copy or obtain work

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

All students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school personnel, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-imposed, with students accepting responsibility for their own behavior.

In accordance with, and in addition to, the Amherst Central School District's Code of Conduct, students at Amherst Middle School may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school when they engage in conduct that school officials have deemed to be prohibited conduct. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

BUS CONDUCT

Students are prohibited from conduct on buses contracted for use by the school district that endangers the safety of others or is distracting to the bus driver. Students should conduct themselves on a bus according to the same established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, eating, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.

COMPUTER USE/INTERNET POLICY

Inappropriate use of technology (e.g. cell phones, computers, etc.) and/or the Internet to engage in behaviors including, but not limited to, bullying, intimidating, threatening, harassing, maligning, and/or defaming others is strictly prohibited. Students are required to adhere to District policy and its accompanying regulation concerning Student Access to networked Information and to the current Acceptable Use Policy.

Students are not allowed to bypass or interfere with network security systems like GoGuardian or violate the district's technology use rules. This includes downloading proxy sites, emulators, or using any tool(s) to get around internet restrictions.

CLASS CUTS/LATE TO CLASS

Any student who cuts a class, or who is late for class, for any reason is subject to disciplinary action. A class cut counts as an unexcused absence and credit will not be given for work assigned or collected on the day of a class cut.

DANGEROUS OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

No student may display behavior, or attempt to engage in behavior, that could endanger the health, safety and welfare of themselves, other students, teachers and/or staff. Students are also prohibited from engaging in any behavior that disrupts their learning, or the learning of other students.

Dangerous or disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• setting false fire alarms• bomb threats• weapon possession, including toys or replicas• lying to school personnel• electronic transmission (i.e. cell phone, e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging, or posts on social media platforms), or possession of material that is inappropriate defamatory, or damaging to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• threats/harassment of others• possession of any flammable materials• fighting• vandalism• activities that are actually, or perceived to be gang activity• Any other behavior that disrupts the normal operation of the school in any way.
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STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY STATEMENT

The following statement applies to acceptable responsible use of social media and technology for all students both in school and outside of school at all times. Given our age of social media and omnipresent technology, your activity online and via smartphones can be a substantial disruption to our learning environment, in school, out of school, day, night and 12 months a year.

In general, students should understand that they are fully responsible for all actions and interactions they engage in on all social media platforms, group texts/chats, cell phones and all other electronic devices. School disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including suspension, for any of the following actions taken by a student that result in disruption of the school environment:

- Cyber-bullying
- Impersonation or catfishing
- Doxing
- Solicitation
- Sexting or sharing of pornographic images
- Use of language, images, memes, photos or video that is hateful or cruel such as racial or ethnic slurs
- Spreading of rumors or gossip
- Peer exclusion and peer cruelty
- Sharing or spreading messages, videos, photos, images that are hurtful to others, insulting, or an attempt to create many forms of conflict
- Threats of any type towards another student, faculty or staff member
- Academic dishonesty & misconduct (cheating, copying, plagiarism, etc.)

For additional information, please refer to the Amherst Central School District Code of Conduct, as well as the ACHS Student Handbook sections on DASA, school disciplinary process and acceptable use of electronics policy.

DRESS CODE

Student Dress Guidelines

Amherst Middle School promotes a dress policy that emphasizes both safety and a sense of belonging—key aspects of a positive school environment. Students are encouraged to express themselves through their clothing while maintaining a standard of dress that is appropriate for school and school-related activities.

Guiding Principles

- Every student should feel comfortable and confident in their attire without fear of unnecessary discipline or criticism.
- Students and staff share the responsibility of maintaining a respectful and distraction-free learning environment.
- All students are expected to practice good personal hygiene and wear clothing suitable for school and school functions.
- Families play the primary role in ensuring students dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting, while faculty and staff serve as role models and help students understand what is suitable for different environments.
- For safety and security, students are not permitted to wear backpacks during the school day. Small purses and crossbody bags (about the size of a tissue box) are allowed. Exceptions require a medical excuse on file with the school nurse.
- Head coverings, other than those that are for religious purposes, are not allowed to be worn inside the building. Hats, bandanas, sunglasses, hoods or outside jackets are prohibited.

Addressing Dress Concerns

School staff and administrators may intervene if a student's attire:

- Disrespects or dehumanizes individuals or groups;
- Promotes hate, encourages violence, or contains inappropriate imagery or language;
- Poses a risk to the health or safety of the student or others (e.g., hats, hoods, ski masks, or non-medical face coverings);
- Advertises or promotes alcohol, drugs, or other illegal activities; or
- Significantly disrupts or interferes with the learning environment.

