

**Ayer Shirley Regional School District
PreSchool - Grade 8
Student/Parent Handbook
2018 - 2019**



**Ensuring, Equity, Equality, and Access for All:
Connecting to Every Learner**

Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School (ASRMS) Grades 6-8

“Our goal is to provide a challenging learning atmosphere in a school which fosters mutual respect and a safe environment for all.”

**Page Hilltop Elementary School (PH) PreSchool - Grade 5
Lura A. White Elementary School (LAW) PreSchool - Grade 5**

“Growing young minds...one child at a time.”

www.asrsd.org

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A Message from Our Principals

“Doing your best is more important than always being the best”

Dear Student and Parents/Guardian:

On behalf of the faculty and staff we would like to welcome you to the 2018-2019 school year.

Our schools take pride in being inclusive schools, built upon a safe and caring learning environment. We will offer each and every student an opportunity to realize academic success as well as social-emotional growth. As we expect the best from all of our students, we must also expect the best from ourselves. As school communities, we will continually strive to improve in all aspects of the educational process. Our school goals are outlined in the School Strategy Plans which can be accessed from our District Website or in hard copy from our school offices.

The support of our parents and community is vital to the success of our schools. There will be many opportunities for parents to volunteer, visit, and share in the “highlights” of the school year. Let your child know how important his/her education is to you. They are our students and your children, which makes them special to all of us. Please feel free to stop by the main school offices, at any time, to share ideas or voice concerns. Please review this handbook with your child and return the signature page to your child’s homeroom teacher. Please keep this handbook in your home for quick and easy reference, or note its location on the District webpage.

We welcome you back and look forward to a wonderful school year with our ASRSD students and families.

Sincerely,

Roberta A. Aikey, Principal, Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School

Frederick C. Deppe, Principal, Page Hilltop Elementary School

Varsha B. Desai, Principal, Lura A. White Elementary School



Vision Statement

Our vision is to connect, engage, and inspire all students in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District to reach academic excellence. We, the educators of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, will instill habits of reflection and inquiry to challenge our students in setting ambitious academic and personal goals. Students will develop a strong voice to express thoughts and ideas in the community, and the confidence to showcase their talents and successes in preparation for entry into college and the world of work.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to educate—and to graduate—all of our students, and to foster a safe and respectful environment where each student develops the skills, character, and values needed to become a productive member of a global society.

Core Beliefs

- ❖ We have high expectations for all students. Every student deserves a quality education.
- ❖ We believe in a personalized learning environment.
- ❖ Successful students are independent thinkers and doers, and persevere in finding solutions to problems.
- ❖ An educated child is one who has developed and evolved as a “whole child”- in the academic, social, emotional, personal, and cultural domains.
- ❖ Habits of reflection, setting goals, and measuring one’s progress support lifelong learning.
- ❖ Respect for self, property and others is essential to a healthy learning community.
- ❖ Psychological and physical safety are necessary for learning.
- ❖ Service to others builds character, is supportive of personal growth and career development, and connects students to the real world.
- ❖ Educators, students, families, and communities partnering together results in high quality educational programming.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District does not discriminate in its programs and activities and follows Massachusetts General Law-Chapter 622 which states that no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, housing status or limited English speaking ability.

Mr. William Plunkett, Title IX Coordinator for staff and students, is vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all complaints of discrimination brought under the provisions of the statutes listed below. Any student or staff who feels that he/she has been harassed or discriminated against because of his/her race, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability should contact Mr. Plunkett whose office is located in the Page Hilltop School at 115 Washington Street, Ayer MA 01432, 978-772-8600 ext. 1510. If the student prefers, he/she may file a complaint with any teacher or counselor, who will then bring the complaint to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator. This filing must be within thirty (30) business days of the event or events giving rise to the grievance or within thirty (30) business days from the date the aggrieved party had knowledge or reasonably should have had knowledge of the event or events giving rise to the grievance.

It is the policy of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District to deal with discrimination complaints at the individual school level whenever possible. However, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, a student may file a written complaint with the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall respond in writing within thirty (30) days. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, he/she may take the complaint to Massachusetts Department of Education, Program Quality Assurance, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 or other appropriate federal or state agency. The Section 504, Title VI and Title IX Coordinator for Ayer Shirley Regional School District is Mary Beth Hamel, Assistant Superintendent (978) 772-8600 x1509.

Please reference ASRSD School Committee Policies: Non-Discrimination File: AC and Sexual Harassment File: ACAB

Legal Refs:

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504	Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975	Civil Rights Restoration Act 1988
M.G.L. 7B: et seq. Chapter 766 & Acts of 1972	Age Discrimination of Employment Act (ADEA)
Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1964	Equal Pay Act
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004)

State and Federal Remedies

In addition to the above, if you believe that you have been subject to sexual harassment, you may file a complaint with either of the government agencies set forth below. Using the complaint process of the ASRSD Public Schools does not prohibit the filing of a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC - 180 days and MCAD - 6 months).

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity
Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
800-669-4000

Massachusetts Commission Against
Discrimination - Boston Office
The John McCormack Building
One Ashburton Place - Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
617-994-6000

Contact Information

Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School (ASRMS)

**1 Hospital Road
Shirley, MA 01464
978-772-8600
978-425-0474 (fax)**

Principal Roberta A. Aikey	raikey@asrsd.org	x1206
Assistant Principal Bryan E. Oelerich	boelerich@asrsd.org	x1201
Administrative Assistant Bettina M. Libby	blibby@asrsd.org	x1200
Clerical Assistant, Tracey Sargent	tsargent@asrsd.org	x1279
School Counselor Megan K. Cushing	mcushing@asrsd.org	x1209
School Counselor Mary Sharon Webb	swebb@asrsd.org	x1205
School Psychologist Rachael A. Fusco	rfusco@asrsd.org	x1275
Nurse Cathy V. Mitchell, RN	cmitchell@asrsd.org	x1207
Attendance Line		x1297

Page Hilltop Elementary School (PH)

**115 Washington Street
Ayer, MA 01432
978-772-8600
978-772-8631(fax)**

Principal Frederick C. Deppe	fdeppe@asrsd.org	x1400
Assistant Principal Elizabeth C. Lewis	elewis@asrsd.org	x1426
Administrative Assistant Gail A. Januskiewicz	gjanuskiewicz@asrsd.org	x1401
Administrative Assistant Margaret J. Carlson	pcarlson@asrsd.org	x1402
School Counselor Rachel Savoie (Gr 2-5)	rsavoie@asrsd.org	x1424
School Counselor/Psychologist Katherine R. Kenyon (PreK-1)	kkenyon@asrsd.org	x1436
Nurse Jody A. Boudreau, RN	jboudreau@asrsd.org	x1406
Attendance Line	pcarlson@asrsd.org	x1497

Lura A. White Elementary School (LAW)

