

Temperance
Elementary School
2023-2024



Principal: Mr. Lantz Martin

1981 Lowesville Road
Amherst, Va 24521
434-946-2811 (phone)
434-277-5594 (fax)

Website: <https://tes.amherst.k12.va.us>

Instagram: [TemperanceES!](#)

Twitter: [@VAtes_tigers](#)

SCHOOL HOURS

The school office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. School personnel are available for the supervision of students from **8:40 a.m. until dismissal at 3:45 p.m.** The school cannot assume responsibility for the supervision of privately transported students who arrive before 8:40 a.m. or who remain after 3:45 p.m. Parents who transport their children to school need to bring them by 9:00 a.m. **Instructional activities begin at 9:00 a.m.** Students arriving later than 9:05 am will be counted tardy. **Dismissal is at 3:45 p.m.** Instruction continues until this time. Except for an illness or emergency situation, students should remain at school until dismissal.

Emergency Closing and Delayed Openings

The Superintendent of schools determines when conditions warrant the cancellation or early dismissal of school. When a decision has been made, local news media will be notified. Parents are requested to tune in to a local radio or television station or use the INFO Source Service (**most up-to-date**). To use the INFO Source, call 946-9386, select #7, and the message will play. **Parents are asked to make specific plans with their children so they know where to go and what to do in case of early closings.** Inclement weather may cause a late opening of school. Parents are asked to listen to the local radio or television stations or to use the INFO Source Service. If schools open two hours late students should not arrive before 10:45am and breakfast will not be served. **A two-hour delay may mean that the Superintendent needs time to determine if weather conditions are severe enough to warrant closing the schools for the day. Therefore, parents are encouraged to stay tuned to the media.** Parents are also encouraged to check the Amherst County Public Schools social media pages.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with Parents

Student learning is enhanced when teachers and parents work closely together throughout the year. Teachers want to have open communication with each parent that begins at registration and continues throughout the year. The school will schedule conference nights during the year after each Interim Report is sent home. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher **any time throughout the year** when a question or concern arises or if a conference is desired. Messages will also be sent by the Principal through our School Messaging system throughout the year to provide up to date information on events and changes that are made to schedules. Please understand that if you would like to meet with a faculty member, you must schedule a meeting ahead of time.

Website - <http://tes.amherst.k12.va.us>

Facebook – Temperance Elementary School

Twitter - @VAtes_tigers

Instagram - @temperancees

Parent-Teacher Organization

Parents are asked to become actively involved in their school's PTO. This organization is established to help the school and community work closely together to assist our students in their learning. Communication regarding meetings, student programs, and other PTO information will be sent to parents throughout the year.

Registration

Electronic registration is now available through Parent Portal for Amherst County Public Schools. Parent/Guardians can now update student information through a web portal that is accessed through the parent account and clicking on the eCollect forms icon on the left hand menu bar. In order to proceed with the electronic registration process, parent/guardians will need to have already set up an account on Parent Portal, or you can contact the school office to receive instructions on how to set up your account and associate your student with that account. **You will still be required to provide proof of residency for any address changes.**

Student Emergency/Registration Forms

Parents are asked to provide information about their child at the beginning of each year. This information is kept in the school and transportation offices and is used to contact parents, family members, friends, or medical personnel in case of illness, injury or unusual circumstances. **Parents are asked to notify the school office whenever changes are made in this information.** All parents are asked to select an adult (s) to act as "emergency contact" in case the school cannot reach the parents. The name and phone number of this person(s) should be provided on the Student Registration Form. The person(s) designated as "emergency contact" will also be allowed to pick up the student on their request with proper identification, unless otherwise noted by the parent.

Student Release from School

Students may not leave the school premises with anyone unless permission has been granted by the parents and a release record has been signed in the school office. Parents requesting relatives or friends to take their child out of school must submit written permission to the office. Without authorization from the parent no one, but the parents, will be allowed to pick up a student. Any adult picking up a child needs to present a photo ID.

SCHOOL POLICIES

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. Jim 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. Tim Hoden, Chief Operations Officer, 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.

