



Amherst County High School

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Amherst, Virginia 24521
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**Student Handbook
2022-2023**

Principal

Mr. Joey Crawford

Assistant Principals

Mr. Tom McBride

Mr. Jay Sales

Mr. Segar Jordan

Dean of Students

Ms. Itzel Nogueras

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Amherst County High School administration, faculty and staff, we welcome everyone to the 2022-2023 school year. We extend a heartfelt greeting to the incoming freshmen (Class of 2026) and to any transfer students entering ACHS for the very first time. We hope you find ACHS to be a place that nurtures your aspirations and inspires new possibilities. We expect all students, parents, and invested stakeholders to work in a cohesive and collaborative manner in order to provide a quality education that serves the best interests of all students.

As Lancers, we intend to mold members of our society who will be a positive representation of our school and our community. No matter the challenges that are presented this school year, I know all Lancers will display pride in their school and in their community. At Amherst County High School we are more than a school, we are a community. Our expectation of all Lancers is that we will support each other. We can assure you that the faculty and staff at ACHS are committed to their chosen profession and serve as ambassadors for excellence even in the toughest of times.

ACHS offers a wealth of life changing experiences in the areas of academic life, athletics, fine and performing arts, leadership, and community outreach. We urge you to take advantage of these amazing opportunities to broaden and enhance your high school experience. Lastly, we look forward to fostering new relationships and keeping you informed of new and exciting developments. We stand committed to the Amherst County Public School's mission of serving "Every Child, Every Day"!

Lancer Pride!

Mr. Crawford
Principal

Amherst County High School Vision Statement:

It is our vision to be a model community school that produces engaged and thriving citizens.

Amherst County High School Mission Statement:

At Amherst County High School, our mission is to focus on more than academics, by creating engaged citizens, promoting community pride, and developing essential workforce skills.

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Students and/or their parents may request for the reconsideration of any learning resource utilized with the curriculum. Policy KLB and KLB-E should be used when providing this request to the school principal.

School Policies

Acceptable Computer System Use

All students must read and sign the Acceptable Computer Use Agreement.

Attendance Policy

Amherst County Public Schools believes that school attendance is directly related to academic achievement and to the development of good attendance habits that are important as students enter adulthood. Optimum student attendance is a collaborative effort, and Amherst County Public Schools expects parents and students to take active roles in accepting that responsibility.

The Virginia Department of Education has revised the Standards of Accreditation to include attendance rate. Students who miss more than ten percent (10%) of the school year, EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED, will impact the accreditation of Amherst County High School.

Compulsory School Attendance (§ 22.1-258)

Appointment of attendance officers; notification when pupil fails to report to school; plan; conference; court proceedings.

Every school board shall have power to appoint one or more attendance officers, who shall be charged with the enforcement of the provisions of this article.

Where no attendance officer is appointed by the school board, the division superintendent or his designee shall act as attendance officer.

Whenever any pupil fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, a reasonable effort to notify by telephone the parent to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence shall be made by either the school principal or his designee, the attendance officer, other school personnel, or volunteers organized by the school administration for this purpose. Any such volunteers shall not be liable for any civil damages for any acts or omissions resulting from making such reasonable efforts to notify parents and obtain such explanation when such acts or omissions are taken in good faith, unless such acts or omissions were the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct. This subsection shall not be construed to limit, withdraw, or overturn any defense or immunity already existing in statutory or common law or to affect any claim occurring prior to the effective date of this law. School divisions are encouraged to use non-instructional personnel for this notice.

Whenever any pupil fails to report to school for a total of five scheduled school days for the school year and no indication has been received by school personnel that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, and a reasonable effort to notify the parent has failed, the school principal or his designee shall make a reasonable effort to ensure that direct contact is made with the parent in person, through telephone conversation, or through the use of other communications devices to obtain an explanation for the pupil's absence and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. The school principal or his designee, the pupil, and the pupil's parent shall jointly develop a plan to resolve the pupil's nonattendance. Such a plan shall include documentation of the reasons for the pupil's nonattendance.

If the pupil is absent for more than one additional day after direct contact with the pupil's parent, and school personnel have received no indication that the pupil's parent is aware of and supports the pupil's absence, the school principal or his designee shall schedule a conference with the pupil, his parent, and school personnel. Such conferences may include the attendance officer and other community service providers to resolve issues related to the pupil's nonattendance. The conference shall be held no later than 10 school days after the tenth absence of the pupil, regardless of whether his parent approves of the conference. The conference team shall monitor the pupil's attendance and may

meet again as necessary to address concerns and plan additional interventions if attendance does not improve. In circumstances in which the parent is intentionally noncompliant with compulsory attendance requirements or the pupil is resisting parental efforts to comply with compulsory attendance requirements, the principal or his designee shall make a referral to the attendance officer. The attendance officer shall schedule a conference with the pupil and his parent within 10 school days and may (i) file a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations district court alleging the pupil is a child in need of supervision as defined in § [16.1-228](#) or (ii) institute proceedings against the parent pursuant to § [18.2-371](#) or [22.1-262](#). In filing a complaint against the student, the attendance officer shall provide written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of this section. In the event that both parents have been awarded joint physical custody pursuant to § [20-124.2](#) and the school has received notice of such order, both parents shall be notified at the last known addresses of the parents.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit in any way the authority of any attendance officer or division superintendent to seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance law as set forth in this article.

Attendance officers, other school personnel or volunteers organized by the school administration for this purpose shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection with the notice to parents of a pupil's absence or failure to give such notice as required by this section.

Truancy Procedures

When a student exceeds the allotted time to excuse an absence (2 days), a reasonable effort by the attendance coordinator will be made via telephone to notify the parent(s) about their child's unexcused absence. Once a student has accumulated five (5) days of unexcused absences (scheduled school days) for the school year, the school will send a written notice to the parent or guardian.