**34 Lancaster Road
Shirley, MA 01464
978-772-8600
978-425-2639 (fax)**

Principal Varsha B. Desai	vdesai@asrsd.org	x1101
Assistant Principal Catherine A. Koch	ckoch@asrsd.org	x1105
Administrative Assistant Sandra Ferguson	sferguson@asrsd.org	x1100
Clerical Assistant, Tracey Sargent	tsargent@asrsd.org	x1160
School Counselor Dr. Jayne L. Garrett	jgarrett@asrsd.org	x1104
School Psychologist Kathy R. Kenyon	kkenyon@asrsd.org	x1436
Nurse Patricia A. Langston, RN	plangston@asrsd.org	x1103
Attendance Line	sferguson@asrsd.org	x1100

Ayer Shirley Regional School District Offices
115 Washington Street (located at Page Hilltop Elementary School)
Ayer, MA 01432
978-772-8600
978-772-1863 (fax)

Superintendent Mary E. Malone, Ed. D.	mmalone@asrsd.org	x1507
Assistant Superintendent Charlie Caliri	ccaliri@asrsd.org	x1447
Director of Student Services Mary Beth Hamel	mhamel@asrsd.org	x1509
Administrative Assistant Michelle C. Towne	mtowne@asrsd.org	x1508
Title IX Coordinator William J. Plunkett	wplunkett@asrsd.org	x1510
Food Service Coordinator Susan A. Parker	sparker@asrsd.org	x1512

Special Education Office
115 Washington Street (located at Page Hilltop Elementary School)
Ayer, MA 01432
978-772-8600
978-772-8609 (fax)

Special Education Director Tara A. Bozek	tbozek@asrsd.org	x1407
Administrative Assistant Linda M. Harrington	lharrington@asrsd.org	x1408
Administrative Assistant Doreen L. Mahoney	dmahoney@asrsd.org	x1480

Ayer Child Care Program Director Patricia A. Russell	prussell@asrsd.org	x1467
Shirley Extended Day Program Director Susan E. Noll	snoll@asrsd.org	x1128
Family Partnership and Schools of the 21 st Century Director Deanna M. Christie	dchristie@asrsd.org	x1428
Homeless Coordinator Frederick C. Deppe	fdeppe@asrsd.org	x1400
Title I Coordinator Mary Beth Hamel	mhamel@asrsd.org	x1509
EL Coordinators Emily Babineau & Liz Hoeske	ebabineau@asrsd.org ehoeske@asrsd.org	x1409

Dee Bus Company	Sandra Martin - Manager	978-425-4706
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Non-Academic Support Services

School Counseling Services

All of our schools have school counselors. They assist students in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and positive attitude necessary to enhance attendance, school behavior, and academic achievement. They use a developmental model, emphasizing prevention and early identification. Much of this work takes place during lessons in the classroom, during consultations with parents, teachers, and other professionals, or during collaborative meetings. The school counselors contribute to the safe school climate through school-wide programming addressing issues such as bullying prevention. Crisis intervention and related services are provided as needed. Parents and teachers are welcome to contact the counselors to discuss any school related concerns. The guidance counselors are also happy to share information about community resources such as support groups, therapists, and financial support for families experiencing difficulties.

William James College INTERFACE Referral Service

INTERFACE is a mental health counseling resource and referral Helpline that our communities of Ayer and Shirley have contracted with to help children, adults and families when in need of a mental health counseling resource. This service is available at no cost to residents of Ayer and Shirley. If you need a mental health referral for your child or anyone in your family who resides in Ayer or Shirley, call the helpline at 617-332-3666 x 1411 or 888-244-6843 x 1411 between the hours of 9:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. A case referral specialist will make every effort to find a mental health specialist who has an opening matched with your insurance carrier within 2 weeks. You can see a complete listing of towns with this referral service as well as read the latest articles and advice on childhood and teen mental health topics at www.msppinterface.org. For more information, contact your child's ASRSD school counselor.

Child Abuse

Under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 51, Section A, all professional school employees, are required to report suspected instances of child abuse and neglect of any child under eighteen (18) years of age to the Department of Children and Families, Leominster, MA 01453, (978) 353-3600

Education of Homeless Children

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitled B-Education for Homeless Children and Youth) reauthorized in January 2002. In keeping with these requirements:

- Children who become homeless have the right to continue attending their school of origin, or enroll in the school of the district in which they are residing.
- Transportation will be provided for students in order to maintain continuity of their attendance in a single school over the course of the year.
- When a student is residing outside of the town due to circumstances related to homelessness (in accordance with the statutory definition of “homeless”) transportation will be coordinated with the District where the student is temporarily residing to provide transportation to the school of origin if this is the preference of the parent and student.

- The parents of a homeless child have the right to decide which one of the two (2) schools their child will attend. The options are:
 - The school in which the child was last enrolled, or
 - The school in the District in which the child is temporarily living.
- Women living in a battered women's shelter can give school officials the Post Office Box or mailing address of the shelter office, along with verification from the shelter director in which the children are residing in lieu of the street address. Transportation arrangements will be made in a manner that seeks not to disclose such shelter addresses.
- Questions or concerns regarding issues pertaining to homeless students should be referred to the District ASRSD Homeless Liaison, Fred Deppe, x1400.

Support Organizations

Ayer Shirley Education Foundation (ASEF)

The Ayer Shirley Education Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization that is supported by donations from individuals, businesses and organizations committed to improving the quality of education in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. Through a granting process, the Ayer Shirley Education Foundation disperses the tax-deductible donations to create specific new programs and professional training aimed at enriching the education of the students in the region. The Ayer Shirley Education Foundation may be contacted at info@ayershirleyeducationfoundation.org or ayershirleyeducationfoundation.org

PTO

The Parent Teacher Organizations are vital and active in Page Hilltop, Lura A White and the Ayer Shirley Middle School. They provide benefits to the students of each school. It is the hope of each PTO to expose all children to as many enriching experiences throughout the school year as possible. Membership drives are held in the spring and fall. Please check the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Website for more information.

SEPAC

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has a Parent Advisory Council for Special Education. This council is mandated by regulation and serves in an advisory capacity to the Director of Special Education and School Committee. For further information, please feel free to contact the sepacboosters@yahoo.com.

School Council

A school council is a representative, school based committee that is composed of the principal, parents, teachers and community members. Each school is required to establish a school council pursuant to Section 59C of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993.

The purpose of a school council is to provide a broad base of educational shareholders the opportunity to combine resources for the purpose of improving the mission and achievements of each school. The school council works collectively with the school principal for the purpose to:

- a) Assist and advise the principal in adopting educational goals for the school;
- b) Assist and advise the principal in the identification of students' educational needs;
- c) Assist and advise the principal in the formulation of a School Improvement Plan.

