

PELHAM SCHOOL

HANDBOOK

2025-2026



**45 Amherst Road
Pelham, MA 01002
(413) 362-1100**



Table of Contents

Welcome Letter.....	Page 3
Mission & Vision Statements.....	Page 4
Information at Your Fingertips.....	Page 5
Staff Directory.....	Page 6
The School Day.....	Page 7-9
Home-School Partnership & Communication.....	Page 10-11
Policies.....	Page 12
Code of Conduct for Students and Parents	Page 22
Pelham School Student Bill of Rights.....	Page 25
Appendix.....	Page 31-32

**At Pelham Elementary,
we show our...**



- P** Practice kindness
- A** Accept responsibility
- W** Work together
- S** Show respect

Welcome to Pelham School

Dear Pelham Families,

Get ready for an exciting **2025-2026 school year** at Pelham Elementary! We're delighted to welcome you back as we begin another chapter of discovery and progress together. Our foundation of **academic excellence** is stronger than ever, and this year, we're sharpening our focus on nurturing both **intellectual growth** and **social-emotional development**. A key part of this approach is our emphasis on **productive struggle**, where students will build resilience and problem-solving skills through guided independence. This means we'll empower them to tackle challenges, knowing that overcoming obstacles leads to deeper learning.

We recognize that a **diverse learning environment** isn't just beneficial; it's fundamental to true academic excellence. By embracing a rich tapestry of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, we are actively preparing our students to navigate and excel in an ever-evolving world. At Pelham Elementary, we are unwavering in our dedication to fostering a culture of **inclusivity and understanding**, ensuring every student feels genuinely **valued and respected** within our welcoming school community.

We're particularly excited to launch a **new ELA curriculum, Magnetic Foundations K-2, Magnetic Reading 3-6** this year, designed to ignite a passion for language arts and enhance critical literacy skills. It's the collaborative spirit of our **dedicated and highly trained staff** working alongside our supportive families that truly creates a vibrant learning environment where every child can reach their full potential. Together, we are shaping not just students, but **enthusiastic lifelong learners** and thoughtful, responsible citizens.

Your active participation is a cornerstone of your child's educational journey. We strongly encourage you to engage with our school community via the **School Council, PTO, and Social Justice and Equity Committee**. Additionally, we will host regular forums designed to gather your insights and collectively establish goals for student achievement, school climate, and parent communication.

Through this powerful partnership, we are confident we can deliver an outstanding education that equips our students with the essential skills and enduring values necessary for success both in their academic careers and in life beyond.

Here's to a truly wonderful year!

Your Pelham Educators



Pelham School Mission Statement

At Pelham Elementary School;

We welcome the uniqueness of each student.

We commit ourselves to teaching and nurturing the whole child.

We establish a culture that embraces playfulness and joy, fosters curiosity, honors self-identity, and promotes community.

We know that the partnership between schools and families is vital to every child's development and education.

We support all students in their academic, emotional, and social growth.

Pelham Vision Statement

To foster a dynamic culture of lifelong learning, we strive to kindle a fervent curiosity within our students, empowering them to become active participants in their education. By crafting culturally rich curricula and providing authentic learning opportunities, we aim to create an inclusive environment where every individual feels valued and supported. Our commitment extends beyond the classroom as we actively seek to understand and embrace the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our school community. Through continuous reflection and inquiry, we nurture a collaborative network of educators dedicated to personal and professional growth, ensuring that our impact extends far beyond graduation.

A vision for the Amherst, Pelham and Regional Schools

We must recognize our students for who they are and must challenge them to excel while balancing their academic progress with expressive, personal, physical, civic, and social development. We must provide our students with the highest quality education possible in order to prepare them for success in a global, interconnected future. The 21st century education at ARPS will enable our students to address challenges we cannot predict, to use adaptive and creative thinking and problem-solving, to understand technology and languages, and to respect and understand diverse beliefs, cultures and backgrounds.

To achieve excellence for our students, we are committed to being the highest quality educational system possible. This includes a commitment to continual improvement, informed reflection, and the collection and analysis of data. As an educational system, we must attract and retain excellent educators who can provide a challenging, relevant and cohesive curriculum that serves the needs of our diverse students. We reaffirm our commitment to a vital and focused program of professional development for our staff and a safe environment for learning and constructive communication for our students. Lastly, we commit to the wise allocation of the resources our communities provide.

We need to ensure that every student participates in a rigorous and engaging learning experience.

Information at Your Fingertips

PELHAM SCHOOL WEBSITE: <https://www.arps.org/pe>

Superintendent: Dr. E. Xiomara Herman 413-362-1810

Office and Other Staff:

Principal:	Micki Darling
Administrative Assistant:	Markyta Ables-Conyers
School Nurse/Special Education Secretary:	Katy Guisti
Head Custodian:	Amy VanOudenhove

Pelham School Office:

Hours:	8:00 AM 4:00 PM
Telephone:	413-362-1100
Absentee Hotline:	413-362-1198

Breakfast/Lunch Prices:

2025-2026 School Year: Free

School Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:10-2:30

School Closing or Delays:

District information line: 362-1898

Responsibility for closing schools because of snow or other severe weather rests with the Superintendent or, if the Superintendent is not in town, the designee. The decision to cancel or delay school due to snow will ordinarily be made before **6:00 a.m.**

School cancellation for severe weather or other emergencies will be announced on the following radio stations:

WRNX/WTTT – Amherst 1430 AM

WHMP – Northampton 1400 AM or 99.3 FM

WHA1 – Greenfield 1240 AM or 98.3 FM

WHYN – Springfield 93.1 FM

WMAS – Springfield 94.7 FM

WPVQ – Greenfield 93.9 FM

Channel 22 – Springfield Channel 40 – Springfield

Should a weather-related or other type of emergency arise during the school day, it may be necessary to dismiss students after school has begun. Parents/guardians would be notified at their emergency contact numbers to ensure that all children can return home safely. The district may also notify parents/guardians via the **Parent Square** system of an emergency closing.

Pelham School Staff 2025-2026

Administration	Position	Phone Extensions	Email
Micki Darling	Principal	1101	darlingb@arps.org
Markyta Ables-Conyers	Administrative Assistant	1102	ablesm@arps.org
Katy Guisti	Nurse/SE Secretary	1103	Guistic@arps.org
Professional Staff	Classroom Teacher		
Maggie Principe	Kindergarten	1130	principem@arps.org
Giselle Gonzalez	Grade 1	1128	gonzalezg@arps.org
Kate Thurston	Grade 2	1118	thurstonk@arps.org
Sara LaPlante	Grade 3	1117	LaPlantes@arps.org
Kelsey Geer	Grade 4	1115	geerk@arps.org
Suzanne Quinlan	Grade 5	1113	quinlans@arps.org
Margaret Light	Grade 6	1111	lightm@arps.org
Support Staff	Job Title		
Abby Fuhrman	Counselor	1104	fuhrmana@arps.org
Gwen Bass	Counselor	1127	bassg@arps.org
Catherine Havens	Speech Language Pathologist	1105	HavensC@arps.org
Leanne Hunt	SE/Intervention: K-3	1125	Huntl@arps.org
Carol Schotte	Interventionist	1120	schottec@arps.org
Kelly Carlisle	SE/Intervention: 4-6	1114	Carlislek@arps.org
Kristin Mayo	Psychologist	Room 27	mayok@arps.org
Mary Lee Austin	PT	Room 27	Thorntone@arps.org
Yesenia "Nia" Hostetter	OTA	Room 27	hostettery@arps.org
Danielle Cooke	BCBA	Room 27	cooked@arps.org
Specialists	Job Title		
Mk Despres	Art Teacher	1129	despresmk@arps.org
Theresa Godfrey	Music Teacher	1129	godfreyt@arps.org
Ashley Fuller	PE/Technology Teacher	1129	fullera@arps.org
Eleanor Lincoln	Orchestra		lincolne@arps.org
Lincloln Smith	Band		smithl@arps.org
Paraeducators	Job Title		
Rosalba Booth	Library Paraprofessional	1150	Baroni-boothr@arps.org
Ashley Fuller	Paraeducator		fullera@arps.org
Beata Ciesielska	Paraeducator		Ciesielskab@arps.org
Dawn Sawula	Paraeducator		Sawulad@arps.org
Susan Longto	Paraeducator		Longtos@arps.org
Natalya Kenney	Paraeducator		KenneyN@arps.org
Munmun Das	Paraeducator		Dasm@arps.org
Custodial Staff	Job Title		
Amy VanOudenhove	Head Custodian	1139	Vanoudenhovea@arps.org
Keon Jules	After school custodian	1139	julesk2@arps.org