At five (5) unexcused absences, an attendance review meeting (ARM) is scheduled and an attendance plan developed to improve attendance and discuss repercussions for nonattendance. Another conference is held after an additional day is missed. If, after completion of the attendance review meeting (ARM), the student reaches 10 unexcused absences, school officials will notify the School Accountability Coordinator, who will then enforce the provisions of 22.1-258 by

either or both of the following (i) filing a complaint with the juvenile and domestic relations court alleging the student is a child in need of supervision as defined in 16.1-228 or (ii) instituting proceedings against the parent pursuant to 18.2-371 or 22.1-262. In filing the complaint against the student, the principal or his designee shall provide written documentation of the efforts to comply with the provisions of section 22.1-258. If the student's parents have joint physical custody of the student and the school has notice of the custody arrangement, then both parents shall be notified at their last known addresses.

Dance/Prom Regulations

Students that have accumulated 10 percent or more in absences by the date of the dance (excused and unexcused) will not be allowed to attend any dance, including the prom. If extenuating circumstances occur, an appeal must be requested by the student and granted by the building principal or designee.

Student Absences

The Amherst County High School administration, faculty, staff, and parents believe that regular school attendance is essential not only for academic success, but also for the development of habits that are required in the workplace. To foster these goals, we have developed an attendance policy, which places a limit on the number of absences that a student may have in a class in order to receive credit.

Attendance will be taken daily by first period teachers and a list of absentees will be generated and emailed to all teachers by the ACHS Attendance Coordinator.

All absences will be classified as excused or unexcused. An excused absence is defined as an absence due to medical appointment or illness/sickness, court appointment, or death in the immediate family. All other absences are unexcused.

I. Absences: For each day a student is absent, the parent/guardian must provide a written note stating the reason for the absence. Notes must be submitted within

two days of the absence. Notes submitted after two days will only be excused by the Principal or his designee.

Excused absences will only be granted for the following reasons:

- a. Medical Condition or appointment verified by a doctor's note.
- b. An approved school-sponsored event.
- c. Engage in a one day civic event per school year.
- d. Death or serious illness in the immediate family. The Principal or designee will also consider each individual case and any extenuating circumstances.
- e. Personal required court appearances with documentation from the Court.
- f. Approved pre-planned absences.
- g. Extenuating circumstances which are determined by the principal or designee.
- h. After written notes are submitted by a parent/guardian for 10 days of personal illness of a student, a doctor's note or other documentation may be required to excuse any future absences.

Please note: All other absences not included in the list above will be classified as unexcused absences. As a result, there are consequences for unexcused absences as described in the Compulsory Attendance Procedures in § 22.1-258 of the Code of Virginia. Amherst County Public Schools must ensure that all students are compliant with the Code of Virginia as it relates to school attendance.

II. Attendance Reporting and Action for Unexcused Absences

- a. For each day the student is absent, a phone call, text, or email shall be sent to the parent/guardian to advise them that the student is absent.
- b. On the fifth unexcused absence, direct contact should be made with the parent/guardian, either in person or by phone, to obtain an explanation for the student's absences and to explain to the parent the consequences of continued nonattendance. School personnel and the student's parent/guardian shall develop a written plan to resolve the student's nonattendance.
- c. On the sixth unexcused absence, the school shall notify the parent/guardian and request a face to face attendance review meeting.

d. On the 10th unexcused absence, the Student Accountability Coordinator may file a truancy petition with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. This proceeding may be against both the parent/guardian and the student.

School Activities

A student must be present in all **7 classes** of the school day in order to participate in any extracurricular activities, such as sports, clubs, and performing arts. This includes school sponsored events such as games, after-school field trips, and dances. A student may attend these activities if part of the day is excused by official medical documentation, court appointments, and family bereavement circumstances. **If a student is absent for all 7 classes of the instructional day he/she will not be eligible to participate in after-school activities.** The administration may exercise discretion in special cases. Student athletes should refer to the Student Athlete Handbook for further information concerning eligibility.

The School Accountability Coordinator will proactively collaborate with the administration to assist with the enforcement of the ACPS attendance policies and procedures when addressing excessive absences and reporting truancy violations.

Leaving School During the Day

Students must have permission from their legal parent/guardian and school official to leave school during the school day. Students who leave school without permission from the attendance office or administration are considered to be truant and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including out of school suspension. Students who have been seen on school grounds before school begins and who do not return for classes will also be considered as leaving school without permission and truant from school.

If a student desires to be excused from school before the end of the school day, he/she must bring a note from a parent/guardian to the attendance office before

school. Students must sign out of school in the attendance office before leaving school grounds. Upon returning to school the same day, a student must sign-in at the attendance office. Students and parents are requested to schedule medical appointments when possible after the close of the school day. Students who cannot make these arrangements will be expected to attend school before and/or after such appointments, including Court appearances, as time permits.

Closed Campus

Amherst County High School is a closed campus. A closed campus means that once students come on school grounds, they must remain on school grounds until their regular dismissal time. Leaving school grounds at any time without permission is a violation of discipline policy.

Amherst County High School does not recognize any Senior Skip Days. All “senior skip days” will be unexcused.

Students 18 Years of Age and Older:

The following procedures will be implemented relative to attendance of students eighteen years of age and older:

- Regular attendance procedures will be followed.
- Absentee notes must be written by the parent or guardian as long as the student is a resident of the family home and is not an emancipated minor (as shown by satisfactory court order) and is living in the school division not solely for school purposes.

Staying After School

In order to promote school safety, students who stay after school must be involved in a faculty supervised activity. If you are not in a supervised activity, students are expected to leave the building and school grounds by the 2:45 pm bell. Students who loiter at school without specific need or supervision will be subject to disciplinary action that can include charges of trespassing. Seniors who have early release from school and are involved in extra-curricular activities must leave school grounds and return after the 2:45pm bell.

Absences - Excused

Students who are absent must bring a parental note within two (2) days from the first day the student returns to school stating the reason for the absence unless prior written or telephone notification of reason has been received from the parent/guardian. Acceptable reasons for an absence and/or tardiness to school include:

- Doctor verified illness.
- Appointments (doctor, dentist, professional) – Student must attend classes during part of the day unless the nature and distance of appointment makes this impossible. Note from doctor is required.
- Court appearance.
- Death in the immediate family.
- Religious holidays.
- Family vacation (Must obtain *Pre-arranged Absence Form* from the Attendance Coordinator and receive one-week prior approval from all teachers and principal). **State attendance requirements will still apply even in the case of excused absences.**
- Field trips and school-related activities.
- Extenuating circumstances, which are determined by the school administration.