It is important to emphasize school councils serve in an advisory capacity. Parents interested in serving on school council should contact the building principal early in the fall.

Diversity

“Schools reflect the diversity of their communities and the increasing diversity of our society. School communities should respect and celebrate these differences. Schools should both honor the individual differences among their members and respect the diverse cultures and backgrounds, which they represent. In dealing with prejudice and stereotypes all types of diversity must be considered, including: age, appearance, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, physical ability, race, religion, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.

Ayer Shirley Regional District Schools acknowledge the responsibility to provide a safe, respectful and conducive learning environment for all of our students. Parents are encouraged to work with us to promote equality and understanding.

Anyone who exhibits prejudice and stereotyping in any form will face disciplinary action. This is considered a serious offense and will not be tolerated.

English Learner Education (ELE)

In accordance with state laws and regulations, Ayer Shirley Regional provides instruction in the language of English for students whose English language proficiency level is limited. English Learners (ELs) are identified through screening tools administered to those whose home language is not English and who demonstrate a language need. This program provides instruction for students according to the intensity of their need as learners of English.

Students who speak no English or limited English receive specialized instruction from licensed English as a Second Language (ESL) educators for part of the day with the remainder of their day in classes taught by Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) endorsed teachers. Sheltered English Instruction means that instruction is "sheltered" (or adjusted) in order to help students learn skills and knowledge in the core content areas—English language arts, math, science, social studies. English learners study the same subjects as their peers, but with simplified language and visual material presented in a comprehensible manner, to make information clearer and more understandable. The material used includes, but is not limited to, pictures, graphs, videos, computer programs, and manipulatives. Lessons and activities are designed so that the English language development of the student is addressed.

Information about services or eligibility can be obtained by contacting the building principal or the ESL Coordinator, Emily Babineau, ebabineau@asrsd.org, Liz Hoeske, ehoeske@asrsd.org, 978-772-8600 x1409

Ayer Police Department and Shirley Police Departments

"The Ayer Shirley Regional School District and the Ayer and Shirley Police Departments agree to coordinate their efforts and share information in order to prevent violence involving the students of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, to prevent the use, abuse and distribution of alcohol and other controlled substances involving the students of Ayer Shirley Regional School District and to promote a safe and nurturing environment in the school community."

Academics

State and Local Assessment

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the federal government require a variety of assessments be administered to students. In addition, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District may administer nationally normed standardized tests. These scores are used to determine individual, school, and district progress. Some assessments are administered to all students, while others are administered only to English language learners.

Academic life is at the heart of Ayer Shirley Regional Schools. Our goal is to support our students' academic development and foster learning across a spectrum of disciplines.

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan

Massachusetts General Laws require the adoption and implementation of a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). This plan is intended to guide principals and teachers in ensuring that all possible efforts are made to meet student needs in general education classrooms and to support teachers in analyzing and accommodating the wide range of student learning styles and needs that exist in any school. By describing in a document the accommodations, instructional supports and strategies that are available in general education, and the process for determining effective interventions for struggling learners, it is hoped that this DCAP will help support diverse learners in our schools.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 38Q1/2 "A school district shall adopt and implement a curriculum accommodation plan to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet the students' needs in regular education. The plan shall be designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all children in the regular classroom and in providing appropriate services and support within the regular education programming, including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in reading and provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning, or who do not qualify for special education services under chapter 71B. The curriculum accommodation plan shall include provisions encouraging teacher mentoring and collaboration and parental involvement."

Student Records

The following is a summary of the major parent and student rights regarding their student records, as provided by the Regulations pertaining to student records.

Inspection of Records

A parent/guardian has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be available to the parent/guardian no later than two (2) days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent/guardian has the right to receive copies of any part of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

Confidentiality of Records

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian. In addition, any person inspecting or releasing information in the temporary record must note which portion was inspected or released and for what purpose, in a log that is kept as a part of the temporary record.

Authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's records without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving, or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.

As of 1998 Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the school principal.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he/she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

Books and Homework

Books Students are responsible for the care and the return of all books, materials, and/or equipment issued by the school. Charges will be assessed for the replacement cost of lost, damaged, or destroyed materials. All textbooks should be covered to avoid damage to them.

Homework At all levels, homework is an integral part of a student's education. To be truly effective, homework must include active participation and cooperation on the part of the students, teachers, and parents. Homework provides the student an opportunity to work independently, to develop study skills, to enrich the total learning process, and to expand experiences that enhance class instruction.

Teachers will assign homework on a regular basis. Homework assignments may include writing, reading, or studying assignments. Teachers will collect and review, check, or grade assignments and return them to students as soon as possible to preserve effectiveness. Homework assignments may be part of the student's grade.

The student's responsibility is to complete all homework assignments promptly and thoroughly. Students must understand the assignment, its purpose, how it should be completed, and when it is due. A guideline for teachers is to assign approximately ten (10) minutes of homework per grade. For example, a student in grade three might expect to have 30 minutes of homework in a given evening. In addition, students are asked to read nightly.

Parents should provide an environment conducive to effective home study, encourage their children to complete all homework assignments, encourage them to properly prepare for tests and quizzes, and assist when necessary.

Homework/Make-up Work Due to Extended Absence

If necessary because of an extended excused absence, parents may request homework by adding this to the attendance line message.

When the student returns to school, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to discuss missed assignments and make-up procedures. It is neither beneficial nor realistic to recreate the entire missed learning experience for every missed assignment. The teacher will determine what studies missed during an absence need to be completed. The determination of make-up assignments will be made upon the student’s return to school.

In addition, teachers are not required to provide assistance, make-up work, or the opportunity to make up quizzes or tests for students missing school due to unexcused absences. They may, however, choose to do so at their discretion.

School Cancellations, Delayed Openings, and Emergency Early Dismissals

The following procedures will be followed for a school closing/school delay/early dismissal:

1. A decision on no school or school delay will be made as early as possible, preferably between 5:00-5:30 am.
2. Please note that a delay may be for 1 hour or 2 hours.
3. Families will receive a call and email through AP Notify.
4. School closing/delay will be announced on Channels 4, 5, 7, & Fox 25.
5. The no school/delay announcement will be posted on Facebook, the District Website www.asrsd.org, and tweeted via Mary Malone @marymalone7.

Other Important Reminders:

- The Ayer Childcare Program & Shirley extended day will both be closed when the schools are closed.
- AM pre-school sessions are cancelled in the event of a delayed opening.
- School start times for a delayed opening:

	<u>1 hour delay</u>	<u>2 hour delay</u>
Middle School	8:50	9:50
Page Hilltop	9:45	10:45
Lura A. White	9:45	10:45

Early Dismissal:

It may become necessary to close schools early due to an emergency. In the event of an early or emergency dismissal, all afterschool and evening activities will be cancelled. In the event of an early or emergency dismissal, it is the responsibility of the parent to have a plan for parent pickup and/or childcare for their child.