The School Day

School Hours

The school day begins at **8:10 am**, and ends at **2:30** each day. Any child arriving after **8:20 is considered tardy** and should **first report to the office**. **There will be Playground supervision from 8:00-8:10 am. In order to ensure the safety of each child, it is very important that children not arrive before this time unless they are supervised by a caretaker.** If this should ever present a problem, kindly contact the principal. It is expected that if parents/guardians are picking up a child, they will do so promptly at dismissal. Children waiting for their parents/guardians will be outside the front of the school. Please see arrival/dismissal procedures in Appendix A.

Attendance

District Guidelines

Daily attendance is fundamental to a child's success at school, beginning the day with their peers ensures a positive start to a student's day. This year all of the schools in Amherst/Pelham will once again be making a concerted, coordinated effort to improve the attendance of our students and to make certain that they arrive at school on time. **As instruction begins promptly at 8:20**, students that are tardy enter classrooms in which directions and activities have already begun.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for academic success in school. When a student is absent from class or school, the continuity of the instructional process is disrupted, and the benefits of classroom instruction are lost. Following is a list of important information for students and parents/guardians:

- All students will attend school every day, on time.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for their child's daily and timely attendance.
- Parents/guardians will not keep students from school while it is in session.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for reporting their child's absence on the same day, before the official opening of school. In case of an emergency that prevents this from happening, parents/guardians must send a note explaining the absence to the student when they return to school.
- Reporting an absence is not the same as excusing it. The Superintendent or designee (usually the building Principal) is the only person that can legally excuse an absence.
- The only "excusable" reasons to keep a child/youth from attending school are: students' illness, religious observance, court obligation and/or a major family emergency (accident, serious illness/quarantine, death).
- Students must present a note upon their return to school after three consecutive absences.
- Tardiness will not be excused. Three tardies will equal an unexcused absence.
- After fourteen (14) cumulative or consecutive days of being out sick, students may be eligible for home or hospital tutoring.
- There are several weeks in the school calendar designated for vacation/holiday time out of school. Families are advised to plan all trips and visits during these weeks.
- Parents/guardians will be held responsible for failure to send their children to school and/or not bringing them to school on time.
- School staff will contact parents/guardians to set up a meeting when issues of attendance arise.
- Parents/guardians and their students will be referred to local agencies for additional support to improve school attendance.

Absences

Parents/guardians are asked to call the absence line, **362-1198** or the main school number, 362-1100, **before 8:10 AM** to report their child's absence. These are voice mail systems to report absences. Please include the

reason for the absence so we can determine if it is “excusable” or not. *Under Massachusetts law, only the superintendent and/or a designee (in this case the principal) can officially excuse absences. Absences due to illness, death/major family crisis, court case or religious in nature can be excused and guardians must call the school by the time designated each day the student will be out.*

If you do not call this number you will receive a message from our School Messenger system, and your child will be marked for an ‘unexcused absence’. Absences are tracked daily by our office staff who will be monitoring our attendance records. A doctor’s note is required when your child is absent three or more days from school or when concerns have arisen about a child’s attendance. After five unexcused absences a letter of concern will be mailed to families, and at 8 absences, we will invite you to meet to develop an improvement plan. Please be aware that three unexcused tardies will equal one absence.

For the benefit of your children’s education please plan family vacations to coincide with the regularly scheduled school vacation days. Absences for recreational travel are considered unexcused.

Tardiness

Children are expected to be in their classrooms at **8:20 AM** ready to begin class. Arriving on time helps children settle into their day in school. The beginning of the day is an important time when teachers may have morning meetings, give directions and set an agenda for the day. This is essential information for students.

Students who are tardy must sign in at the main office. Tardies will be monitored by the office staff. **Once a child has received 10 unexcused tardies a letter will be sent home. If tardiness continues, at 20 unexcused tardies a conference will be held with the parents, an administrator, and a guidance counselor to develop a plan to improve the child’s timelines.**

On-going Absenteeism and Tardiness

A child’s attendance and timeliness are essential to their academic success. Therefore, once a student reaches 15 unexcused absences or 30 unexcused tardies, the school will consider this level to be neglect of the responsibility for ensuring that a child attends school on a regular basis. Should this occur the school reserves the right to contact the Department of Children and Families (DCF) as Pelham Elementary School follows district policy and abides by MA regulations on student attendance.

Dismissal

If children will be leaving school early or will be going home other than the usual way (e.g. being picked up instead of riding the bus, riding the bus home instead of being picked up, being picked up by a different adult, getting off the bus at a friend’s house.) Teachers & front office must be notified by email or a handwritten note prior to **12:45pm**. Dismissal will be at **2:30 pm** every afternoon. If students are not picked up by 2:45, and they are an After School student, they will be sent to After School and charged as such.

Students will only be dismissed to adults on their guardian provided list. If you need to change or add to the pick up list, we need prior written authorization and the adult is required to show a picture ID before the child can be dismissed.

School Bus

Pelham School is served by two school bus routes. Bus stop locations and pick-up times are published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette and the Amherst Bulletin shortly before school begins in the fall. We will also post them on the district web site.

For families who plan to drive their child to school and have sufficient empty space in their vehicles, please consider carpooling with another family. This will help to reduce traffic and congestion at drop off/pick up (as well as reduce ARPS’ collective carbon footprint).

After School Care

Pelham After School is an independent program and is available at the school Monday through Friday from the time school is dismissed until 5:30 p.m. Ashley Fuller is the After School director and information about fees, activities and space availability may be obtained by emailing her at pelhamafterschool@gmail.com.

Breakfast & Lunch

Breakfast and Lunch will be free of cost this year. There will be a charge for second meals or a la carte milk. Breakfast and lunch are served each school day. [Each month's menu](#) is available on the school's web site, so that parents/guardians may plan accordingly. Families are encouraged to sign up for meals the night before.

Visiting Classrooms:

Pelham Elementary School benefits greatly from its strong community. Please reach out to the classroom teacher if you would like to discuss the opportunity of spending time in your student's classroom.

Volunteering in the Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools

The Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools provide a rich array of volunteer opportunities, which address the educational needs of all students and support educational programming and school community needs. By fostering language, literacy, social and initiative skills volunteers fortify school success for all students. Community members, college students and parents are encouraged to become volunteers to support learning and to facilitate positive community involvement, partnership and collaboration. Typically, there are many volunteer opportunities in our schools throughout the year. Examples are classroom/office/clerical support, afterschool programs, athletic coaching, community events, music, and Parent/Guardian Organizations. Application and additional information can be found on www.arps.org website or by contacting the main office at 413-362-1100.