Attendance

Every parent/guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child within the compulsory attendance age shall be responsible for such child's regular and punctual attendance at school as described in § 22.1-254.1 of the Code of Virginia. 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. One of the characteristics of a good school program is that students want to come to school. We hope each day's instructional program is rich enough that if a student misses one day then they have missed some important learning. For this reason, ACPS strictly enforces the Code of Virginia requirements for attendance through the following policy:

For each day the student is absent, the parent must provide a written note. Excused absences will only be granted for specific reasons:

- medical or mental health concern or appointment verified by a doctor's note
- an approved school-sponsored event (example: 4-H events)
- death or serious injury in the immediate family
- personal required court appearances with documentation from the court
- approved pre-planned absences (must be approved by the Principal in advance)
- extenuating circumstances approved by the Principal
- **Students may only miss ten school days with a parent's note. After the tenth excused absence, a doctor's note will be required for each time that a student is absent.**
- Vacations while school is in session will not constitute justification for an excused absence. In order to be considered excused with permission to make up missed assignments, absences must be pre-arranged a minimum of 10 school days in advance with the principal and will be considered very carefully on an individual basis. Please plan vacations during school holidays.
- Absences will be **unexcused** if notes signed by the parent, guardian, or medical professional are **NOT RECEIVED** by the school within **three days** of returning to school.
- Notes for student absences may be sent via email or fax:
 - demays@amherst.k12.va.us
 - (434) 277-5594
- Notes received late **will not** change the absence from an unexcused absence to an excused absence.
- When a student accumulates three unexcused absences, the school will contact the parent/guardian to make them aware of the absences and discuss the importance of attendance.
- When a student accumulates five unexcused absences, an ATTENDANCE REVIEW MEETING will be held at the school. At this meeting an Attendance Plan will be established to improve the student's attendance.
- At the next unexcused absence, a referral to the division attendance team will be made and a conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian and student.
- Additional unexcused absences will require an INTERAGENCY TRUANCY REVIEW TEAM MEETING be held. This team consists of members from Amherst County Social Services, Amherst County Court

Services, Horizon Behavioral Health, Amherst County Sheriff's Department, and the Children's Services Act Coordinator. This meeting will be held at the court services unit of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The purpose of this meeting is to decide if a CHINS Truancy petition will be filed with the court.

- Recipients of TANF are required to have good attendance and will be reported to DSS at this meeting, per Code of Virginia requirements.
- All subsequent unexcused absences from this point forward will be handled in the **Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court**.

Tardies and Early Dismissals

Two of the most important times during an instructional day are first thing in the morning, when students are settling in and preparing for learning and the last minutes of the afternoon, when the day is being summarized and learning is being solidified. Therefore, please ensure your child arrives punctually and does not leave early unless it is absolutely necessary.

- The instructional day begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. If your child arrives to school after 9:05 a.m. you will be required to come to the main office to sign your child in. Your child will be counted as tardy.
- Students are expected to remain at school until 3:45 p.m.

Excessive tardies and early dismissals will be monitored and addressed by the principal or his designee.

Please note that your student's consistent attendance directly effects their academic success and the ability for Temperance Elementary School to remain accredited.

Bus Transfers

Students are expected to ride their assigned buses. Permission to ride another bus will be granted if a parent sends a note and room is available on the bus. Parents are asked to send a note to school with the child. The office secretary will fill out a bus pass for the student after receiving the note. **Parents are asked to send a note or email instead of calling the school so that the bus pass can be written in a timely fashion.**

Computer System Use

All use of the school division's computer systems must be in support of education and/or research or for legitimate school business. Use of the computer system is a privilege, not a right. The superintendent has established procedures outlining the appropriate use, ethics, and protocol for the computer system. Each student and parent/guardian shall sign the Acceptable Computer System Use Agreement, before using the Division's computer system. The failure of any student to follow the terms of the Agreement may result in loss of computer system privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

Chromebook Care & Replacement Costs

To clean your Chromebook:

- Shut down and power off Chromebook. Use a dry, clean microfiber cloth to wipe it.
- If there is still dirt, use a small amount of water (very lightly damp) and wipe the Chromebook.
- If dirt persists, use a small amount of water with one small drop of dish soap, very lightly dampen a wipe, and wipe the Chromebook.