This note will be filed in the Attendance Office and will be reviewed in the event that a student has five or more unexcused absences. Absenteeism for reasons not specified as "valid" as listed above, will be considered unexcused.

In addition, the following will not count against a student's total number of absences from a class:

- placement on homebound instruction
- senior visits to colleges or armed services appointments with written documentation from a registrar or recruiter (one day per semester or two days per school year only),

Days spent in In-School Detention (ISD) will not count as absences from class. An out-of-school suspension, however, will count against one's attendance from class. **Any first-time suspension for three or more days is counted as three days unexcused against a student's attendance record. All further suspensions in the same year count equal to the number of suspension days against the student's attendance record.**

Students may only miss all or part of a school day ten (10) times for reason of illness with a parent's note. After the tenth excused check-in, check-out, or absence due to an illness, a doctor's note will be required for each subsequent time that a student checks in, checks out, or misses an entire school day.

Class Dues

Class dues are essential to financing a variety of class events (prom, senior week activities, graduation, etc.) and special projects/programs. Students must pay class dues in their junior and senior years. This will minimize the need for fundraisers. Students who fail to pay their class dues will not be permitted to participate in class activities.

Juniors \$15.00 – Seniors \$30.00

Class Rank

Class rank is determined by students' grade-point average. **Final class rank will be determined at the end of the fourth quarter.**

Clinic/School Nurse

Emergency/registration cards are distributed at the beginning of the school year. **These forms must be signed and returned on or before Friday, August 26, 2022.** Any medical problems, allergies, etc. should be noted on these cards.

Students are discouraged from making medical or dental appointments during the instructional day. When necessary, the student is requested to return to school with a written note from the doctor including the time of the appointment. This note should be given to the Attendance Officer and in return the student will receive a blue admission slip that must be exchanged with each teacher stating why they were absent from class.

CLINIC HOURS: Monday- Friday 7:45 A.M.-3:00 P.M.

GUIDELINES:

1. No student will be seen by the school nurse unless they have a written pass from the classroom teacher.
2. Students are required to sign in at the clinic or risk disciplinary action from the administration for missing instructional time.
3. No prescription medication will be administered without a physician's order, parental consent, and the medication in the original container.
4. Over-the-counter medications must be registered in the clinic in an unopened container accompanied by written consent from the parent. Students may then take this medication as needed.
5. Students will NOT be permitted to leave school for medical emergencies unless it has been recommended by the administration and/or the school nurse.
6. No student will be dismissed early from school for medical reasons without permission from a parent or someone listed on their emergency call list. Such calls will be made by the school nurse or administrative designee.

7. When the school nurse is out of the building, students are requested to report to the main office if there is a medical emergency. First Aid will be administered by members of the faculty/staff that possess up-to-date First AID certification.
8. Students who are assigned “early release” are not permitted to be in the clinic without approval from the administration.

[Click here to find more COVID related information.](#)

Club Meetings

Club Meetings can only be scheduled before or after instructional school hours unless a school wide meeting period is scheduled. Club sponsors are required to submit their meeting schedules to the Director of Activities for approval at the start of the school year. This process is in place to secure the use of the facility.

Computer Software, Games, and Electronics

Students who are enrolled in classes that will be using computers are required to purchase a flash drive for the purpose of saving important student documents deemed necessary by the classroom instructor. The instructor may recommend a specific type/model flash drive needed for their class. All students are asked to refrain from making such purchases until it is agreed upon by their instructor(s). Students will **NOT** be allowed to bring “outside” software to class for any reason. Violators will be disciplined according to the Computer User Agreement Policy.

Electronic devices such as iPods, iPads, Kindles, Nooks, and other related eReaders or musical devices are to be concealed during the regular school day. Teachers may use discretion, upon approval from the administration, to allow students to use their personal devices in the instructional setting. If a student violates this agreement, the following steps will be taken:

First Offense – Warning

Second Offenses – Released to the student.

Third Offense - One day of ISD and phone released to student.

Fourth Offense - Two days of ISD and phone released to student.

Fifth Offense - Two days of ISD, Social prohibition, phone released to the student.

***ACHS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

Corridor Passes

No student will be in the halls during classes or lunch without a corridor pass with **time, date, and signature** of a staff member. During the lunch period, students are to remain in the cafeteria for the entire lunch period unless they have secured a pass.

Daily Announcements

Announcements will be delivered by school officials two (2) times during the instructional day. The morning announcements consist of the Pledge of Allegiance and the Moment of Silence. Special announcements may be authorized by the administration if necessary. The evening announcements consist of announcements that pertain to clubs, athletics, fundraising, and community news, etc. Announcements must be in the office by 2:00 P.M.

Announcements must be sanctioned by school officials prior to being delivered over the school's PA system.

Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence: Students at school are expected to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and to observe one minute of silence, on a daily basis, at the direction of the principal unless the student or his or her parent objects to participation in such exercises. No student shall be subjected to unfavorable comment or stigmatization for his or her decision to participate in or to abstain from the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance or observance of one minute of silence. Nonparticipating students are expected to sit quietly, or to stand silently, during the Pledge or the observance of the minute of silence and to refrain from engaging in any disruptive or distracting activity. No disciplinary sanctions may be imposed for refusal to participate in saying the Pledge of Allegiance or in observing the minute of silence; however, willful disruption or interference with the exercise of pledging allegiance by others or interference with other students' exercise of their choice to mediate, pray, or engage in any other silent activity may result in the same disciplinary measures accorded to other instances of classroom disruption in school.

Delayed Opening

Students and parents are informed by radio and television, automated phone messaging, or the ACPS website if schools are closed due to inclement weather conditions. An inclement weather voicemail may be utilized by calling 946-9386 and pressing 7. Everyone is asked to refrain from calling the school for information regarding school closure.