Field Trips

Many of our field trips are organized throughout the school year to enhance classroom curriculum. Field trips will be approved, by the building principal, on an individual basis. Permission from a parent or guardian is required for children to participate. Permission slips will be sent home before each class field trip. Students are expected to follow the same standards of behavior that are expected while on school grounds. Students choosing not to follow these standards of behavior while on a field trip may be returned to school and/or lose the privilege of going on subsequent trips. If there is a cost for field trips that is a financial burden upon parents/guardians, please contact the school as scholarships are available. No student will be prevented from attending due to financial reasons. **A signed and completed permission slip is required for every field trip.**

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

String music lessons are offered to students in grades 4, 5, and 6 and wind, brass and percussion lessons are available for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. There is also an opportunity to play in an ensemble, either band or orchestra, as students are ready to do so. The district provides string instruments to beginners at a minimal maintenance fee, and other instruments are available for rental at local stores, at reasonable cost, should families choose to rent. Information regarding sign-up and rental options will be sent from the music department to students at the beginning of each school year. In the past, we have had wonderful winter and late spring band/orchestra concerts during the school day. There were also evening concerts for the convenience of our families.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Our school, in conjunction with all of the Amherst Regional Schools, has adopted a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Response to Intervention is an instructional framework which uses multiple assessment tools in an

ongoing way to understand students’ learning needs. At Pelham, the student academic data that we examine includes mCLASS assessments, Heggerty Phonological Awareness Screening, Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST), Quick Phonics Screener (QPS), Words Their Way Spelling Inventory, writing samples, Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), i-Ready Math Diagnostic, Advantage Math Recovery (AVMR) Cumulative Math Screener, end-of-unit math assessments, , and MCAS scores. Based on this up-to-date data, students receive focused instruction in small groups in their specific areas of need. There will be ongoing progress monitoring to assess how the students are *responding to the intervention* in order to guide our instruction. Our Intervention staff will be using what are called ‘evidenced-based curriculum programs’ since they have been proven to support students’ learning in a systematic way. We have created a half-hour period called Personalized Learning Time, which is a time that has been set aside for us to reteach, reinforce or extend skills and concepts in reading and math. While this learning period will take place in addition to the classroom instruction in reading, writing, and math, children may also receive extra support during the regular reading and math periods. Students will be accessing this intervention periodically through the year. If you would like to be informed when your student is receiving intervention, please let your classroom teacher know.

Foundational Skills Focus Areas:

Literacy	Math
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Phonological Awareness ● Phonics (encoding / decoding) ● Heart Words ● Reading Fluency ● Vocabulary ● Comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number Sense - Base Ten (fractions in upper grades) ● Foundational Fact Fluency ● Algebraic Thinking ● Essential Vocabulary



Home-School Partnership & Communication

The relationship between families and the school is centered on our aspirations for our children. Developing mutual trust is an essential part of this relationship. We want families to be an integral part of every child’s educational team. We value each family’s viewpoint and know that parents /guardians are a child’s first teacher and they offer a unique perspective into the hearts and minds of their children.

Home-School Communication

Open communication is the foundation of a successful partnership between home and school. We would like to encourage families to communicate directly to their child’s teacher about any concerns. Each teacher will set up a format for families to get in touch with them as well as ways to share information. Our voice mail system makes it easy for families to leave messages for teachers. Individual parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall to discuss your child’s progress. A second conference may be scheduled in the spring at the request of either the teacher or the parent. School-wide and classroom newsletters are a valuable source of information. Please develop a system with your child to make sure you get all of your ‘mail’ in order to avoid missing important news from school. Please check backpacks.

Pelham School Council: The Pelham School Council was established in response to the Education Reform Act of 1993. The school council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, assistant principal, parents/guardians, teachers, community members required to be established by each school pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 59C. Meetings are open to the public and parents are encouraged to attend. The function of the Council is to assist the principal in:

- adopting educational goals for the school
- identifying the educational needs of students
- reviewing the school's annual budget
- formulating a school improvement plan.
- conducting the parent survey

PTO

The Pelham School PTO works to enhance the educational opportunities of our children through fundraising, parent/guardian education, and community-building events. This year there will once again be a PTO and a Classroom parent serving each class as a contact to keep all families notified of upcoming activities and events. All Pelham parents and guardians are automatically members of the PTO, and no sign-up is needed. We welcome all parents and guardians to participate in any way that is comfortable and convenient for their family. Events and ways to be involved will be included in our school's bi-weekly publication, the Pelham Newsletter, which is sent virtually.

The PTO welcomes all parents, staff and members of the Pelham community to its monthly meetings to discuss issues of interest to the school community. These meetings provide an opportunity to learn more about the family-school relationship and to share ideas well as a chance to socialize with friends and neighbors. Every year Pelham School families financially support the school's educational mission in numerous ways. The Council also sponsors several fund-raisers each year which provide scholarships for class trips, non-budgeted items for classrooms, and visiting performers:*PTO contact information and monthly meeting minutes can be found on the school website. www.pelhampto.org

Report Cards and Conferences

Progress is reported formally twice a year with the distribution of report cards to children in grades 1-6 at the beginning of February and at the close of school in June. Progress notes are distributed to kindergarten students twice a year as well around the time of report cards.

Individual conferences for all grades are offered in the fall, primarily during the early release days in October. Spring conferences are scheduled at the discretion of either the teacher or the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are strongly urged to use these conference times to discuss their child's progress. While these are specific occasions to discuss concerns, please contact your child's teacher any time you have a question.

Curriculum Night/Open House

Two evenings are set aside each year for parents to learn about what their children are doing in the classrooms. Curriculum Night is held several weeks after school begins in the fall. This evening is especially designed for parents/guardians to learn from staff about the instructional program. Open House is held in the spring and provides time for students to share their work with parents/guardians.

There is no recording of these events without the permission of the classroom teacher.

Questions or Concerns

All questions or concerns may be initially directed to our secretarial staff. In most cases they will be able to help

you immediately.

We suggest taking the following steps when you have other questions or concerns:

1. Make an appointment to see your child's teacher if your questions or concerns involve your child or your child's classroom. For example:

- If you perceive a problem or have a concern about your child's performance in school, or
- If you perceive a problem at home that may affect your child in school (e.g. death in the family or a separation)

2. Make an appointment to see an administrator if repeated efforts to resolve problems directly with a staff member have been unsatisfactory.

School Directory

An annual directory of school families which helps when organizing PTO events, or when children want to call their friends, etc. Please fill out the form at the start of the year so you can be included! Families who do not want this information released should notify the school and their information will not be published.

Emergency Planning

It is essential that we have a means of contacting every parent or guardian at all times. For the most part, our School Nurse will contact you if your child becomes ill during the school day. Accidents, minor or otherwise, need to be communicated immediately to parents, as well. Our Safety Team will use the Parent Square automated calling system for communicating with families in the event that we must unexpectedly close school (such as for a major snow storm), or evacuate the school in case of emergency.

As soon as a child enters school, we must have both of the following:

- A completed emergency health form
- A completed emergency school closing form

These forms ***MUST*** remain up to date and contain multiple approved contacts, so that if you are not available, we can call the person you have designated. Please keep the school office informed of any changes or additional contact numbers, at any time during the year. These forms must also be updated at the beginning of each school year, for each child in the family.



Policies

Homework Policy

Please see our [district policy](#) for more information on homework.

No Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones and Smart Watches should not be brought to school or on the bus. Cell phones distract children from their focus on learning at school. If a child has a cell phone out during the school day, the cell phone will be confiscated, and a parent/guardian will be required to pick it up from the main office. Please make sure that your child does not bring a cell phone to Pelham. We also ask all adults to refrain from using cell phones for personal use in public areas in our school.

If you feel like your child must have a cell phone before or after school, please set up a time to talk with the principal to explain why and write a note permitting for your child to bring a phone to school. If this permission is granted, your child will be required to turn in the cell phone at the main office at the beginning of the school day and then pick it up at dismissal. This includes Smart Watches.