Students are also required by state and local health regulations to wear footwear.

Students wearing clothing that is not in compliance with the student dress code will be offered an opportunity to change their clothes into something more appropriate. Any student who refuses this opportunity, or who violates the school dress code on more than one occasion may be considered insubordinate, and be assigned an appropriate consequence.

School administrators will make the final decision on any questionable dress code issues.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are prohibited from using or having in operational mode any mobile phones, smart watches, earbuds, or other telecommunications or imaging devices during the school day. Devices must remain off and away and may not be used in any manner.

Upon entering the building and until departure, students are not permitted to use electronic devices anywhere inside the building. In addition, electronic devices should be stored in student lockers between 9:05 am and 3:45 pm.

Examples of electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, cameras, Bluetooth earbuds/headphones, laser pointers, recording equipment, and “smart” watches. A student who does not comply with this expectation will have the item confiscated, and the student will be assigned an appropriate consequence. Any student who refuses to turn over a device to any school personnel will be considered insubordinate.

Students who violate our policy will be subject to the following:

- 1st offense: The device will be confiscated and will be returned to the parent, or to the student upon parent request. One night of detention will be assigned.
- 2nd offense: The device will be confiscated and will be returned only to the parent. Two nights of detention will be assigned.
- 3rd offense: The device will be confiscated and will be returned only to the parent. One day of In-School Suspension will be assigned.

Any device that is disabled, or has the battery removed, will be turned over to an administrator to verify ownership. At any time a student may be prohibited from bringing a cell phone or electronic device on school property.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR INSTRUCTIONAL USE

Some electronic devices, such as cell phones, music/video players, recording/playback devices or other mobile devices may be used in the classroom for educational purposes. These devices may only be used under the direction and approval of teachers for classroom activities and projects that are approved in advance by the Principal. Students and families will be provided advance notification when such use may occur, and therefore will know when it is appropriate to bring and use electronic devices in the classroom.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES FOR EXTENDED HOMEBASE TIME

During Extended Homebase time, students may use a Kindle, iPad, or Nook device to access books for silent reading. Any student who uses their device for any other purpose, or who uses their device to access material that is inappropriate or offensive or otherwise violates our Code of Conduct, during this time will have the privilege of using their device revoked. This means that all downloads of reading material must be done prior to arriving at school.

Amherst Middle School will not be responsible for lost or stolen devices, so it is important that students understand that by bringing a device to school for this purpose on Extended Homebase days they are accepting the responsibility of properly securing it in their locker to keep it safe.

FORGERY

Forgery is the signing of another person's name with, or without, their knowledge. It is considered forgery even if it is done with the consent of the parent/person in parental relation whose name was forged. No student may at any time write his/her own notes for early dismissals or for absences.

GAMBLING/SELLING/TRADING OF ITEMS

Students observed participating in, or conducting any activity that may be construed as gambling will be disciplined appropriately. Exchanging of personal property is not conducive to the educational environment and those items may be confiscated and appropriate disciplinary measures may be taken. Individual students are prohibited from selling items.

GUM CHEWING

Chewing gum is not allowed in school at any time.

HARASSMENT/HAZING/BULLYING/DISCRIMINATION

All students of the Amherst school community are to treat each other with dignity and respect. Any student who engages in physical, sexual, verbal, or electronic harassment, discrimination, bullying or hazing will be subject to disciplinary consequences consistent with District policies and Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/. Any student who has been discriminated against, harassed, hazed, or bullied (or who has witnessed such conduct) should report the matter to a teacher, administrator, or to a Title IX officer. Bullying or harassment can be confidentially reported via email at: tipline@amherstschools.org or leave a voicemail at 716-362-2255.

INSUBORDINATION

Students may not be insubordinate, vulgar or display disregard of the school rules or disrespect for school personnel, which includes, but is not limited to not completing assignments, failing to comply with directions from school personnel and being unprepared for class.

LEAVING SCHOOL BUILDING/GROUNDS

Students are not permitted to leave the school building or grounds at any time during the school day without a duly authorized pass from the Office. Students who become ill must be sent home through the Nurse's Office.

In order to provide the safest possible learning environment, we reserve the right to search any student who returns to school after having left the building and/or grounds without following appropriate school policies.