Daily Schedules

	Drop Off	Breakfast	Class Start	Dismissal	Half Day (no lunch)	90 Min Early Release (lunch served)
ASRMS	7:35	7:35	7:50	2:20	11:20	12:50
Page Hilltop	8:30	8:15	8:45	3:15	12:15	1:45
Lura A. White	8:30	8:15	8:45	3:15	12:15	1:45

Attendance, Tardiness and Truancy

Attendance

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has adopted an Attendance Policy. A student shall not be repeatedly absent from school without legitimate cause. A student enrolled is expected to be present and punctual each day that school is in session.

Family vacations taken during school time are absences. Families should plan their vacations during the regularly scheduled school vacations and make appointments after school hours.

Regular attendance and on-time arrival are essential to sequential learning and necessary for satisfactory student progress. It is important that students are punctual and attend school each day. When an absence is unavoidable due to illness, bereavement, or other family emergency, the parent is expected to inform the school by phone, the day of the absence. If parents are unable to make phone contact, a written note or email from a parent or guardian must be brought to school on the first day of the student’s return to school. It is the student’s responsibility to make up all assignments, projects, and tests missed during the absence. We do not assign homework to be completed while a student is absent from school due to a family vacation since we believe homework supports daily classroom instruction. We do suggest that

you ask your child to read daily or write in a journal about their vacation. Teachers may assign appropriate make up work when students return to school.

Students cannot participate in school-sponsored afternoon or evening activities on the day of an absence unless approved beforehand by the principal.

Tardiness

If a student is tardy (late for school), he/she must report to the office (preferably accompanied by their parent) before going to class. Students who are habitually tardy or absent without an adequate excuse are considered truant.

Absences

All student absences are to be reported to the school main office before 9:00 a.m. If the school does not receive a call, the parents will receive an automated call from the school to notify you that your child is not in school.

MGL Title XII, Chapter 76, Section I states that students may be excused for necessary absences not exceeding seven (7) days in a six month period or fourteen (14) half days.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

A student's absence will be excused, with proper documentation within 72 hours, for the following reasons:

- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- Illness (with medical documentation if 3 or more consecutive days)
- Professional health appointment
- School related field trips
- Observance of major religious holidays
- Legal/court appointments
- Registry of Motor Vehicles appointments; with prior approval from the administration

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school principal.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his or her character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

If a student is going to be absent, parent should call the school's attendance phone line.

Absences not outlined above are considered unexcused.

Parent/Guardian or Physician's Notes

A parent/guardian call, email, or note (or a physician's note) is required whenever a child has been absent, tardy, or dismissed early. Each note should include

- The student's name
- The homeroom/classroom teacher's name
- The date(s) the child was absent or tardy, or is to be dismissed early
- Whether he/she was absent or tardy or is to be dismissed, and the reason
- If your student is to be dismissed, please also state the time he/she will leave school, and whether he/she will return that day.

Physical Education Health Concerns

Students expecting exclusion from PE class for a medical reason must provide the teacher and the nurse with a note from the physician. Parent notes are not adequate unless the requested time of exemption is for one lesson. If a child has specific physical limitations that a parent needs to alert the PE teacher about, parents must send that alert to the nurse who will notify the teacher.

Truancy

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) defines truancy as: "an absence that is not excused by school district policy". Numerous unexplained absences and excessive tardiness will be referred to the principal for investigation and may result in truancy action.

Missing school without a legitimate reason is considered truancy and is a violation of state law. (MGL 76:20) When a student is truant, the principal and/or his/her designee will assume responsibility for contacting parents at once. The state law defines truancy as unexcused absences totaling more than seven full days or fourteen half days in a six month period (MGL 76:1-2). However, it can also be interpreted as a loss of more than forty-two (42) hours of school.

Consequences of Truancy through Excessive Absenteeism and Tardiness

Many steps will be taken by the teachers and administration to reduce a student's truancy. Student conferences, warning letters, and parent conferences will occur as first intervention steps. There is a direct impact on student achievement when students repeatedly miss school or are tardy. Thus, students who have excessive absences and/or late arrivals to school most likely have significant gaps in their skills and content knowledge. Since these gaps will increasingly impair a student as he/she progresses through the grades, retention may be considered for students who are truant due to absences.

Additionally, the school may choose to file a CRA report (Child Requiring Assistance) with the Middlesex Juvenile Court.

Missing School for Family Trips

The School administration and staff remind parents and students that students who take vacations while school is in session disrupt not only their education but the education of their classmates because the class is altered for that period of time. We ask that parents make every effort to avoid taking students out of school while school is in session. If students do miss school, you must notify the school via the attendance line. The school cannot provide advance homework when students and their families vacation during times when school is in session. While the school does advocate quality family time together, the school cannot assume the responsibility of attempting to compensate a student's lost time in classes by advance homework assignments or duplicate instructional information because of a trip.

Other Important Information

Invitations

Birthday or any other invitation may not be distributed in school or on the school bus. Confidential information regarding students may not be distributed to the public.

Valuable Possessions/Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to bring toys to school unless requested by the teacher. Students should not bring electronic devices or valuable items to school. We are not responsible for lost or stolen possessions.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned educational experiences correlating closely with grade level curricula. Since these lessons occur away from the school grounds, permission slips signed by a parent/guardian must be returned prior to the student's participation. Students who have received three bus slips will need the principal's approval to participate on field trips. Some field trips may incur out of pocket costs, there will be no refunds.

Volunteers

Some volunteer opportunities include: assisting in the cafeteria and /or recess, shelving books in the library, helping in the classroom, reading with students, and after school activities. To avoid unnecessary distractions in the classroom, volunteers are not allowed to bring siblings during volunteer duty.

Visitor Procedure

Parents and other persons with valid reason to visit the Ayer Shirley Regional School District will be welcome according to the following procedures.

- Visitors must sign in upon entering at the main office and sign out when leaving. Visitors must wear a Visitor's badge at all times.
- Before and after school hours, parents and/or students may not enter a classroom unless accompanied by school personnel. Visitors require authorization to move beyond designated areas of the building.
- It is critical to maintain momentum of instruction in the classroom. Visitors disrupting any aspect of the educational process will be asked to leave the building.

- Parents do not need a visitor's badge to pick up a child. However, they will need to check in at the office, be prepared to provide identification and will be asked to remain in the office area.

Teachers must be notified ahead of time if a parent wishes to speak to them or visit during the school day. For the safety and supervision of all students, cafeteria and playground visits are discouraged. A strict adherence to these requirements is in the best interest of the safety and well-being of all our students.

Food Services

The cost for student lunch will be determined prior to the start of the school year.