Through student reporting, we have seen an uptick in students from 3-6th grade using one or more social media platforms in which students have used hurtful language, such as racial slurs, toward their classmates. Although these online conversations take place outside of school hours, it impacts students' ability to access their education. All of this activity leads to a toxic environment in which students feel frightened for their own safety and that of their friends. Students who are concerned about their safety are NOT able to access learning. Please help our children make good choices about their activity online. For more information on internet safety, please [see link](#).

Telephone Policy

Pelham School has only two lines to serve both incoming and outgoing calls. In order to keep the lines as free as possible, we discourage children from calling home except in emergency situations. We ask parents/guardians for cooperation in helping children make their after-school plans in advance.

We ask parents/guardians to plan ahead so that phoning children at school is unnecessary except in emergencies. We will always deliver phone messages from parents/guardians to their children, but under normal circumstances will not page children to come directly to the phone. We will not deliver messages to children from people unknown to us without parent/guardian permission.

Teachers are not generally available to speak with parents/guardians on the phone during the school day. Ordinarily, if a parent/guardian calls a teacher, office staff will take the message, and the teacher will return the call at his or her earliest convenience. Teachers are usually available from 2:45 – 3:30. Some teachers may prefer to correspond through email. Teachers will let parents know the best ways to reach them in their weekly announcements or at the Fall Curriculum Night.

Pelham Elementary School Visitor Policy

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. All visitors play a vital role in maintaining our secure learning environment.

Visitor Procedures:

- **Check-In Required:** All visitors, without exception, must report directly to the **Main Office** immediately upon entering the school. Do not proceed to classrooms or hallways first.
- **Photo ID:** Be prepared to show a **valid, government-issued photo ID**.
- **Visitor Badge:** You'll be issued a **visible visitor badge** that must be worn at all times while on school property.
- **Sign Out:** Please return to the Main Office to **sign out** and return your badge before leaving.

Specific Visit Guidelines:

- **Appointments Highly Recommended:** We encourage you to **schedule appointments in advance** with staff members to ensure their availability and minimize disruption.
- **Teacher Visits:** Please aim to meet with teachers **outside of instructional time** (e.g., before/after school, during planning periods).

- **Classroom Visits/Observation:** These must be **scheduled in advance** with both the teacher and the Principal. Unannounced visits are not permitted.
- **Student Pick-Up:** If picking up a student early, report to the **Main Office**. Students will only be released to authorized individuals with proper ID. Do not go directly to classrooms.
- **Dropping Off Items:** For forgotten items, leave them at the **Main Office**; staff will deliver them.
- **Volunteers:** Approved volunteers must complete district background checks and follow all check-in procedures.

Visitor Conduct:

- All visitors are expected to be **respectful and appropriate**. Disruptive behavior or failure to follow school rules will result in being asked to leave.
- For safety, **do not prop open doors** or allow unauthorized individuals to enter.

Former Student Visit Policy

Pelham welcomes former students! To ensure a safe and focused learning environment for everyone, please follow these guidelines for your visit:

- **Appointments Required:** All former students must **call ahead to schedule an appointment** before visiting.
- **No Unscheduled Visits:** If you arrive without an appointment, you'll be asked to return another time.
- **Teacher Visits After School:** Please plan to visit former teachers **after the school day ends** to avoid disrupting classes.
- **Check-In:** All visitors, including former students, must check in at the main office upon arrival and wear a visitor's badge.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a positive learning environment!

Standards of Dress and Appearance

These dress code guidelines encourage individuals to dress, groom, and conduct themselves so that they can participate in, benefit from and access the educational environment. These guidelines respect the rights of all and are based on *Massachusetts General Laws Section 83 Dress and Appearance of Students Protected*, which establishes reasonable standards regarding **health, safety, and cleanliness**.

Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools state that individuals should wear clothing that allows them to participate safely in all school activities including specialized learning spaces, such as the swimming pool, gymnasium, shops, etc. Individuals should wear footwear held securely on the feet for protection when on school grounds, aboard school buses and at school events.

Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools state that individuals have the right to freedom of expression through their clothing provided that such right does not cause any disruption or disorder within the school (MA Section 82) or infringe on the rights of others. Disruption, disorder and infringement of rights can include clothing that contains: words, symbols, suggestions or portrayals of violence, defamation, illegal acts, illegal substance and/or unacceptable products (such as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs).

Winter Wear Guidelines

In our elementary schools, children go outside for recess on a daily basis so it is important for them to dress appropriately for the weather. When the temperature is colder outside than it is indoors, children should wear additional clothing (i.e. sweatshirts or jackets and long pants) when going outdoors. When the weather

approaches freezing temperatures, the children should have hats, mittens or gloves and warmer clothing when going outdoors. To walk in snow, students must wear waterproof boots, or have a second pair of shoes to be worn inside. To play in the snow, (go sledding, roll around, etc.) students must wear snow pants. Please send your child to school with clothing appropriate for varied weather conditions. In particular, please note that students should have shoes or sneakers for indoor wear, if they are planning to walk in the snow.

On very cold days our staff will look closely at the wind chill factor in order to ascertain if there is any danger of frostbite. If there is no threat of frostbite, we will hold outdoor recess even on cold winter days. Proper clothing ensures that this winter play is comfortable, safe and fun.

HOW TO KNOW WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

In general, these symptoms warrant keeping a child home for the day:

1.) Fever of 100 or more

Stay home for 24 hours after the fever is gone and encourage fluids.

2.) Vomiting or diarrhea

Stay home for 24 hours after the last episode and encourage fluids.

3.) Sore throat

Note that Strep throat may be present without fever, and may have symptoms of headache and stomach ache.

4.) Runny nose, cough

Often a day or two of rest, and a light diet with extra fluids will help resolve a cold and will help in minimizing the spread of cold virus at school. A child who is feeling run down, losing sleep due to their cold or actively sneezing and coughing is not going to be able to attend to learning.

5.) Earaches

If an earache lasts more than a day or if pain is severe, please see your health provider.

6.) Impetigo or other skin rash

Please have these identified and treated 24 hours before returning to school. Consult with the school nurse with any questions.

7.) Pink Eye or conjunctivitis

A draining, itchy eye that is red must be treated with antibiotic eye medication before the child returns to school.

Please refer to district health policies concerning physical examinations, immunization requirements, accidents, medication policies, vision and hearing tests, head lice, and scoliosis screening in the back of this book.

Lost and found

Any unclaimed, unlabeled items found at school are placed inside the front foyer. Children or parents/guardians who are looking for missing items may check here at any time. Several times during the year, the items will be spread out on tables near the cafeteria in the hope that children may recognize and claim them. Families will be notified when this will take place. Unclaimed items are donated to local charities after the close of the school year.

Items brought from home

Unless you have made a prior special arrangement with your child's teacher only school related materials should be brought to school. Please refrain from allowing your child to bring electronic equipment, Pokemon cards or other items that can be broken or misplaced, particularly iPods, Kindles, and other small electronic devices. We also highly discourage students from bringing in candy. Knives, toy guns, bullets, and laser pointers are not allowed in school or on the bus. The school cannot be responsible for items that are lost.

Library Policy

The Town of Pelham has a combined school and town library, which serves the needs of both community and the Pelham Elementary School. Each class has a scheduled library time one or two days a week. Students may check out books for two weeks. Some materials (such as some of the school videos and professional materials) do not circulate. During library hours, students may check out books from the children's collection. Students may use the computers in the library to access the computerized library catalog and the Internet, which is filtered according to the Amherst - Pelham District guidelines. There is a booklet of all the library policies at the circulation desk. In general, students may check out only three books at a time. If a library material is lost or damaged, families will be requested to pay for the cost of replacement. Material will be considered lost when it is six weeks overdue. Material will be considered damaged when its condition is worse than the usual wear and tear on the material, i.e. water and animal damage. Library privileges may be suspended until the lost or damaged material is replaced.