Dress Code

The school requires that each student dress in a manner that does not distract other students or the school staff from the instructional process or is not disruptive to the learning environment. Despite fashion trends, students are expected to dress appropriately for an educational environment. **If your dress is deemed to be disruptive to the instructional environment, you will be required to change to appropriate clothing or report to ISD for the remainder of the day. Further disciplinary action may take place if students are defiant to this request.**

Be aware of the following guidelines:

Items of clothing that may cause disruption include, but are not limited to:

1. Hats, caps, visors, stocking caps, picks, do rags, **bandanas or headbands** worn around the head, body, or neck must be removed upon entering the building. **Apparel, masks, and accessories suggesting or displaying inappropriate language or any other expressions deemed inappropriate by the administration are prohibited.**
2. Footwear must be worn at all times. **Slippers are not acceptable.**
3. **Skirts, dresses, and shorts should not be shorter than five (5) inches from the knee (the length of an index card). This is also true of slits in long or short skirts.** This applies to students wearing tights as well.
4. No undergarments or negligee should be exposed or worn as outer garments. **Tops cannot have necklines that are lower than the straight line from top of underarms across to opposite underarm.**
5. All outerwear covering inappropriate clothing (i.e. jackets, shirts, sweaters) as part of an outfit are expected to be worn at **all times.**
6. Tank tops, tube tops, mesh tops, sheer tops, halters, cut-off shirts, sleeveless (muscle) shirts, bare-midriff tops, or tops with shoulder straps less than one (3) inches wide are not

- acceptable (the width of an index card).
7. **All styles of pants and shorts must be worn at or above the waistline without exposing underwear or skin.**
 8. Bed clothing (i.e. pajamas) is not appropriate and should not be worn.
 9. **Leggings, jeggings, leotards, sweater dresses, knit skirts, and yoga pants may be worn, as long as the student's bottom is completely covered.**
 10. Gloves are not to be worn during the school day.
 11. **Torn, holey, or ripped clothing that expose any part of the body is not appropriate attire for school and is prohibited.**
 12. Sunglasses (or other dark shaded glasses) are not to be worn on face, head or body in the building. If they are necessary for medical treatment, a physician's prescription will be required.
 13. Apparel, masks, or accessories that can/may imply gang membership is not permitted as defined under *Gangs* in the student handbook.

Driving and Parking

Students are allowed to drive without a parking pass for the month of September. Beginning October 1st students must obtain a **parking decal for \$50.00 that must be displayed on the rearview mirror of the vehicle.** The decal will be assigned on a first come basis. There will be a replacement fee of \$5.00 for lost decals. The student and parent must sign the parking contract stating that they both understand and will adhere to the school regulations regarding the driving and parking on school property. School safety and regulations must be observed. Regulations for driving and parking vehicles to school are as follows:

1. Seniors are to park in the senior parking lot or lower parking lot according to their assigned number. All other students are to park in the lower parking lot. **Do not park in the area reserved for faculty. Your car may be**

towed at the owner's expense.

2. Cars parked inappropriately or in the wrong space are subject to being towed at the owner's expense.
3. Students must drive with caution and obey speed regulations at all times.
4. All parking lots are off-limits during school hours unless students are arriving to or leaving from school. Students arriving at school are to proceed into the building and students leaving school are to proceed directly to their cars and leave the premises promptly. **Unauthorized presence in any parking area will result in a one day at the alternative suspension center.**
5. Lack of cooperation with faculty and administration, or failure to purchase a parking sticker and complete the required student parking form may result in the loss of driving privileges or other disciplinary action.
6. **Driving privileges can be revoked at any time, for any disciplinary action.**
7. Student vehicles can be searched at any time.

Early Dismissals

Early dismissal notes are to be brought to the Attendance Officer before 7:45 A.M. Students must sign out in the Attendance Office before leaving school grounds for an early dismissal. **No student will be granted permission to leave school grounds without permission from his/her parent or guardian.**

Legitimate reasons for signing out are:

- 1) personal illness
- 2) family illness or emergency
- 3) doctor or dentist appointment
- 4) court appearance
- 5) extenuating circumstances approved by an administrator.

Leaving school early to go to work is an unacceptable reason for early dismissal. **Those students on a reduced class schedule are expected to leave the building and grounds immediately.**

Notes will only be accepted for appointments that can be verified, and must contain a contact person, and phone number where the person can be reached. Notes written for job interviews, to leave for work, or for appointments that cannot be verified will not be accepted.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills and other emergency evacuation drills are necessary for the safety of the students and the school facility. Periodic drills are required by law and will be scheduled throughout the school year. The purpose of conducting these drills is to familiarize students and staff on the procedures to be used in order to best exit the building in the safest and shortest time possible. The administration may notify parents using Power Announcement if necessary.

Food Regulations

All food and drinks must be disposed of properly. Take pride in keeping your school clean. No food or drink is allowed in the halls or classroom with the exception of student lunch breaks. Students may not have food or drink from outside vendors unless prearranged approval by the administration that corresponds with a school function or event.

ACHS CAFETERIA –

1. Lunch lines should be orderly.
2. Students should go directly to the cafeteria to pick up their lunches
3. During each lunch period, students must remain in the cafeteria.
4. Trays need to be placed in the serving window and students should throw their trash away as soon as they have finished eating.

Gifted Education

Amherst County Public Schools are committed to an educational program that recognizes the special value and need of the individual student. We are therefore committed to providing gifted students with a qualitatively differentiated K-12 program that takes into consideration individual learning styles and special abilities. Students in grades K-12 may be referred for evaluation by a parent, guardian, friend, teacher or administrator. Students may refer themselves. All second graders are screened by their teachers in the spring. Results from standardized and informal testing, portfolio assessment, honors and awards are also used in grades K-12 to refer students. Brochures describing program services and other details are available through the school's gifted coordinator.

Grading Practices

Best practices will serve as the foundation for Amherst County Public Schools grading policy and regulations. **Grades may be accessed at** any time through the Parent Portal Information System. Parent Portal can be accessed online at www.amherst.k12.va.us.

The purpose of a grade is to provide feedback on academic achievement. Although the basis for a grade is academic achievement, non achievement factors may be appropriate in the fine arts and physical education courses.

Grade Book Requirements

A minimum of one graded assignment in each category per week will be submitted to the teacher's grade books (two total).