2018-2019 School Meal Prices

Middle & Elementary School

Breakfast \$1.50

Lunch \$2.75

The snack line includes a variety of items that students can purchase as they proceed through the lunch line or can be purchased at self-serve vending machines. Students can pre-pay their lunches by bringing a check (preferred) or cash to the cafeteria manager preferably on Monday morning. Checks should be made payable to "Ayer Shirley Regional School District" or "ASRSD" with the student's name written on the memo line.

Free or Reduced Fee Meals

Applications for the Free or Reduced Fee Meals Program are available online and are sent home with students at the beginning of the academic year. Applications are also available throughout the year in the front office, or by contacting the Coordinator of Food Services, Susan Parker, at 978-772-8600 x1167

Food Services

- Offers breakfast and lunch to all of its students on a daily basis.
- All meals meet or exceed the USDA, National School Standards.
- Menus are posted monthly on the school Website and sent home either by e-copy or hard copy
- Menus are subject to change without notice

The Food Service Department applies a **No Charge Policy**. All meals, food, and drinks must be paid for at the time of purchase by cash or check or through MySchoolBucks.

Allergies

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Food Service makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to those with related food allergies. Our cafeteria staff works closely with the school's nurse to ensure the safety of all students. Specific circumstances may be referred to the school nurse.

Breakfast

All students may participate in the morning breakfast program. Breakfast consists of minimally 3 basic components: Milk, Fruit or Vegetable and Grain or Cereal.

Lunch

All students may participate in the school lunch program. Lunch consists of the five (5) basic components: Milk, Meat/Alternate, Fruits, Vegetables and Grain/Alternate.

Milk

½ pints of milk are available with every meal or may be purchased separately.

Special Education and Student Services

Rights of Parents of Disabled Children

Parents and their disabled children (who are students) have rights under various federal and state laws including the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA-97), Sections 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Massachusetts Chapter 71B of the Acts of the 1972, the Comprehensive Special Education Law. Information with respect to these laws is available from the Special Education Office.

Eligibility:

- currently has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity;
- has a record of such an impairment or;
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

When a parent (or guardian) or district personnel believe that a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity and the student is in need of accommodations, a § 504 referral may be initiated. Parents must be given Notice of § 504 Evaluation and Parental Consent. The district must then conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility and accommodations.

Students with Disabilities (Americans with Disabilities Act):

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District complies with ADA policy concerning participation of students with disabilities. All reasonable accommodations will be made to allow students with disabilities to participate. Our Special Education Director Tara Bozek, is the School District's ADA Coordinator and can be contacted at 978-772-8600 extension ext. 1407.

§ 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The purpose of the § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is to prohibit discrimination and assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness Philosophy

Effective management of health care needs requires a partnership among the student, the parent(s) or guardian(s), the primary care provider, and the adults who work with the student at school. The school nurse works closely with all disciplines to coordinate the resources of school, home, and community as they pertain to the total health of individual students.

First Aid

Treatment will be administered for minor injuries during the school day. When a student becomes seriously injured, the parent is notified immediately. If the parent cannot be reached in an emergency, a person designated on the child's emergency card will be notified. If needed, the child will be transported to the nearest hospital. The school assumes no financial responsibility for ambulance transport or emergency room care. **It is essential that changes in emergency numbers be provided to the school promptly.**

Emergency Information

In the event of a student's illness, injury or school emergency we make every effort to contact parents quickly. However it is important to have current emergency numbers and clear instructions about the people to whom your child may be released in case a parent cannot be reached.

Emergency information forms were mailed home prior to the start of school. The front side contains information regarding release of children; the back of the form requests medical information. Please fill out both sides. Emergency release information and medical information with parental permission will be shared with the main office or necessary personnel.

Immunization Requirements

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires that all school children be properly immunized. All students must comply with this requirement. The only exceptions are for religious or medical reasons, and a signed statement by the parent/guardian or health care provider must be on file in the school health record.

Because additional immunizations are required for seventh grade, the school nurse will notify parents/guardians of students with incomplete immunization records. Immunizations must be completed prior to entry into 7th grade, or students will be subject to exclusion. The following immunizations are required for school entry and according to Massachusetts Department of Public Health:

- Measles Vaccine (MMR) - All students are required to have two (2) doses of Measles vaccine;
- Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus Vaccine (DPT) - All students entering 7th grade are required to have one booster dose of Td or TdP if it has been five (5) years or more since the last dose;
- Hepatitis B Vaccine - All students are required to have three (3) doses of Hepatitis B vaccine.
- Varicella (Chickenpox) – All students are required to have one (1) dose. Students entering Grade 7 must have two (2) doses or a physician certified reliable history of having had the disease. (If this vaccine is incomplete a child may be excluded from school for a period of time).
- Polio – three (3) to four (4) doses, depending upon the age the last dose was given.

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements

	Child Care/Preschool	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12
Hepatitis B	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses
DTaP/DP T/TD/Td	≥ 4 doses DTaP /DTP	5 doses DTaP/ DTP	≥ 4 doses DTaP/DTP or ≥ 3 doses Td	≥ 4 doses DTaP/DTP or ≥ 3 doses Td; Tdap
Polio	≥ 3 doses	4 doses	≥ 3 doses	≥ 3 doses
Hib	1 to 4 doses ⁶	N/A	N/A	N/A
MMR	1 dose	2 doses MMR	Grades 1-5: 2 doses Grade 6: 2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella	2 doses measles
Varicella	1 dose	2 doses	Grades 1-5: 2 doses Grade 6: 1 dose	2 doses

Students entering Pre-K and Kindergarten are required to provide proof of a lead screening test.

Physical Examinations

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires physical examinations of students during the first year after entrance into the public school system or within six (6) months before entrance. All students that have been transferred from another school should have health records transferred. Exemptions are allowed for religious reasons and a signed statement by the parent/guardian must be on file in the health record.

Preferred students must have a current yearly physical examinations on file in the Health Office or an updated physical must be on file **at least** every four (4) years:

- Physical exams for interscholastic sports are valid for thirteen (13) months after the date of the examination. There will be no doctor extension letters allowed per M.I.A.A. (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) regulations. A physical that is valid on the first day of the sport's season is now valid for the remainder of that sport's season. For example: Fall sports begin on September 10. If a student's physical is dated August 15 of the previous year, it will expire on September 15. The student will now be eligible to try out and participate in the complete fall sport season. He/she will need to get a new physical to participate in a winter sport. Students must have a physical on file with the school nurse that meets the above requirements prior to tryouts. The nurse must sign the student's Scholastic Permission Slip.

Mass General Law c71, s57 also requires physical examinations for:

1. Children referred because of frequent absences due to unexplained illness or physical defects that require repeated appraisal.
2. Children referred for a teacher-nurse conference because the child is not making expected progress in school or because of signs of illness noted by the teacher or nurse.
3. Children under 16 and over 14 requesting employment certificates.