***Students will not be allowed to check out books from the Young Adult section, unless they are in sixth grade AND have a note from their parents/guardians.**

Bus Rules

Respectful and safe behavior, both at the bus stops and on the bus, is essential. The bus is where many of our students begin and end their school days, so we want the bus ride to be a positive experience for all. If your child complains of problems on the bus, please let his/her teacher, the principal or assistant principal know immediately.

Children who misbehave on the bus will receive a 'bus conduct report' which will be sent home to be signed. If the problems continue they may have their bus privileges suspended for a period of time. Eligible riders will not be permitted to get off the bus at any stop other than their usual one unless they have a note from a parent/guardian. For their own safety, kindergarten children must be met by a parent/guardian or designated adult at their bus stop or they will be taken back to the school and a parent/guardian will be called to pick them up.

Bus Evacuation programs are held twice a year to review bus safety procedures and to practice evacuation from the bus in case of an emergency.

State law requires that cars stop whenever a school bus indicates it is loading or unloading children by flashing red lights and showing a stop sign. This law also applies to the bus entrance in front of Pelham School.

BUS RULES (Parents/guardians, please review the following rules with your child.)

1.) WAITING FOR THE BUS

- A.** Be on time for the bus but do not arrive at your bus stop earlier than ten minutes before the time at which the bus usually arrives.
- B.** Do not allow younger children who are not yet attending school to accompany you to the bus stop.
- C.** Observe all safety precautions while waiting for your bus.
 1. Do not play in the road.
 2. If possible, avoid crossing streets.
 3. Whenever you must cross a street, do so only if you are sure that no moving vehicles are approaching you from either direction.
 4. Do not push, pull or chase any other pupils.
 5. Avoid trespassing on private property and being noisy
- D.** As your bus approaches, line up at least six feet off the highway and do not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door. Again, avoid pushing others in line.

2.) LOADING ON THE BUS

- A.** Get on your bus quickly and be seated at once.

- B. Listen carefully and obey any directions issued by the driver.

3.) RIDING ON THE BUS

- A. No food while you are on the bus.
- B. Do not throw anything while you are on the bus.
- C. Please keep your arms or any other parts of your body inside the bus at all times. Avoid putting your arms out of the window.
- D. **Do not change seats while the bus is moving.**
- E. Avoid shouting and other excessive noise that may distract your driver and lead to a serious accident.
- F. Help to keep your bus clean and sanitary.
- G. Be courteous to other pupils.
- H. Listen carefully and obey any directions issued by the driver.

4.) UNLOADING FROM THE BUS

- A. Please stay in your seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver has opened the door.
- B. Again, obey any directions issued by the driver.
- C. Leave the bus quickly but in a courteous manner without pushing any other pupils.
- D. If you must cross a street as you leave the school bus, be sure to walk in front of the bus (never in back) at a distance of at least 12 feet from the bus. If you get too close to the front of the bus, the driver will not be able to see you, and a serious accident could occur.
- E. Be sure to observe all safety precautions as you travel from your bus stop to your home.

5.) LOSS OF RIDING PRIVILEGES

- A. Students engaging in inappropriate and/or unsafe behaviors may be suspended from riding the school bus for a specific period of time.
- B. Any suspensions will be initiated by school principals with prior notification to parents/guardians.
- C. Suspension of riding privileges for a specific period of time is automatic with a third bus misconduct notice, but suspension for serious infractions may occur after any one infraction.

Lunch Expectations

In keeping with the district's philosophy to provide a climate that promotes healthy interpersonal relationships and to enhance the quality of life for children as well as adults, we believe that everyone has the right to eat in an environment that is clean, positive and safe.

- Raise your hand for an adult's attention
- Commit to recycling
- Clean up after yourself
- Fuel your body with healthy food
- Use inside voices and appropriate language
- Follow adult directions
- Eat only your own food
- Stay seated
- When done eating, talk using an 'indoor voice' or do a quiet activity.



School Climate and Responsibilities:

A School Where Everyone Feels Safe and Included

Responsiveness Initiative

The Amherst-Pelham Public Schools has established a comprehensive Responsiveness Initiative to ensure that we have a safe learning environment in which all children know that it is “okay to tell” when they feel uncomfortable about a situation at school or in their lives. The message that we want to give to children is that talking to a trusted adult about a concern is the responsible thing to do. We are striving to create a school where our students know that they can speak up about teasing, bullying, bias, or anything that is giving them an uncomfortable feeling without fear of retribution, and that adults will listen and respond to remedy the situation. All adults working in the schools have been trained to be a “First Responder” who will listen to our children and then pass on the concerns to a “Second Responder” who is a member of each school’s Responsiveness Committee. At Pelham the “Second Responders” are Micki Darling/Principal, Abby Fuhrman and Gwen Bass/school counselors, and Katy Guisti/Nurse. This group will make sure that each concern that is brought up is examined and addressed in a timely fashion. Of course, parents/guardians can also communicate issues that their children bring to their attention. At the beginning of each year we will review the importance of ‘responsible telling’.

Social Justice Commitment

As part of our School Improvement Plan, Pelham staff will incorporate the social justice standards into their planning, practice, and work with students. The standards are divided into four domains - identity, diversity, justice and action. Together, these domains represent a continuum of engagement in anti-bias, multicultural and social justice education.

Pelham Elementary School has a long-established commitment to promoting social justice and promoting the inherent worth and human dignity of every person. As individuals and as a school we will:

- Practice fairness and equality for people of every race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, religious belief, political view, and other identities.
- Analyze multiple perspectives on historical and contemporary issues.
- Build a community of critical thinkers who are active in the world.

We are committed to ongoing learning, raising awareness, and fostering dialogue around issues of social justice.

The Right to be Safe, Included and Visible

All of the Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools are dedicated to creating communities in which every family feels welcomed and each child experiences a safe learning environment. We want all children to feel proud of their heritage, to be comfortable being ‘themselves’, and to feel free to express their own interests and talents. It is important to address all types of biases in elementary schools so that we can prevent the development of prejudices and promote respect when children are young.

There is much we can do to promote a supportive atmosphere for all children and their families. Prejudice persists when members of a particular group are invisible or are unknown or are spoken of in a derogatory manner. As a staff we will interrupt every incident of all types of name-calling and prejudicial slurs. We will openly discuss why these put-downs are hurtful. It is every family and child's right to be visible, safe and included in our school.

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Amherst-Pelham Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Proposed Policy ACAA: Commitment to Identity-Affirming School Culture and Staff Accountability

Definitions:

Gender identity: A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender, regardless of the gender they were assigned at birth. Everyone has a gender identity.

Transgender: Describes people whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender expression: Refers to the way a person expresses gender, such as clothing, hairstyles, activities, or mannerisms.

Gender nonconforming: Denoting or relating to a person whose behavior or appearance does not conform to prevailing cultural and social expectations about what is appropriate to the female or male sex they were assigned at birth. This often includes students who use they/them as pronouns. Gender nonconforming includes students who identify themselves as nonbinary or gender expansive.

Deadnaming: Calling (a transgender person) by their birth name when they have changed their name as part of their gender transition.

Gender Pronouns: The set of pronouns that an individual expects others to use when referring to that individual. Common examples include, "she/her/hers," "he/him/his," "they/them/theirs," and "ze/zir/zirs." Transgender, non-binary and gender nonconforming students may use a different set of gender pronouns than the pronouns associated with their sex assigned at birth. These are sometimes called "affirmed gender pronouns" or "preferred gender pronouns."