Grading reflects the assessment of student performance to determine academic achievement. A student's grades, to most accurately reflect his or her academic achievement, must be based on multiple assessment opportunities each grading period. Teachers must enter a minimum of two grades per week, per content area, in their grade books.

Categorical weights for the same course need to be consistent at middle and high school (e.g. Spanish I, Algebra I, Earth Science, etc.). Reporting period, semester, and final grades are to be averaged to the nearest whole number.

Zeros

Students are expected to complete all assigned work. When not completed by the deadline established, assigned work (or alternate assignment) must be completed at another assigned time during or outside of the school day. Parents will be notified when work completion becomes a problem. The teacher will seek to determine the cause of the student's failure to complete assigned work, and will make multiple attempts to have the student complete the work. If the student's failure to turn in work is justified, it may be turned in late with an appropriate grade assigned. In this instance, partially completed work will be graded according to the amount and quality of work completed. If a student willfully refuses to complete and turn in assigned work within a reasonable timeframe, a grade of **zero may be** given.

Grading Scales

A minimum of one graded assignment in each category per week will be submitted to the teacher's grade books (two total). A minimum of 16 total grades per grading period are required of teachers.

Students are expected to present their report cards to their parents. Since no report card format can adequately provide all the information necessary to explain a student's total performance, parents are encouraged to contact the school when questions arise. Parents should arrange to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences as well as check the Parent Portal on PowerSchool regularly.

Advanced Placement

Advanced Placement classes are offered in a variety of subjects for all students who choose to register for them. The Advanced Placement Program provides an opportunity for students to pursue college level courses while in high school. This program allows students to earn advanced learning high school credits and college credits simultaneously. To register for an AP exam, the student must be enrolled in a course that is designed to give appropriate instruction in the topics assessed by that test. Fees for these courses may be reduced or waived for students who receive free or reduced lunch. Students registered to take an AP course should check with their school counselor about AP exam fees and waivers.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment classes are offered in Pre-Calculus (Math 163-164=6 college credits) and Advanced Composition (English 111-112=6 college credits) through Central Virginia Community College on the campus of ACHS. Students may register for other college credit bearing courses at the main campus of CVCC or at the CVCC Regional Center in Amherst. **Students must obtain an authorization form from their school counselor and receive written authorization from the principal in order to be granted permission to enroll in any college level courses.** In addition, students must pass the COMPASS test which is administered at the CVCC main campus or at the regional center in Amherst.

All Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement (AP) courses carry an additional 1.0 weighted quality point. The following chart reflects how grades are weighted:

Grade	Quality Point
A	5.0
B	4.0
C	3.0
D	2.0
F	0.0

Virtual Virginia

Virtual Virginia (VV) offers full semester and year-long online courses to high school students. VV class, because it is a web-based curriculum, offers more flexibility than traditional classes. Students may access their class from school every day during a designated class period, or in the evenings and on weekends. A student's VV teacher and classmates will be posting assignments, commenting on discussion boards, and exchanging electronic feedback throughout any given week. An application and selection process is required. Students who enroll in VV classes operate under the auspices of VV; however, students may be subject to disciplinary action from the ACHS administration if warranted.

Other eLearning Models

Students at ACHS may enroll and participate in Lancer Academy using an eLearning curriculum that blends the online course with teacher support. These resources may be utilized when students require credit recovery for graduation or choosing to expedite the earning of verified or standard units of credit. Students must be granted authorization from the administration before enrolling in the Lancer Academy.

1. Homework will be assigned to all students with various timelines and expectations.
2. Homework should be an expansion and enrichment of the material taught in the classroom. This is vital for students during their days away from the building.
3. Homework should be taken seriously by all students.
4. When a teacher does not assign a homework assignment, students should use the opportunity to read, study, or further review a daily lesson. The time taken to prepare for future projects and activities is time well spent.

Make-up Work

Students who are absent from school will be allowed to make up work in accordance with the following guidelines. Students **absent one day** will have **one day** to make up missed assignments. Students absent **two days** will have **two days** to make up missed assignments. Students absent for **three or more days** will have **five days** to make up assignments. The length of the make up time may be extended by the classroom teacher if he or she deems it necessary.

Suspensions

Students must make up all written work, tests, and quizzes missed during a suspension. The number of days allowed for make-up work to be completed will be determined by the length of suspension. For example, upon return from a two-day out of school suspension the student will have two days to complete all make-up work. **The maximum allowable time for making up work missed during an out of school suspension may not exceed the amount of time suspended.**

All written assignments given prior to an out of school suspension that are due at any point during the suspension are due the day the student returns to class.

Also, any assignment given prior to an out of school suspension that has a due date the day the student returns to class must be turned in at that time.

Students making up tests, quizzes, or assignments designed to be completed in class or in a specific amount of time may be required to come to school early, stay after school, or even complete the work in an alternative setting. It may not be possible for some work (i.e. lab work, physical education activities, group work) to be made up during class time; however, individual teachers may choose to allow such make-up work or provide alternate assignments as long as they extend this privilege to all students consistently.

It is the responsibility of each student to request make-up work when they return from an absence.

Testing Schedule

Subject areas are assigned specific days for major tests. This does not include homework due dates, quizzes and due dates for projects. Please adhere to this schedule.

Discipline Area	Days of the Week
Math	Wednesday/Friday
Science	Tuesday/Thursday
Social Studies	Wednesday/Friday
English / Foreign Languages	Tuesday/Thursday
Vocational, Business, Health and PE, and other Electives	Monday - Friday

*****Testing days may change at the discretion of the administration. All students will be notified accordingly.**

School Counseling Services

The School Counseling Department at ACHS is here to serve you. Your counselor is available to help you with such things as personal/school problems, academic issues, and career development. We request that you stop by the School Counseling Office and make an appointment. However, if an emergency arises, please obtain an official pass from the class teacher. In all cases, it is necessary that you let your teacher know that you are in the School Counseling Office.