Medication Policies

In compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, all medications to be taken during the school day should be brought to the school nurse by a parent or designated adult. Nurses will only accept up to a thirty (30) day supply of medication. Parent/guardian permission must be given in writing. In addition, the following requirements must be met:

- **Over the Counter Medications**
Physician authorization must be in writing for all over the counter medication, including: cough/cold remedies or pain relievers. **All medication must be in manufacturer labeled bottles.**
- **Prescription Medications**
All medications must be in a pharmacy labeled bottle (ask the pharmacist to dispense a duplicate bottle for use at school). For short- term antibiotics or medications to be given for less than ten (10) days, the parent signature and properly labeled bottle is sufficient authorization. **If the medication is to be administered for a longer time, or is an “as-needed” medication such as Albuterol, physician authorization must be in writing.**
- **Standing Orders**
Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) and EpiPen (Epinephrine) are available in the Nurse’s Office in case of severe allergic reaction. Nurses can administer Acetaminophen (Tylenol) based on her professional assessment and with written parental permission.
- **Self-Administration of Inhaler Medication**
A protocol has been developed to allow the responsible use of inhalers at school. After consultation with the school nurse and the self-administration form has been signed and understood by both parent and student, an inhaler will be allowed to be carried and self-administered.
- **EpiPen for Diagnosed Anaphylaxis** - With signed physician’s orders and a completed Allergy Emergency Health Care Plan, a student will be allowed to carry an EpiPen to have available in case of Anaphylaxis. Members of the educational team will be notified of the student’s diagnosis and EpiPen administration training will be provided. An EpiPen for that student will be available in the Nurse’s Office.

Just a reminder the all children receiving medication during the school day need to have on file in the nurse’s office written permission from a parent along with a written doctor’s order for Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen or ten (10) days of antibiotics. **Medication in baggies cannot be accepted.**

Health Screening

In compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, height, weight, vision and hearing screening is done annually on all 7th graders. Postural screening is done annually for all students in Grades 6-8. Parents will be notified of any significant findings with a recommendation for medical follow-up if appropriate.

Massachusetts law requires that all 7th grade students are weighed and measured by the school nurse and BMI’s (Body Mass Index) be sent to the parents. Heights and weights are measured once for each student during the 7th grade. In addition BMI’s will be sent home at the end of the school year. If you do

not wish to have your child weighed and measured, that request must be received **IN WRITING** no later than October 1 of the current school year.

School Attendance—Health Dismissal

The following guidelines are used to determine dismissals and may be helpful for parents to determine appropriate attendance. Keep your child home from school if he/she:

- has been vomiting or has had diarrhea
- has an oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher, flu or severe cold symptoms
- has a severe sore throat; If diagnosed with strep throat, students may not return to school until treated with antibiotics for a full twenty four (24) hours
- has pink bloodshot eyes with yellow or green drainage
- has a head or eye injury – **please notify the nurse upon student's return**

These are guideline and are not all-inclusive. The nurse reserves the right to dismiss a student who, in her opinion, is contagious or too ill to remain in school. Please report all illnesses to the school office before the start of the school day. Parents will be called if students are absent on the daily attendance without notification. Please notify the nurse via phone call, email, or note of any illness or condition that will require care during the school day or throughout the year.

Any student who becomes ill or is injured during the school day **must** report to the Nurse's Office.

Using Crutches in School

A child who needs to use crutches at any time during the school year **must** notify the nurse. The nurse will show him/her how to use the elevator and how to follow evacuation procedures, should they be needed.

Blood-Borne Pathogens

As part of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District's Exposure Control Plan, administration and staff, with the advice of the school nurse, Centers for Disease Control Guidelines, and Massachusetts State Department of Health adhere to OSHA's guidelines in handling blood-borne pathogens.

Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

Students with HIV or AIDS are entitled to full protection and rights under IDEA. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District complies with those protections.

School Health Services

The nurse is available to provide first aid to the sick and injured and promote an optimum level of wellness for students and staff. Please inform the nurse when there is a change in your child's health status or if your child has a chronic illness and requires specific medical consideration. If your child has a confirmed diagnosis of a contagious illness (strep throat, conjunctivitis, etc.) please notify the school. If emergency contact numbers or work numbers change, the office should be made aware of these changes. Injured students wearing a hard cast that can do inadvertent harm to classmates or themselves will not be allowed to participate in physical education (PE) until the hard cast is removed and the student is cleared to participate in PE by his/her medical doctor.

In accordance with General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts the nurse conducts yearly health screenings. Following is a list of mandated screening services:

Vision	K through 5
Hearing Screening.....	K through 3
Postural Screening.....	Grades 5-8
Height and Weight Assessment with Body Mass Index (BMI).....	Grades 1, 4, and 7

A dental program is provided by the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health & the Smiles Dental Program. With parental permission a Registered Dental Hygienist screens children in Kindergarten and provides cleaning and fluoride treatments for children in Grades 2 and 4.

Safety Plan

Current events within our country have required all of us to have a heightened sense of awareness with regard to a potential crisis. In light of this, we have developed the following information guide to assist parents in knowing what to expect should an emergency evacuation or other situation occur.

Safety Planning and Training

Parents need to know that the following actions have been taken and are assessed on an ongoing basis for further interventions in our school district:

- Emergency contact numbers for students are continually updated (parents need to keep the school informed).
- Regular communication with local police and fire officials. The nursing staff has emergency information concerning students readily available. Emergency equipment and supply bags are packed for each school site. In addition, emergency plans for evacuation of students with medical needs are also in place.
- Ongoing staff leadership training, planning, and meetings regarding crisis planning and implementation of policies are conducted.
- Ongoing disaster planning is coordinated by the District Safety Team.

Evacuation of Building During Crisis

In the event that we have to evacuate our school buildings or secure children within the building, parents can expect the following:

- Students will be grouped by classes with their teacher or other designated school officials. Teachers would have the daily attendance record available and a head count would be conducted.
- A designated school official would be stationed at the school to direct parents arriving at the school to designated evacuation areas—either on campus or off campus.

To Retrieve Your Child in an Emergency:

- Know your child’s homeroom teacher and bring positive ID (picture identification) for yourself.
- Check in at main office or designated area to receive authorization
- Locate your child’s classroom teacher
- Present your ID

- Sign out your child from the teacher or other designated school official

You should:

- Keep all of your emergency contact numbers updated with the school.
- Make sure you have another back-up person designated for emergencies besides yourself, and make sure that person's contact numbers are correct.

Who is in Charge?