Chromebooks should remain in the cases provided to students to provide protection during normal use and transporting to and from school

Lost or accidental damage requiring repair = \$50

Lost or damaged Charger/Case = \$10

Conduct – Student Code of Conduct

Educational research suggests that the most important contributor to student achievement is a focused learning environment, free from disruptions. In order to offer a learning environment that is conducive to learning, all students must engage in appropriate behavior. Any behavior which interferes with the orderly process of instruction will not be tolerated. These standards should be read carefully with each student. Included in this section are highlights from some of the ACPS policies that are elementary appropriate.

Conduct in School - Standards

- All Temperance Tigers are expected to be Team Players, Trustworthy, and Thoughtful.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, honest, and respectful manner at all times.
- Students are not allowed to use or write profanity or abusive language or draw or bear obscene pictures on the bus or school grounds.
- Students shall not fight nor display aggressive behavior. Students shall not intentionally harass, bully, threaten, intimidate, grab, push, play fight, strike, kick, haze, physically harm, or verbally abuse any teacher, school employee, student or person.
- Students will not engage in gang activities.
- Students will not gamble.
- Students shall not cheat on their school-work.
- Students will not take items that belong to others.
- Students shall not leave the school grounds during the day without authorization.

Articles Inappropriate at School

Parents should continually monitor the items their child takes to school. The only appropriate items would be normal school supplies needed to successfully participate in the established curriculum. **All other items would be considered inappropriate at school (or on the school bus).** The following items should not be brought onto school property:

(Note-this is not intended to be an all inclusive list of "should-nots")

- Students are not allowed to have laser pointers, knives, guns, other firearms or weapons (**toy or real**), slingshots, dangerous articles (including glass bottles), firecrackers, other explosives on the school grounds.
- Students are not to bring toys, hand held games, tablets, iPads, iPods, etc. to school. The school cannot assume responsibility for damage or loss of such items.
- Tobacco products, alcohol products, large sums of money or controlled substances are not allowed.
- Non instructional items, such as but not limited to flowers and gifts, are not to be sent/brought to schools to be delivered to students. Any such items will not be given to students and parents will be contacted to come pick them after school.

Snacks

Amherst County Schools' commitment to child wellness, food safety, and allergy awareness includes not only food provided through the Division's Nutrition Services program but also to food provided by parents and staff to students, such as during snack time or during classroom events/celebrations. The following requirements apply only to food shared with other students during the regular school day, and not to food provided by parents to their own child(ren): Elementary Classrooms: Food distributed to students during the school day in the elementary buildings must be commercially prepared and packaged with clearly identifiable ingredients. **Home prepared or homemade foods are not permitted to be distributed or shared.**

Code of Conduct Corrective Actions

If it has been determined by the principal or their designee that a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred; the student will be made aware of the accusations against him/her, have an opportunity to present his/her side of the story, and will be notified of his/her right to appeal.

When violations of school rules occur, students will be subject to the following corrective options: counseling, warning, student conference, loss of privilege, loss of field trip, in-school suspension, parent conference, overnight suspension, out of school suspension, notification of legal authority when appropriate, and/or recommendation for expulsion.

Conduct - Dress Code

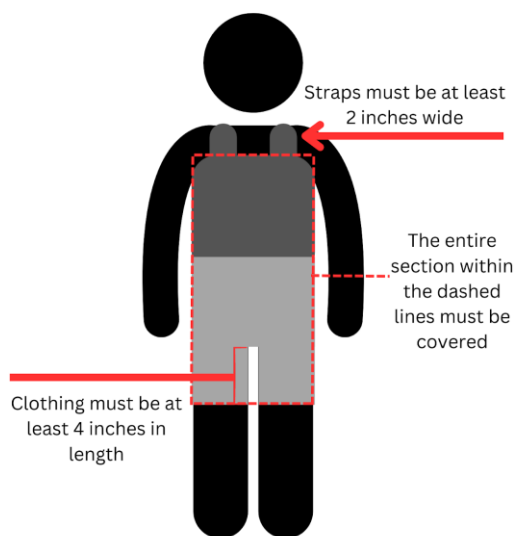
Amherst County Public Schools has developed standards for student dress in order to prepare students for future success as well as to create a safe and orderly learning environment. Amherst County Public Schools respects the differences of all students and does not discriminate based on sex, race, color, national origin, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status, or other factors. Amherst County Public Schools will rely on parents and guardians to use good judgment in their selection of clothing for their students.