Honor Code

The honor code, established to promote integrity within the student body, is taken very seriously and will be strictly enforced. The honor code reads as follows:

As a student at Amherst County High School, I will respect the rights of others, assume the responsibility for my own actions, and maintain the basic standards of personal honor. Recognizing the fundamental principles of justice and personal integrity, I pledge to uphold the virtues of the Amherst County High School Honor Code.

Honor Code Violations include:

1. Giving or receiving help on graded assignments
2. Talking during a test or quiz
3. Plagiarism
4. Any obscenity within a written or oral project, report or work that is graded.

First offense:

Teachers will give a zero on the assignment, contact parent/administrator, and then report the incident to a school counselor.

Second offense:

The student will be given a zero in addition a conference will be held with parent, student, teacher, and counselor.

Third offense:

(and all others after this)– zero, suspension and possible loss of credit for the semester, and referral to school counseling.

***Violations are cumulative** (and will be maintained by the student’s school counselor).

Insurance

All students participating in interscholastic athletics must have health insurance coverage. Student insurance is available for those interested that includes special coverage for football. Parents who have private coverage can provide proof by completing a waiver form. The parents whose child wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity must submit the waiver form to the athletic director prior to participating (including practicing) in any event.

Lockers

1. Lockers will be assigned by request only. Students can request a locker from their fifth period teacher.
2. Lockers must be used only for the storage of books, notebooks, lunches, coats, and other school supplies.
3. The locker must be used only by the person(s) assigned to the locker.

Lockers should not be shared or exchanged with other students.

4. Food items should not be stored in lockers overnight.
5. When a student has been informed in writing in advance per School Board regulations, lockers may be searched if the administration has reason to suspect the presence of articles or materials not in the best interest of the school. This action is necessary for the protection of other students and for the maintenance of an orderly school environment. **THIS INFORMATION SERVES AS YOUR WRITTEN AND ADVANCED NOTICE**. Therefore, the school division retains the right to inspect student lockers for any reason at any time without notice, without students' consent, and without a search warrant.
6. Students will be held responsible for any damage done to a locker beyond the normal wear.
7. If a locker will not open, proceed to class; problems with lockers must be taken care of during non-class time at the Main Office. **The Main Office will not issue late passes to class due to jammed lockers or other locker problems.**
8. Lockers are provided as a convenience. The school cannot be held responsible for items left in lockers. It is strongly advised that students do not leave valuables in their lockers. Large sums of money should not be brought to school.
9. All lockers must be emptied no later than the last day of school. The custodial staff will remove and dispose of all items left in the lockers.

Loitering

Students are not to congregate in the hallways. Students are expected to immediately report to bus, car, and or after-school activity by 3:00 P.M. daily. Unauthorized presence in any area of the school property may result in disciplinary action.

Lost and Found

Articles found in the building or on school grounds should be turned into the Main Office. All textbooks should be turned into the Main Office as well. All unclaimed items will be donated once a month to a local thrift shop.

Media Center

Students will be allowed to check out library books. Teachers/library media specialists will develop procedures to prohibit the students from touching multiple books as they search for a book to read. A recommendation was for teachers/library media specialists to pull books for the students and give them a specific book to take home. Students will place returned books into a bin/box. The books would need to sit for at least 48 hours prior to being re-shelved or redistributed.

National Honor Society

Membership in the National Honor Society (NHS) is a privilege bestowed upon students by the faculty, rather than a right earned by students. Each member of the sophomore, junior, or senior class who met the scholastic standing, a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 and meets the criteria of the society listed below, is eligible for membership.

Recognition of Merit

The **Scholar's List** is a grading period academic recognition for all students who take a minimum of five units of credit per semester and who have a GPA of 3.50 or better. All courses will count in computing the grade point average (GPA).

The **Honor Roll** is a grading period academic recognition for all students who take a minimum of five units of credit per semester and who have a GPA of 3.25 to 3.49. All courses will count in computing the GPA.

Report Cards

Student academic achievement as well as student attendance data is personally distributed to each student in the form of a report card four times per year. Only the last report card is mailed home.

Interims	End of Grading Period	Report Cards Sent
September 19	October 21	October 28
December 1	January 13	January 20
February 21	March 24	March 31
May 5	June 8	*June 8

*These report cards are mailed home.

Rights and Responsibilities

Each student has the right to expect an educational environment in which he or she can strive to achieve his or her intellectual potential. The student is expected to attend school regularly, be diligent in his/her studies and conduct himself/herself in such a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. The student is expected to accept and demonstrate the obligation of

good citizenship to help prevent problems from happening and help solve problems if they occur.

Whenever a parent/guardian feels his/her child has been denied his/her rights for any reason in this school, he/she may call the matter to the attention of an assistant principal, followed by the principal. If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the action taken, an appeal may be made to the Division Assistant Superintendent.

School Bus Regulations

In accordance with the 1984 Code of Virginia, Sections 22.1-176 through 22.1-198, and per Chapter Two of the 1977 Virginia School Bus Driver Training Guide, as revised, bus conduct rules are hereby established as of April 11, 1985:

1. Students will remain seated.
2. Students will keep heads, hands, arms, etc. and belongings inside the bus.
3. Students will not obstruct the aisle or exits with any objects.
4. Students will not eat, drink, smoke, or chew tobacco on the bus.
5. Students will not litter.
6. Vandals will pay for bus damage.
7. See Cell Phone section in handbook pertaining to cell phone usage on the bus.
8. **During morning loading at home, students will be at correct pick-up places five minutes prior to scheduled bus arrival. During afternoon loading at school, students will report to area and immediately load the buses when school is dismissed.**
9. Students must use the same loading and unloading address, unless they have a note from their parent/guardian, and approved by a principal.
10. Students must cross the street 10 to 15 feet in front of the school bus.
11. Students are not permitted to cross a dual highway when loading or unloading from a school bus.
12. Students may only ride the bus that they are assigned by the Division Superintendent or his duly authorized agents.
13. **Students are under the jurisdiction of the Amherst County School**

Board from the time they leave home for school until they return.