Misgendering: Referring to someone (especially a transgender person) using a word, especially a pronoun or form of address, that does not reflect their gender identity.

LGBTQIA+: An acronym that represents a diverse group of people who experience various forms of sexual orientation and gender identity. It stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual, with the "+" symbolizing all other identities and orientations that are not explicitly included in the other letters.

Sexual orientation: A person’s romantic and/or sexual attraction to other people, which includes being straight, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, or many other terms. This is different and distinct from gender identity. Transgender and nonbinary people may be straight, gay, lesbian, asexual, or any other sexual orientation.

It is the right of every student in the Amherst, Pelham, and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts to learn in an environment where they are seen, respected, and protected—inclusive of any gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. As such, the district maintains and enforces a clear standard of professional conduct related to gender identity and LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Accordingly, it shall be the policy of the Amherst, Pelham and Amherst-Pelham Regional School Districts to strictly prohibit the misgendering of individuals; the use of dead names; the making of derogatory remarks concerning sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression—whether in counseling, academic, athletic, extracurricular or informal settings. Given the seriousness of the impact of these actions, staff must bring such incidents to the attention of their immediate supervisor, who must document the occurrences. Such prohibited actions shall be a violation of this Policy and Policy AC: Commitment to Nondiscrimination and Educational Equity and shall be considered conduct unbecoming. When an alleged violation of this Policy ACAA is brought to the attention of administration, it shall be reviewed by the appropriate administrator and investigated. The form of investigation shall be determined based on the nature of the allegation and the judgment of the administration. In the event a violation of this Policy ACAA is found to have occurred, administration shall take appropriate corrective action, which may include, but is not limited to, removal from student-facing roles, reassignment, or termination. Corrective action should be taken in accordance with applicable laws and/or collective bargaining agreement.

In order to build a culture of safety and accountability, the Districts shall implement professional development at least annually for all staff focused on affirming LGBTQIA+ students, inclusive language, bias-based bullying prevention, and trauma-informed practices related to identity. This training shall be required for all staff. Participation will not be optional, and completion will be tracked and documented.

The Districts shall integrate these practices into the school culture through policy, training, and accountability systems. The superintendent shall report , on a periodic basis and no less than twice per year, data including metrics on training completion, student climate and any relevant conduct investigations or corrective actions. The superintendent will also provide regular updates to the School Committee regarding student and staff climate data and other metrics related to this policy.

If a staff member is found to have violated this Policy ACAA or engaged in other identity-harming behavior toward a student, caregivers and/or the student shall have the right to meet with the appropriate administrator to discuss protective measures for the child to ensure the student is not exposed to further harm or subjected to retaliation, which may include a no contact directive.

The superintendent shall create a procedure, plan, or guidance for implementing this policy that is reviewed and updated at least annually.

Through these measures, we commit not only to words of support but to policies that

enforce them—ensuring that all students, especially LGBTQIA+ youth, are protected, affirmed, and empowered in our schools.

References:

MGL Ch 76 Section 5

DESE 603 CMR 26.00

Policy AC

Policy ACAB

Policy JICFC

Policy JICFB

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice Practices and Peer Mediation are a set of informal and formal strategies intended to build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing, and respond to wrongdoings, with the intention to repair any harm that was a result of the wrongdoing. Preventative strategies include community or relationship building circles, and the use of restorative language. Some responsive strategies include the use of Restorative Questions within a circle or conferencing format, again with the intention of repairing the wrong that happened as a result of the behavior. The Restorative Questions, while varied in exact language, ask the student to consider: What happened? Who did it impact? How do you make it right?

Why do Restorative Justice?

- Build healthy relationships between educators and students;
- Reduce, prevent, and improve harmful behavior;
- Repair harm and restore positive relationships;
- Resolve conflict, holding individuals and groups accountable; and
- Address and discuss the needs of the school community.

Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and/or bullying of students or staff are extreme violations of the Standards of Behavior. It can also be a violation of civil and criminal law. It will not be allowed in school or at school sponsored activities. Any such offense will result in disciplinary action.

When is it harassment or bullying?

According to Massachusetts State Law: “The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of: (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to the other student’s property; (ii) placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.”

It is harassment when a student talks inappropriately about a person's ethnic or national origin, race, color, religion, physical appearance, gender, sexual orientation, or handicap. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- calling a person names and/or putting a person down
- writing comments about a person; for example, on a wall or in a note
- teasing a person about his/her body or clothing
- Intentionally omitting a person from an activity

Please see the District Pages for more information. Families are encouraged to go to the school’s website to report any concerns around bullying behavior towards their student. This will trigger an investigation process, overseen by the counselor and school administration.

Serious Behavior Issues

Serious behavior issues (examples below) will be brought to the administration's attention immediately. These behaviors may result in parent conferences, referrals for counseling, replacement of property, internal or external suspension, contacting the police department or other measures appropriate to encourage the student to practice appropriate behavior. Please see our Code of Conduct below for more information.

- Behavior which prevents the class from functioning
- Taking or destroying the property of others
- Possession of a weapon or dangerous material
- Attempt to cause or causing injury
- Violation of bullying and/or harassment rules

SUSPENSION- PLEASE SEE THE DISTRICT PAGES FOR UPDATED INFORMATION

Key Messages

The more that school staff and families can work together and give our children consistent messages, the easier it will be for them to understand our expectations. We can build a child's foundation for learning with three basic messages:

- *What we are asking you to do is important.*
- *You can do it with effective effort.*
- *We are not going to give up on you.*

Safety Planning and Drills

Pelham Elementary School has a comprehensive Safety Plan. Emergency procedures are reviewed and as part of our safety preparedness, we have many drills that we conduct with students present and without. Each room has displayed a well-marked fire exit plan map and evacuation plans and the staff are trained to respond to several specific safety concerns. We conduct fire drills four times during the school year and bus evacuations twice a year. Pelham School also conducts age appropriate **emergency response** drills with older aged students. Our emergency response drills are focused on lockdown and shelter-in-place procedures.



Caregiver Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Amherst, Pelham, and Amherst-Pelham Regional Public Schools (ARPS) are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, and families. This Caregiver Code of Conduct outlines our expectations for parents, guardians, and caregivers when interacting on school premises, at school-sponsored events, during transportation services, and in communications with staff, students, and other members of the school community. By adhering to these guidelines, we can work together to support student success and maintain a positive and productive school climate.

General Expectations

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and other adults speaking on behalf of students should:

1. Demonstrate Respect and Courtesy: Treat all students, staff (including bus drivers and transportation staff), and fellow community members with respect and dignity in words, tone, and actions.

2. Support a Safe Learning Environment: Promote a safe and positive school environment by avoiding disruptive behavior, harassment, intimidation, or threats.

Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to:

- o Yelling or speaking in an aggressive or threatening manner
- o Interrupting instruction or meetings
- o Refusing to follow staff directions or safety protocols
- o Entering school spaces without permission or bypassing check-in procedures
- o Using social media to intimidate or harass school community members

3. Communicate Constructively: Address concerns or conflicts in a respectful and solution-focused manner through the appropriate channels.

4. Follow School Policies and Procedures: Adhere to school rules, policies, and procedures, including visitor protocols and security measures.

5. Model Appropriate Behavior: Demonstrate civility and good sportsmanship at all school events, meetings, and activities.

Conduct on School Premises, at School-Sponsored Events, and During Transportation
When on school grounds, attending school-sponsored activities, or engaging with school transportation services, parents, guardians, and caregivers are expected to:

- Comply with all school security procedures, including check-in protocols.
- Refrain from disruptive or inappropriate behavior, including yelling, using offensive language, or engaging in physical confrontations.
- Remain in authorized areas only and do not leave the main office without explicit permission from school personnel.
- Follow all staff directions and cooperate with school personnel, including bus drivers and transportation monitors.
- Refrain from using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs on school property, school buses, or at school events.
- Support and encourage positive participation in school functions.