LOITERING/TRESPASSING

Students are not permitted in any school building other than the one that they regularly attend unless the Principal of the building that the student is to visit grants specific permission. Additionally, unauthorized persons, including students, are prohibited from loitering in the building or on school grounds, or from being in an unauthorized area. All students are required to be directly supervised by a teacher beginning at 4:00 PM. No students are to be unsupervised anywhere on school grounds for any reason after 4:00 PM.

PHYSICAL ALTERCATIONS

Students are prohibited from engaging in physical altercations on school grounds or at a school related event. Examples of physical altercations include, but are not limited to, hitting, fighting, play fighting, pushing, shoving, punching, throwing items, spitting, biting or scratching, or attempting to do so.

PROFANITY/IMPROPER BEHAVIOR

The use of language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive is prohibited at all times. Additionally, public displays of affection, indecent exposure, possession of, buying, selling or distributing obscene or inappropriate materials, or any other inappropriate behavior are strictly prohibited.

PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Amherst Middle School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. The possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of certain substances and related paraphernalia is strictly prohibited. This policy applies to all school property, including adjacent areas, school-sponsored activities, and athletic events.

Prohibited Items and Substances:

- **Tobacco Products:** This includes, but is not limited to, traditional cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco (e.g., chewing tobacco), vapor/e-cigarettes, and any associated substances like "e-juice."
- **Alcoholic Beverages:** Possession, consumption, distribution, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- **Drugs:** This category includes illegal drugs, as well as the misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications. Misuse means consuming medication or drugs for any purpose other than their intended medical purpose.
- **Nicotine Products:** Unless prescribed by a physician as part of a documented smoking cessation treatment plan and authorized for use in accordance with District policy.
- **CBD Products:** All CBD products, including oils, edibles (gummy worms, candies, bakery products), and similar items, are prohibited.
- **Other Unauthorized Substances:** This includes substances like certain vitamins, supplements, and herbs when used for purposes other than their intended, legitimate use.

Prohibited Paraphernalia:

- Any items used in connection with alcoholic beverages, tobacco (including matches or lighters), smokeless cigarettes, illegal substances, or misused prescription/over-the-counter drugs are prohibited.

Prohibited Actions:

Students are not permitted to:

- Possess, consume, or use these substances.
- Buy, attempt to buy, sell, or attempt to sell these substances.
- Distribute, share, or exchange these substances.
- Be under the influence of these substances.

Students are also prohibited from possessing, consuming, distributing, or sharing energy drinks, including, but not limited to Amp, Monster, Red Bull, Rockstar, and Full Throttle.

Amherst Middle School will confiscate all prohibited items. The confiscated items will not be returned to students or adult family members, and may be turned over to law enforcement.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

THEFT

Students are prohibited from taking (including assisting in the taking/theft of), or from being in possession of property that does not belong to them.

VANDALISM

Damaging or destroying school district property, the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any other person lawfully on school property is prohibited. Students will be assessed for damages or loss of any school property or equipment for which they are responsible.

WEAPONS

Only authorized law enforcement personnel are permitted to possess a weapon on school property or at a school function. Students are prohibited from possessing, or threatening to use, a weapon on school property or at school functions at all times. Students are also prohibited from possessing or displaying anything that appears to be a weapon on school property or at a school function at all times. A weapon is any device, instrument, material, or substance that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.

Students in possession of a firearm or a weapon, as defined by NYS Education Law 3214(3)(d), may be subject to suspension of one year, according to the requirements of that law. Any student in possession of an instrument designed to inflict harm or has the capability to inflict harm, regardless of intent, may also be subject to suspension.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

DETENTION

- Students must report directly to the main office for Lunch Detention no later than 4 minutes after their dismissal from the previous class period just prior to lunch. Lunch detention is 30 minutes with an administrator or designated staff member.
- Students must report to the main office for after-school detention by 3:55 PM. No late passes will be accepted. Detention is from 3:55 PM – 4:30 PM on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.
- When Detention is canceled, all assigned detentions for that night will be served the next night.
- Failure to attend a scheduled detention or reporting after 3:55 could result in further disciplinary action.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-School-Suspension (ISS) is designed to help students reflect on the choices that they've made. Students may spend time in ISS as a disciplinary action. It is a very structured environment in which each student receives the day's assignments from his/her classroom teacher. A certified teacher will provide instruction for students who are assigned to In-School-Suspension.

A student assigned In-School Suspension has the following responsibilities:

- To report to the Assistant Principal's Office by 9:05 AM.
- To bring all books and materials that will be needed.
- To remain quiet.
- To complete all assignments.
- To return completed assignments to the ISS Teacher to receive credit for the day.