14. All school rules and regulations apply to students when they are on a school bus.
15. Unauthorized persons on the bus are considered trespassing.
16. The school bus driver is in charge of the school bus. All bus riders will remain in compliance with all bus rules and regulations or they jeopardize their privilege from riding the bus.
17. This school bus will be treated as an extension of the classroom. Classroom policies, such as no eating, no drinking, no standing up, no yelling, no fighting, no inappropriate language, remarks or actions will be tolerated. Any activity that distracts the school bus driver from performing their driving duties or denies any student a safe and peaceful school bus ride will be grounds for suspension from the school bus.
18. This school bus is a designated “**SAFE HAVEN**”.

Selling Items on School Property

No items may be sold by students on school grounds unless they are involved in a school fundraising project. Outside organizations may not sell or advertise items on school grounds, without prior approval from the superintendent. Sponsors are encouraged to announce fundraisers to faculty/staff and inform students not to solicit from faculty and staff.

Tardy Policy

The Tardy Policy is devised to encourage prompt arrival of students in the classroom for immediate instructional engagement. Tardiness is defined as

absent from 0 to 5 minutes after the tardy bell. Skipping class is defined as absent beyond 5 minutes after the tardy bell.

- Students are expected to report to class on-time. Tardiness is cumulative; therefore, if a student arrives at class tardy then the teacher is expected to enter the tardy into PowerSchool for accurate reporting. A tardy report will be printed each morning and an administrator will notify the student when they reach the threshold for disciplinary action.
- Tardiness to school by student drivers will result in revocation of driving privileges. To avoid tardiness to school, students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of Amherst County Public School transportation services.
- 1st period tardiness to school will be handled separately from the remaining 2nd- 4th blocks. The consequence charts are listed below.

First block-Arrival to School- Tardiness

1st Period Tardiness to school will be handled by the Student Accountability Coordinator (Mrs. Marshall). An attendance station will be set-up for check-in after the 1st period bell rings. Students are expected to report to the designated location to receive a pass to class. **Students who are late to first period will not be admitted to class without a pass.** Mrs. Peters will inform the students of the number of tardies that have accumulated at this time.

Tardy Number	Consequence
1	Warning
2	Student Accountability Coordinator Conference/Warning
3	Administrative Conference
4	Parent Conference (face to face) - Plan must be developed with Parent, Student, and Administrator

5	Lunch Detention
6	2 Days Lunch Detention
7	1 Week Social Probation OR 1 Week Loss of Driving Priveleges
8	1 Day ISD AND 1 Week Social Probation OR 1 Week Loss of Driving Priveleges
9	1 Day ISD AND 2 Weeks Social Probation OR 2 Weeks Loss of Driving Priveleges
10	2 Days ISD AND Social Probation for Remainder of Semester OR Loss of Driving Priveleges for Remainder of the Semester
11+	2 Days ISD AND Social Probation for Remainder of Semester OR Loss of Driving Priveleges for Remainder of the Semester PLUS Face to Face Parent Conference

Tardies to 2nd-7th periods:

Tardy Number	Consequence
3-4	Administrative Reprimand
5	Administrative Reprimand AND Plan put in place to develop steps to eliminating tardiness
6	Lunch Detention
7	2 Days Lunch Detention
8	3 Days Lunch Detention

9	3 Days Lunch Detention PLUS Parent Conference (face to face) PLUS Plan put in place signed by parent and student and administrator
10	1 Day ISD
11	1 Day ISD AND 1 Week Social Probation OR 1 Week Loss of Driving Priveleges
12	1 Day ISD AND 2 Weeks Social Probation OR 2 Weeks Loss of Driving Priveleges
13	1 Day ISD AND Social Probation for the remainder of the Semester OR Loss of Driving Priveleges for the remainder of the semester
14	1 Day ISD PLUS Parent Conference PLUS Plan reviewed
15+	1 Day ISD

Tardies are cumulative each semester. Students are expected to clear the hallways and be in the classroom prior to the tardy bell. Teachers may use their discretion and expect students to be in their seat before the tardy bell or risk being counted tardy for class.

Excuses such as oversleeping, car trouble, or missing the bus are not considered valid reasons for being tardy.

*Tardy and late are used interchangeably.

**Students are reminded that driving privileges may be revoked at any time at the discretion of Administration

Telephones/Cell Phones

Cellular phones may be used by students being transported on ACPS buses and vans. **Please see the requirements listed below in regards to cell phone use on school buses to adhere to the ACPS policies.** Students exiting the building as car riders may access their phones once they exit the rear of the school building. **In case of emergency**, a telephone is available in the main office for students to use with permission.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phone use (outgoing calls, incoming calls, text messaging, camera use, game-playing, or any other use) is prohibited during instructional hours. Use of a cell phone between the hours of 7:15am-2:45pm will result in disciplinary action and loss of cell phone privileges. Cell phones are to be turned off during instructional hours. Vibrate and silent mode is considered on. If a phone goes off during class or is out and visible, the student will be disciplined accordingly.

1. **First offense** = Phone Confiscated; Parent Contact and released to student at the end of the day.
 2. **Second Offense** = Phone Confiscated, Parent Meeting, and released to student.
 3. **Third offense** =Phone Confiscated; one day of ISD and phone released to student.
 4. **Fourth offense** = Phone Confiscated; two days of ISD, 1 week of social probation and phone released to student.
 5. **Fifth offense** = Phone Confiscated; two days of ISD, 2 weeks of social probation and phone released to student.
- Guardian should continue to call the school for any emergency situation. We will contact your son/daughter. Do not try to contact them by cell phone.
 - In addition to the suspension, the student's cell phone or pager will be confiscated. The parent/guardian will need to come to school to pick it up at the end of the confiscation period.

- It is permissible for students to use their cell phone outside of the buildings on school grounds before or after school hours.
- Cell phones must be concealed at all times.
- **Cellular phones may be used by students being transported on ACPS buses and vans. Students may use their phones to send text messages, access social media, access the internet, listen to music, or to watch videos. Students are required to utilize earbuds or headphones when viewing videos or listening to music. Students are NOT allowed to make phone calls, record images or sound, or take pictures. All content being accessed must be within the guidelines of the ACPS acceptable use policy. Students must NOT wear ear buds or headphones while boarding or disembarking the school bus or while crossing the road in front of the bus.**

The use of camera phones for pictures or video is **strictly forbidden at any time.** Such use may also be in violation of the criminal code. Use of cell phones to record fights and altercations will result in disciplinary action. Students who refuse to give their cell phone to a school official will be given a discipline referral for failure to comply.