In an emergency, school officials would respond by securing the safety and well-being of the children. Some of the immediate responses and actions that would be taken by school staff have been outlined for you above. Parents need to know the local Police, Fire and EMS personnel would be contacted and would respond to the crisis. In addition, for more far reaching disasters, the school would work under the direction of local, state and federal agencies to coordinate an appropriate response. Some of these agencies are: local Boards of Health; local hospitals; the Department of Public Health; Centers for Disease Control; FEMA; Immediate Response Personnel and many other community health agencies. As a school community we have established contact with many of these individuals and organizations and will continue to work with them to remain informed of the services and roles they can play in assisting us during a disaster.

Code of Behavior

A Guide to Mutual Respect

We believe that all students and staff should have a safe, comfortable school environment. The following code of behavior has been established to assist students, parents, teachers, and administrators in promoting patterns of behavior which enhance our learning community. ASRSD School Committee policies are in place to address inappropriate behavior such as harassment, sexual harassment and hazing.

Children need to feel safe and supported in a caring, learning environment. School procedures help give structure to the responsibilities of: Respect yourself; Respect others; Respect the environment. Adults also have responsibilities. They serve as positive role models by showing respect towards children and each other. Adults give positive feedback regarding appropriate and cooperative behavior. They work together with students to establish age-appropriate rules in each classroom. Adults also suggest alternative choices for unacceptable behavior and encourage the use of conflict resolution and mediation.

In cases where suspension or expulsion from school is determined to be the response to the misbehavior, all rights to due process hearings will be offered. A detailed description of due process rights is found at the end of this section. Additional copies can be obtained from the principal. Administrators will work to preserve the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff.

Code of Discipline

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others.

Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that ensures the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Any of the following actions will result in suspension and may subject a student to expulsion by the principal under the terms of M.G.L. 71:37H:

1. Found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.
2. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's assistant or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events including athletic games.
3. Any student who is charged with violation of either of the above two paragraphs shall be notified in writing of an opportunity of a hearing. The student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).
4. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers or administrators.
5. Life threat, verbal harassment or bullying. Please read the [ASRSD Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan](#), located on the district website.
6. A student is being bullied when he/she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students.
 - A negative action is when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another.
 - These actions can be achieved by physical actions, threatening drawings, words and/or gestures.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited: [M.G.L 71:370](#)

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

School building administrators will not suspend a student, or recommend a student for suspension or expulsion, unless the student has engaged in a prohibited action while on school property or taking part in a school activity off school grounds.

Any of the following actions may subject a student to suspension or other disciplinary measures under the terms of M.G.L. 71:37H.

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school property; or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
2. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to private property; stealing or attempting to steal private property.
3. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
4. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution.

Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012, An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School

A principal shall provide every student an opportunity to make *academic progress* during the period of suspension (whether in-school or out-of-school) or expulsion, to make up assignments, and earn credits missed. A district that suspends or expels a student for *more than 10 consecutive days* must provide the student and the parent with *a list* of alternative educational services.

Due Process Procedures in the Case of Suspension or Expulsion

Prior to suspension from school, every student is entitled to the due process described below except in the event of an emergency in which the child's continued presence at school would be harmful to him or the school environment. Because a suspension reflects a short separation from school, not from learning, the student is expected to complete work assigned during the suspension. The student's teacher will determine the assignments to be completed and their due dates.

[M.G.L. 71: Section 37H ½](#)

Procedures When Suspension May Be a Consequence of Behavior

In any situation in which a student's misbehavior may result in the consequence of suspension, the following procedures will occur:

- The principal or his/her designee will investigate and verify the reported behavior before any action is taken.
- The student and parent/guardian shall receive written notification of the charges and reason for suspension prior to such suspension taking effect.
- The student shall receive written notification of the process for appeal.
- A meeting (in person or by telephone) may take place between the parent, the child and the school administrator before the suspension. At this meeting, the following activities take place:
 - The principal or his/her designee explains the behavior that led to the suspension.
 - The student may explain the behavior or discuss anything about the behavior the principal or his/her designee should know.
 - The parents may speak on the child's behalf.
 - The principal or his/her designee will notify the parent and child of his/her decision about the suspension.

- The parents may appeal the decision to the Superintendent, in writing no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of suspension.
- The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and student's parent/guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request to appeal.
- The Superintendent shall render a decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision will be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Procedures When Expulsion may be a Consequence of Behavior

- The Principal may expel a student, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
- The student will receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such exclusion taking effect.
- The student shall receive written notification of the right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion.
- The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.
- The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent.
- The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of the request for appeal, no longer than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion.
- The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student with and student's parent/guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion.
- The student shall have the right to present written or oral testimony, and shall have the right to counsel.
- The Superintendent shall have the right to alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational setting.
- The Superintendent shall render a decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision will be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Discipline

- We believe in the support of discipline standards for our students. Therefore, there exists a set of reasonable school and classroom regulations by which all students are expected to abide. Consistency is provided throughout the school system using common language and common expectations.
- Our teachers are knowledgeable with regard to behavior that reasonably can be expected from children, considering age, basic personalities and individual needs.
- Most discipline problems are handled by the classroom teacher in concert with the parents and the principal or assistant principal. Whenever necessary, positive alternatives are employed to promote improvement in student behavior.
- The principal and assistant principal are responsible for establishing or approving general school and classroom rules and regulations. They serve as a resource to both teachers and parents in improving student behavior. In instances where the teacher and/or parent have been unable to affect a positive change, the principal and/or assistant principal will become more directly involved in the disciplinary process.

Please reference [ASRSD School Committee Policy Manual](#) to reference additional information on student discipline:

Dress Code

The intent of the school dress code is to create a positive environment that is conducive to the learning and safety of students as well as providing a positive working environment for our staff. It is commonly accepted that student behavior and the school environment are strongly influenced by the dress and appearance of students. Dress codes inherently teach students the importance of respectable appearance which can positively impact self respect and self esteem.

Since school is primarily a place of learning and work, students are expected to dress appropriately for those tasks. Diversity within our school population is appreciated and the need for individual expression is respected. We strongly believe that those values can be celebrated and maintained while at the same time meeting the following expectations. Students shall not wear clothing items that contain messages that are vulgar, obscene or libelous; that denigrate others on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability; that promote alcohol or drug use or violence; or that are otherwise disruptive to the educational process. The Principal and Assistant Principal have the final decision in making the determination that there has been a violation of dress code policy. Students who are dressed inappropriately will be asked to change or call home for a change of clothes.

Consequences for non-compliance or repeated infractions may include: verbal warnings, detention, parent meeting or other appropriate actions.

Dress Code for Elementary Schools

General Guidelines

- Students should come dressed appropriately for seasonal weather.
- Outerwear, including coats, jackets, parkas, etc. will not be allowed to be worn inside school (Sweatshirts, vests or other layering pieces of clothing are allowed)
- Students shall not wear hats, hoods, bandanas in school, except for religious or medical reasons OR on special designated spirit days.