Any disruption or failure to meet responsibilities may result in more serious disciplinary action.

Students who arrive late or are dismissed early on a day they are assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) will be required to make up the missed time on the following school day.

Students serving in-school suspension cannot stay after school or participate in any school related clubs, sports or activities, including dances on any full day of in-school suspension assigned, for the duration of the ISS assignment.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Students who are suspended out of school will report to the off-site suspension facility for a mandatory supervised suspension. The supervised suspension program is located at the BOCES facility located at the Winchester Academy located in West Seneca. Instruction during Out-of-School Suspension is provided by certified teachers on staff at Winchester Academy. Students will be transported according to specific instructions, which will be provided by Main Office staff. Students who choose not to attend the Out of School Suspension program will be considered "Absent Unexcused", which means that students cannot make up any work that is assigned or collected on that day. Any disruption or failure to meet responsibilities that is reported to us may result in more serious disciplinary action.

Students serving out of school suspension are prohibited from all school and extracurricular activities for the duration of the suspension and are prohibited from being on any district property.

SUSPENSION FROM DANCES/ACTIVITY NIGHTS & FIELD TRIPS

Any student assigned one (1) full day, or more, of Out-of-School suspension, may be prohibited from attending the next school dance, activity night and/or field trip following their suspension. Additionally, at administrative discretion, any student assigned one (1) full day, or more, of In-School suspension, may also be prohibited from attending the next school dance, activity night and/or field trip following their suspension.

SEARCH/SEIZURE BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

(Further information pertaining to student searches and interrogations can be found in the District's Code of Conduct)

School officials will conduct searches of students and their belongings, as well as of school property, when there are reasonable grounds to believe that students may be in possession of drugs, weapons, alcohol or other materials ("contraband") in violation of School District Policy or State or Local Law. Such searches may also be conducted when there is reason to believe that a student could be a danger to others or to themselves. School property shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to search at any time without notice.

BULLYING...FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a word, gesture, action, look or touch that hurts another person's body, dignity or possessions. Bullying is different from "normal" everyday conflict that students often experience with each other. Bullying is something that happens repeatedly and causes hurt and fear. Bullying can include things like:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name calling• Teasing• Damage to someone's property• Spreading rumors or telling lies about a person• Threats | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purposely excluding someone from a group• Saying mean things or sending/posting hurtful statements electronically• Pressuring someone to do something• Kicking, pushing, hitting, or tripping a person |
|---|---|

Bullying is a violent act that is never acceptable. Bullying is not tolerated at Amherst Middle School. Bullying will result in parental notification, detention, suspension and/or police involvement.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

Cyber bullying is when a student is bullying another by texting, posting hurtful comments on social websites and by using any technology to intimidate or hurt another person.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS AND RIGHTS OF ALL AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

Students at Amherst Middle School are responsible for their behavior at all times. This includes during classes, lunch, off-team classes, during passing time in the hallways, on the school bus and at all school activities and field trips. All students have the right to feel safe and comfortable at school. Students have the responsibility to treat each other with respect.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM THE VICTIM OF BULLYING?

Your School Counselor and your Teachers and Administrators are valuable resources for you if you feel you are a victim of bullying.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Seek immediate help from an adult.

1. Report the bullying incident to your counselor, teacher, parent, principal, assistant principal. We have an anonymous reporting procedure in place for you to use if you don't want to talk to us about it. Write down what happened and put it in the "BULLY BOX", located in the Counseling Office or call the reporting line at 362-CALL (2255)
2. Be assertive and use planned verbal responses. Your School Counselor teaches these in 6th grade classrooms and would be happy to talk with you anytime to review these skills.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WITNESS A PERSON BEING BULLIED?

Witnessing bullying and not taking action helps to spread it. What can you do if you see someone being bullied?

1. Seek immediate help from an adult.
2. Refuse to join in. Bullies are almost always accompanied by followers who join in their hurtful behavior. Do not laugh, tease, spread rumors or gossip or participate in any way with a bully's behavior.
3. Report any bullying you see. Reporting IS NOT tattling. It's the right thing to do.
4. Speak out, if possible
5. Stand by the person being bullied and help them get out of the situation.

Amherst Middle School is YOUR School. Be part of making it a great place. Be kind. Treat everyone, adults and students, the way you would like to be treated. There is never a good reason to be disrespectful or mean. Get to know your fellow students and make smart decisions.