***This policy is subject to change as deemed necessary by administration. Students will not be permitted to call home during school hours in the event a phone is confiscated.**

Tobacco/Vaping

Tobacco/Vape Use/Possession/Sale

Use, possession and/or sale of any tobacco/vape products on school grounds buildings and buses is prohibited. This is to include the use sale and/or possession of any form of E-cigarette/vaporizer/paraphernalia or any smoking device.

- 1st offense – 2 days ASC
- 2nd offense – 3 days ASC and referral to SRO
- 3rd offense- 6 days ASC and referral to SRO

Videotaping/ Video Surveillance

Video Surveillance

NOTICE TO STUDENTS, PARENTS AND STAFF REGARDING THE USE OF CAMERA SURVEILLANCE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY For the safety of our students, staff and visitors, the School District employs camera surveillance equipment for security purposes. This equipment may or may not be monitored at any time. Surveillance cameras will generally be utilized only in public areas where there is no “reasonable expectation of privacy.” Public areas may include school buses; building entrances; hallways; parking lots; front offices where students, employees, and parents come and go; gymnasiums during public activities; cafeterias; and supply rooms. However, it is not possible for surveillance cameras to cover all public areas of District buildings or all District activities. District surveillance cameras will not be installed in “private” areas such as restrooms, locker rooms, changing areas, private offices, or classrooms. Recordings are not public information.

Videotaping

Cell phone video, camera/pictures usage is not allowed. ACHS reserves the right to videotape in classrooms for the purpose of evaluation. If a teacher/staff member is involved in self- or peer-evaluation, they will make an announcement several days prior the taping date.

Visitors

School policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business and a scheduled appointment at the school. Visitors and guests must report to the Main Office immediately to conduct a health screening upon entering the building. To meet with an administrator, teacher, or counselor, it is advised these steps are taken.

All visitors must secure badges from the Main Office upon arrival, and these must be returned before leaving.

Dance and Prom Regulations

1. Each ACHS student is responsible for his/her own behavior and the behavior of his/her guest. This behavior is to be appropriate for the occasion and conform to all school rules, school board policies, and state and federal laws. All students will be required to sign a behavior contract prior to purchasing tickets.
2. Students and guests who leave the building during the activity will not be readmitted.
3. Anyone leaving the building must immediately leave school grounds or the site of the activity if held off-campus.
4. The sponsor, administrator, or teacher shall have the privilege of refusing entrance to any individual whose presence is deemed not to be in the best interest of the school.
5. DRESS: Regular school attire or as designated for dances.
6. All dances and proms must have the approval of the school administration before they can be promoted to the student body.
7. Only ACHS students and their approved guests are permitted to attend prom, ring dance, and other designated dances. ONLY ACHS students are allowed to attend homecoming.
8. All guests must be approved by administration at least one week in advance and prior to ticket purchase. Identification will be required at the door.
9. No middle school students will be allowed to attend ACHS dances and prom.
10. No students over the age of 20 will be allowed to attend any dance, including the prom.
11. All school dances will end by 10:00 P.M., except the prom, which ends at 11:00 P.M.
12. No student can attend a school dance if on homebound or on suspension.

13. **Any student who is suspended for a cumulative of seven or more days anytime during the school year will be ineligible to attend any dance, including prom.**
14. **Students that have accumulated 10 percent or more in absences (excused and unexcused) will not be allowed to attend any dance, including the prom.**
 - **If extenuating circumstances occur, an appeal must be requested by the student and granted by the building principal or designee.**

AMHERST COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Amherst County Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability in its programs, activities or employment practices, as required by Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504. Mr. James Gallagher, Chief Human Resources Officer, is designated as the Compliance Officer responsible for assurances of non-discrimination. He may be reached at the following address: P O Box 1257, Amherst, Virginia 24521, and telephone number (434) 946-9376. Dr. William Wells, Assistant Superintendent, is the Division Discipline Supervisor and is responsible for the fair and equitable implementation of the Division's discipline policies. He can be reached at the following address: P O Box 1257, 153 Washington Street, Amherst, Virginia 24521, telephone number 434-946-9343, and email wwells@amherst.k12.va.us.

CODE OF CONDUCT INFORMATION

The entire student Code of Conduct can be found on the Amherst County Public Schools' website at www.amherst.k12.va.us under the

parents/students tab. You can request a paper copy of the manual from your child's school.

FERPA INFORMATION

The entire FERPA Information can be found on the Amherst County Public Schools' website at www.amherst.k12.va.us under the parents/students tab. You can request a paper copy of the manual from your child's school.

UNPAID MEAL CHARGES

Students who do not have money on account or in hand to cover the cost of a meal at the time of service may be permitted to charge the meal. The Amherst County Public Schools does not have a charge limit.

A student carrying a negative balance is only permitted to charge a meal, not ala carte items. Reasonable efforts are used to avoid calling attention to a student's inability to pay.

In compliance with the Code of Virginia §22.1-79.7 Notice of low or negative balances in a student's meal account are sent to parents and the school principal. Communication may be by a letter addressed to the parent to be sent home with the student.

Parents are expected to pay all meal charges in full by the last day of the school year.

If a parent regularly fails to provide meal money or send food to school with the student and the student does not qualify for free or reduced benefits, the child nutrition director will inform the principal, who will determine the next course of action, which may include notifying the department of social services of

suspected child neglect and/or taking legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges.

The superintendent or superintendent's designee ensures that federal child nutrition funds are not used to offset the cost of unpaid meals and that the child nutrition program is reimbursed for bad debt. In order to accomplish those goals, the following procedures are followed:

- At least one written notice is provided to a student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the student being denied reimbursable meals for exceeding the division's charge limit.
- If payment of the negative balance is not received within 4 months, the debt will be turned over to the superintendent or superintendent's designee for collection. If the debt is not paid within 30 days of notice being given, it is considered bad debt for the purposes of federal law concerning unpaid meal charges.