Dress Code for Middle Schools

General Guidelines:

- Hats, hoods or other head coverings are not allowed unless for religious or medical reasons.
- Foot apparel must be worn at all times; slippers are not an acceptable form of footwear.
- Outerwear such as jackets and coats cannot be worn inside the school.

- Undergarments must not be visible at any time.
- Garments that are see-through, low cut, or expose any part of a student's midriff are not acceptable.
- All tops must have at least a 2" shoulder strap, therefore, halter tops, strapless tops and off the shoulder tops are not acceptable.
- Shorts, t-shirts and skirts should fit well and be an appropriate length. Shorts must have at least a 2" inseam. Skirts/dresses must be fingertip length when arms are held naturally at the side.
- Any pant made of lycra, spandex or fabric that clings tightly to the body must be covered by a loose fitting top that covers both front and back.

Physical education dress code All students will be expected to participate with their class in appropriate clothing that includes gym shorts and/or sweatpants, sneakers (hiking boots and fashion sneakers are not acceptable), athletic socks, T-shirt and/or sweatshirt. Students should dress for the weather. Classes will be outside until late fall and in the early spring.

Electronic devices Cell phones, iPods, iPads etc. are to be turned off before students enter the building. Before homeroom, all electronic devices are to be placed in student's locker and remain there throughout the school day. The staff will confiscate any electronics which are found to be in violation. Staff will turn confiscated devices into the Assistant Principal.

- First Offense: Item will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- Second/Third Offense: Item will only be returned to a parent/guardian and student will serve an after school detention.
- Four or More Offenses: Electronic device will not be allowed in school and serious disciplinary consequences will follow.

Discipline and Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.

2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or ten (10) cumulative school days in a given school year, building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). During disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to receive services identified as necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.
3. If building administrators, the parents/guardians and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP team or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
4. If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent/guardian's consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The Student's Team shall also review the student's IEP, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavioral intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
5. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school 48 function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational placement (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

School Bus Rules/Discipline

It is considered a privilege to ride the school bus. If the student is not well behaved or endangers the health and safety of other pupils, this privilege may be withdrawn. The bus driver will be considered as having the same authority as a teacher in the classroom while students are on the bus, boarding the bus, or disembarking from the bus.

Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop

1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.
2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.
3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.
4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.
5. Proper conduct is required aboard the bus at all times.
6. Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.
7. Parents and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year.

The ASRSD utilizes a progressive disciplinary approach to ensure the safe travel of all students. Consequences for unsafe and unacceptable bus behaviors may range from a verbal / written warning up to a loss of bus riding privileges. The determination of an appropriate consequence for improper bus behavior will rest with the building principal or designee. In all instances, parents / guardians will be informed.

Physical Restraint

The Board of Education adopted new regulations on the use of physical restraint in public education programs. The regulations (603 CMR 46.00) are meant to promote safety for all students and staff in schools. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District's policy reflects the content of Chapter 69, Section 1B, and Chapter 71, Section 37G of the Massachusetts General Laws. The purpose of the Law is to ensure that every student participating in the Massachusetts public education program is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

School personnel shall use physical restraint only if formally trained in physical restraint and only when restraint is needed to protect the student and/or member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the physical restraint.

Legal and Other Procedural Matters

Updating Student Information

Parents should notify the front office in writing when there is a change of address or phone number (home, work or cell).

Custodial Orders

If a student is the subject of any temporary/permanent custody order, decree or agreement, a copy of the custody order, decree or agreement, either signed by the judge of the probate court, in the case of an order or decree, or signed by both parents, in the case of an agreement, should be on file in the principal's office. These orders are important for determining access to the student's records, the right to have the student dismissed in to the care of an individual, the right of access to a student's teacher or similar issues. Parents are obligated to notify the school of any changes in the custody orders as they become final.

Distribution of Materials

All aspects of school-sponsored newspapers and/or yearbooks are completely under the supervision of the teacher sponsor and principal. Written materials, handbills, photographs, pictures, petitions, films, tapes, other visual or auditory materials may not be sold, circulated, or distributed on campus by a student or a non-student without the approval of the principal. Requests for approval of materials must be made at least twenty four (24) hours in advance; if permission is denied, an appeal can be made to the Superintendent. Distribution of material consisting primarily of commercial advertising is prohibited.

Fundraising

All fundraising projects need to be approved by the principal and appropriate ASRSD paperwork must be completed.

Student Fundraising Activities

Students are not permitted to go door to door for the purpose of fundraising for the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. All fundraising activities will be approved by the principal, with notification to the Superintendent.

Volunteering/Chaperoning

Parents who have an approved CORI form on file may volunteer in the school and on field trips, as opportunities arise. CORI forms can be obtained at the front office of the ASRMS. Fingerprinting may be required.

Volunteers are vital to our school programs and are greatly appreciated. Volunteers must complete a background security check (SAFIS-Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services and Criminal Offender Record Information CORI) and agree to the conditions of the volunteer handbook

Withdrawal Procedures

To withdraw a student, a parent will need to complete a Release of Information form. This allows our school to send student records to the receiving school.

Technology and Responsible Use Policy

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee understands that the Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee encourages the use of information technology to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. Information technology will be used to increase communication, enhance productivity and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills. The system/network will also be utilized to provide relevant school information to the community.

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges. Inappropriate use is subject to review and action.

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. Students should:

- Use the Internet and computer for school work only.

- Stay on the web pages that their teacher chooses.
- Ask for help when necessary.
- Tell their teacher right away if they read or see something on the Internet that is inappropriate.
- Never give their picture, name, address, home phone number or name of school on the Internet.
- Understand that network and cloud files are not private, teachers may view the contents at any time.
- Respect all school computers and use them correctly.

Students are:

Prohibited from downloading, uploading or distributing any files, software, or other material that is not related to an educational project.

- Not to use their personal computers on the school network unless they receive approval from the Technology Department.
- Not to reveal any personal contact information relating to him/herself or other students or staff members that consists of names, addresses, and/or telephone numbers.
- Not to post private information as it relates to fellow students, district staff, or academics. Nor shall defamatory material concerning a person or group be sent or retrieved.

Information technology is defined as Internet access, email, published and unpublished documents, and various forms of multimedia technology. The District employs the use of specialized filtering software that monitors Internet traffic and blocks inappropriate Websites.

All students and parents are required to accept the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Acceptable Use Policy.

The ASRSD reserves the right to make changes to this handbook at any time.

right to request that student photos/videos not be released or published. Parents must notify the school in writing that they wish their child's photo not be made public.

I DO NOT wish for my child's photograph to be made public.

Communications through Email

I would like for the school to communicate with me also through email. The school newsletter, report cards, progress reports, teacher information, announcements, etc., could be sent to me via email at:

Parent/Guardian email address is _____

Parent's Name

Parent's Signature

Date: _____

Signature of Student (for middle school students)

Date: _____