Interactions with Students

- Concerns about student behavior should be directed to school staff.
- Interactions with students should always be appropriate, respectful, and supportive.
- While on school grounds, parents should not be communicating with students other than their children about any school-related concerns, and shall not engage in retaliation, intimidation, or coercion of students who may be a witness or otherwise participating or anticipated to participate in a school investigation.

Interactions with Other Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers

- Engage in respectful and productive communication.
- Avoid personal conflicts on school property or at school events.
- Refrain from spreading misinformation or engaging in disruptive behavior on social media related to the school community.

Interactions with School Employees

- Treat teachers, administrators, staff, and transportation personnel with courtesy and respect.
- Schedule appointments for discussions rather than approaching staff during instructional time.
- Express concerns professionally and through the proper channels.
- Understand that school staff have the best interests of all students in mind and work within policies and regulations.

Addressing Concerns

If a parent, guardian, or caregiver has a concern regarding a school-related matter, they should:

- Contact the appropriate teacher, staff member, or administrator in a respectful manner.
- Classroom or extracurricular activity concerns should only be brought to the school administration after the concerns have been raised directly with the teacher, staff member, director, or coach.
- Follow the school's communication protocols to resolve concerns.
- Avoid confrontational behavior or public disputes on school grounds, at events, or during student transportation.

Consequences of Violating the Code of Conduct

Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in:

- A verbal or written warning.
- Restrictions on access to school property or events.
- A meeting with the school administration to discuss concerns.
- In cases involving school-sponsored athletic events or extracurriculars, caregivers who are removed from an event due to misconduct may, in addition to other consequences, be suspended from attending future events for a specified number of games, typically no fewer than two, with the exact length determined by school administration based on a variety of factors, including the severity of the incident.
- Legal action or involvement of law enforcement.

Conclusion

We appreciate the partnership and involvement of parents, guardians, and caregivers in our schools. By working together respectfully and collaboratively, we can ensure a positive learning environment for all students. Thank you for your cooperation in upholding these standards.

MJ-8/25

Pelham School Student Bill of Rights

At Pelham School, every kid matters! These are the rights we all have at school.

1. The Right to Learn

- I have the right to learn new things every day.
- I can ask questions, try my best, and make mistakes as part of learning.

2. The Right to Feel Safe

- I have the right to feel safe at school, in class, and on the playground.
- No one is allowed to bully, hurt, or scare me.
- I can always talk to a teacher or adult if I feel unsafe.

3. The Right to Respect

- I have the right to be treated with kindness and fairness.
- I can be proud of who I am—my culture, language, gender, religion and abilities.
- I must also respect others.

4. The Right to Speak and Be Heard

- I have the right to share my ideas and opinions.
- I can ask for help when I need it.
- My voice matters in class and at school.

5. The Right to Belong

- I have the right to be included in learning, play, and activities.
- I have the right to get the support I need to do my best.
- Everyone belongs here!

6. The Right to Privacy

- I have the right to keep my things and personal information safe.
- I can use technology safely, and my privacy should be protected.

7. The Right to Play and Joy

- I have the right to recess, play, and have fun at school.
- I can enjoy learning, friendships, and creativity every day.

☀ Our Promise: Teachers, students, and families work together to make sure everyone's rights are respected.

Amherst-Pelham Public Schools Student Code of Conduct Introduction

- We believe everyone deserves a safe, supportive, and orderly learning environment.
- We encourage appropriate behaviors by teaching, guiding, directing, and providing opportunities for new learning to occur.
- We create opportunities for students to practice and succeed in making responsible and effective choices in order to reach their academic potential and contribute to the school community.

In Amherst-Pelham Public Schools, students have rights and privileges as well as responsibilities. While the school system has an obligation to provide an education for all students, we have set high standards for students to conduct themselves in a way that is respectful and helps to build a positive climate essential for learning. All of the elementary schools have identified core values as part of the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

The purpose of the Code of Conduct Handbook is two-fold:

1. To illustrate expected appropriate and respectful student behaviors
2. To describe inappropriate or disruptive behaviors and the levels of interventions and consequences associated with the behaviors

Equally important to sharing what is expected of students is that school and district instructional practices support character development, the development of self-control, and positive behavior choices. Developing positive and effective student behaviors is best achieved through collaborative partnerships with school, home, and community organizations and agencies.

We support appropriate student behaviors that facilitate learning and minimize disruption in several ways. *Second Step* and *Character Strong*, social skills programs which are designed to teach empathy, problem solving skills, self-regulation, and emotion management, are taught in our elementary schools. The Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) framework enables our schools to work towards the development of a culturally responsive climate that promotes positive student learning outcomes with a focus on prevention of behavioral challenges that may interfere with learning.

The focus of this Code of Conduct Handbook is to guide student behavior, to link interventions to improve student behavior, and inform others that will assist school staff in creating safe and orderly environments. The rules and expectations outlined have been developed so that a combination of consistent, fair, proactive, corrective, and instructive strategies will be implemented in every classroom and every school, and opportunities for teachers to teach and students to learn will be achieved. As a result, students, staff, and families all benefit.

Levels of Interventions

The Amherst-Pelham Schools utilizes the Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS) framework which includes proactive strategies for defining, supporting, and teaching appropriate behaviors to create positive learning environments. Attention is focused on sustaining a tiered system of support to enhance student learning. Students often need encouragement and new skills to improve their behavior and assistance in learning to do so. School staff recognizes that maintaining and changing student behaviors involves a continuum of acknowledgements, supports, and interventions.

(Center for Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, University of Oregon)

Three Levels of Intervention

Tier 1—All Students

Includes:

- General curriculum enhanced by acknowledgments of positive behaviors, and clearly stated expectations that are applied to all students.
- Delivery of Social Emotional Curriculum (Character Strong & Second Step).

Tier 2—Targeted Interventions

Focus on:

- Specific interventions for students who do not respond to universal efforts
- Targeted groups of students who require more support
- Interventions that are part of a continuum of behavioral supports needed in schools
- Individual brief pull out counseling as needed.

Tier 3—Intensive Individualized Interventions

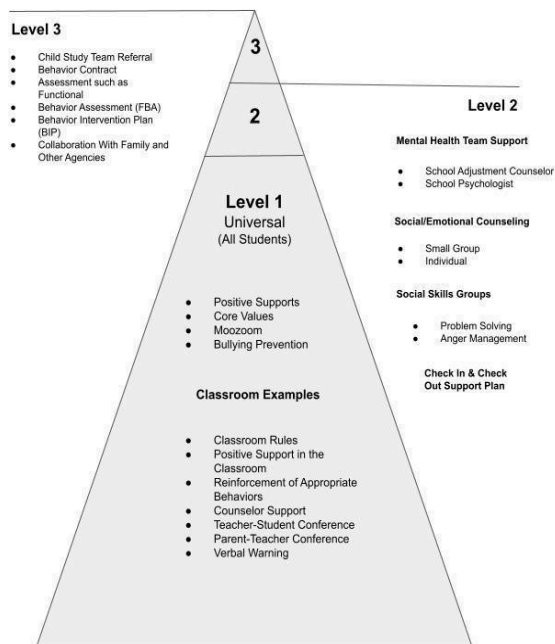
Focus on:

- The needs of individual students who exhibit a pattern of problem behaviors
- Diminishing problem behaviors and increasing the student's social skills and functioning
- Interventions involving functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans

The Three Levels of Intervention

Interventions may include (but are not limited to) the examples below

The Three Levels of Intervention
Interventions may include (but are not limited to) the examples below.



The Code of Student Conduct shall apply to all students during school hours on school property, including:

- in school buildings
- on school grounds
- in all school vehicles
- at all school, school-related, or Board-sponsored activities, including but not limited to:
 - school field trips
 - school sporting events (*whether such activities are held on school property or at locations off school property, including private business or commercial establishments*)

Levels of Interventions and Consequences for Violations of the Code of Student Conduct

As with any incident of student behavior, school administrators must exercise informed judgment as to whether a student’s actions constitute a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. The levels, shown on the following page, guide administrators to use progressive interventions to change student behaviors. The administrator always has the option to use an intervention from a lower level as long as one from the prescribed level is also employed.

Levels of Disciplinary Response

When students are disruptive or behave inappropriately, school personnel respond logically, appropriately and consistently. The Amherst-Pelham Public Schools *Code of Conduct 2017-18* describes four levels of possible response to inappropriate or disruptive behavior. Each inappropriate or disruptive behavior category is assigned to one or more of these levels of intervention and response. School personnel should use only the levels suggested for each behavior. If the inappropriate or disruptive behavior is assigned to two or more levels, then the lowest level of intervention and disciplinary response should be used first. For example, if a student refuses to follow directions, school personnel should first use intervention strategies and responses in Level 1 before moving to Level 2. When school personnel respond to student misbehavior, they are expected to take into account the age, health, or special education status of the student; the appropriateness of the student’s academic placement; the student’s prior conduct and record of behavior; the student’s willingness to repair the harm; the seriousness of the behavior and the degree of harm caused; and the impact of the incident when determining the level of intervention and consequences **Repeated chronic or cumulative offenses may require higher levels of interventions/consequences.** For serious violations, interventions/ consequences may begin at a higher level.

Level	Levels of Disciplinary Responses for Violations of the Code of Student Conduct Framework-PBIS & Restorative Practices Revised August, 2025	
1	Classroom Interventions/Consequences <i>Teachers use these interventions/consequences to help students change behavior in the classroom. Typically used when no or limited prior incidents have occurred.</i>	
	Classroom Interventions	Consequences for students who engage in the negative behavior
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give behavioral choices ● Use planned ignoring of negative behavior ● Review core values/expectations ● Skill building-lessons using Social Emotional Curriculum ● Skill practice/role play ● Class problem solving meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reinforce appropriate behaviors ● Provide Rule Reminders or redirection ● Give a warning ● Loss of privileges (connected to behavior) ● Seat change ● Repair ● In-class time out ● Buddy classroom

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modify classroom environment (seat change, proximity) ● Provide take a break space (sensory center, peace corner, calming down space) ● Teach and practice self-regulation strategies ● Incentive for appropriate behaviors ● Use school-wide PBIS ● Restorative Circles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written reflection about incident (Think sheet) ● Teacher conference with student ● Parent contact
2	<p>Used when frequency/duration of the behavior increases or when the intensity of the behavior poses significant physical/emotional harm. Referral to support staff personnel or the administrator is necessary when level 1 intervention and consequences have been put in place and have not been successful.</p>	
	<p>Classroom/Individual student Interventions</p>	<p>Consequences for students who engage in the negative behavior</p>

- Parent/guardian involvement (Daily home/school communication)
- Conference with counselor
- Give behavioral choices
- Conflict resolution
- Peer mediation
- Restorative problem solving circle meeting
- Student support plan including:
 - Scheduled breaks
 - Check In/Check Out
- Social/emotional/behavioral or academic skill building
- Mentoring (including meeting with mentors, younger/older students, silent mentoring, etc.)
- In-class coaching by counselor or paraprofessional
- Use school-wide PBIS system
- Implement Class-wide behavior goal/incentive
- Grade-level Guidance meetings
- Child Study Team
- Functional Behavior Assessment Behavior Intervention Plan Short Form
- Observation – Consultation with counselor or psychologist
- Consultation with outside service providers/agencies

- Conference with parent/guardian
- Phone call/letter to parent or guardian
- Behavior contract with counselor and/or administration (with incentive as needed)
- Teacher and/or administrator conference with student and/or parent
- Office referral /Office time out (student comes with work)
- Restorative practices (problem solving circle meeting, repair/community service)
- Working lunch

3

In School Suspension

Used for extreme or intensive disruptive behavior that poses significant physical/emotional harm to self and/or others.

Classroom/Individual student Interventions

Consequences for students who engage in the negative behavior

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior/EH documentation review • Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan • Observation and consultation with Behavior Specialist • Referral for Special Education Evaluation • Consultation with District Programs • Consultation with outside service providers/agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-School Suspension • Parent/guardian notification required • Conference with parent/guardian • Phone call/letter to parent or guardian • Behavior contract with counselor and/or administration (with incentive as needed) • Teacher and/or administrator conference with student and/or parent • Office referral /Office time out (student comes with work) • Restorative practices (problem solving circle meeting, repair/community service) • Restricted participation in activities
4	<p>Out of School Suspension Used for extreme or intensive behavior that seriously disrupted the learning environment and created a safety risk in the school. <i>Used very rarely at administrator's discretion. Parent/guardian notification is required. Upon re-entry the following interventions and/or consequences should be considered.</i></p>	
	<p>Classroom/Individual student Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-entry plan with school staff that includes specific intervention supports. • Follow protocols for Manifestation Determination for students with an IEP. • Risk Assessment if necessary • Behavior/EH documentation review • Observation and consultation with Behavior Specialist • Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan • Referral for Special Education Evaluation • Consultation with District Programs • Consultation with outside service providers/agencies 	<p>Consequences for students who engage in the negative behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior contract with counselor and/or administration (with incentive as needed) • Teacher and/or administrator conference with student and/or parent • Restorative practices (problem solving circle meeting, repair/community service) • Restricted participation in an activity

Appendix A



Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Visitor Parking:

Space in the school parking lot is limited. **Please be vigilant when parking** because children may be outside playing and in crosswalks. Please do not park on the hardtops. (There may not be children there when you arrive, but a class might be on its way out to that playground.) The area in front of the school must be kept clear for buses. Please note that the state law, which prohibits a vehicle passing a school bus that is loading or unloading children, also applies to buses parked in the bus loading area. Parents/guardians should follow the parking plan to drop students off in front of the school in the morning, or park at the back of the library in the designated spaces there for drop off or parent/guardian pick up in the afternoon.

Front Parking Lot Traffic Plan

The parking lot near the front office experiences a high amount of traffic in the morning, and on occasion in the afternoon. Due to the level of activity we have developed a traffic flow plan and request that you please review and help to support. On the following page, a traffic flow map illustrates the drop off point and the direction that traffic will flow. Staff members will be out there daily to monitor and support adherence to this plan. We welcome your feedback and suggestions in making this plan work.

Important Rules to Remember:

- Pull up to the **orange cone** to drop-off (nearest spot to K-2) entrance. If there are other cars in front of you, please pull up behind them. Do not try to pull up in front of them as cars pull away from the curb very quickly.
- There is **no parking** in the drop off lane. Parents/guardians are requested to park in the back parking lot if your student needs additional time to get in or out.
- Please **do not** stop by the flower garden to drop off. This backs up traffic into Amherst Road.
- Traffic will be on a one-way flow pattern. Please proceed with caution.
- **Please do not drop off and make a U-turn in the parking lot. This is extremely dangerous.**
- Students must exit the vehicle in the drop off lane on the passenger side of the car.
- If you plan to park in the parking lot, you must follow the one-way flow of traffic and go around the parking spaces in the center of the parking lot.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and support in implementing this plan that will increase the safety of our parking lot!

Pelham School Parking Lot Plan