Students must wear clothing from below the armpits to four inches below the upper thigh. Tops must have shoulder straps that are at least two inches wide. This clothing must include shirts, pants, shorts, skirts, dresses, etc., and must also include shoes. All areas of the torso should be covered within this area.

The following clothing/attire is prohibited:

1. Any attire that has images or language that is vulgar in nature, profane, or offensive.
2. Any attire or accessories (including jewelry) that denotes membership in a gang that advocates illegal, violent, or disruptive behavior. (Including trademarks, symbols, or other images and language)
3. Any attire that promotes illegal activity, violence, or the use of drugs or alcohol.
4. Any attire causes or is likely to cause a substantial disturbance or disruption of the learning environment.
5. Attire that does not cover the torso from below the armpits
6. Any attire that causes or is likely to cause a safety concern.
7. Hats, hoods, and other headwear are not permitted inside of ACPS buildings unless permitted for religious, medical, or other reasons approved by the administration.
8. Pajamas and bedwear are prohibited (including slippers).

The administration at individual schools reserves the right to determine what clothing/attire meets the above requirements. Students who do not adhere to the above requirements will need to change their clothing/attire to meet the requirements. Parents will be contacted for students who are unable to change clothes to appropriate attire.



Conduct - Vandalism

If any student injures, destroys, or defaces any school property the student/parent will be required to pay the cost of the property. In addition, the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

Grading and Student Evaluation

Report cards are sent home at the end of each grading period. Interim reports are sent home at the middle of each grading period. Teachers also report student evaluation to parents through parent conference or phone call. We try to involve students in the evaluation of their progress so they will see grades as a report of progress and not as a reward or punishment. The following list highlights the Amherst County School Board Grading Policy:

1. Grading scale:

98 - 100 A+	93 - 97 A	90 - 92 A-
87 - 89 B+	83 - 86 B	80 - 82 B-
77 - 79 C+	73 - 76 C	70 - 72 C-
67 - 69 D+	63 - 66 D	60 - 62 D- 0-59 F

2. Zeros will be assigned to work not attempted or completed.

3. Make-up work:

- It is the responsibility of the student/parent to schedule make-up work at the teacher's convenience.
- All missed work must be completed within five school days from the return to school.
- When a student is absent and a parent calls the school by **10:00 a.m.** to request homework, assignments will be available for pickup at 3:00 p.m.

Homework

Homework is an expansion and enrichment of the material taught in the classroom. Homework assignments are made according to grade level capabilities and needs. Parents are asked to encourage their children to complete homework assignments. Approximate time frames for homework assignments should adhere to the following:

Kindergarten - 15 minutes Grades 1-2 - 30 minutes Grades 3-4 - 45 minutes Grades 5- One hour daily

If a parent has a question about homework, or if homework consistently exceeds this time frame, the parent should contact the teacher and arrange a conference.

Returned Check Fee

Due to the volume of uncollectible checks that the district receives, Amherst County Schools has contracted with the Envision Payment Solutions for the electronic collection of checks returned for insufficient funds (NSF). The District will gladly accept your checks. **When you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from the check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. You authorize us to collect a fee through an electronic fund transfer from your account if your payment is returned unpaid.**

School Attendance Zone

Parents who live outside the school's attendance zone, but want their child(ren) to attend our school must secure written permission from the Superintendent of Amherst County Public Schools. Permission forms must be requested from the **school office** and returned to the principal each and every year prior to the end of the school year. The principal will address the requests and forward them to the Superintendent for approval in July.

School Entrance Requirements

Virginia State Law requires that students have a physical examination by qualified medical personnel prior to entering public school for the first time. An up-to date immunization record, **state** birth certificate and proof of residency are also required.

School Safety

Amherst County Public Schools have contingency plans and procedures to follow in case of emergencies such as fire, illness, injuries and violent behavior.

- Fire drills are held twice during the first twenty days of school and once per month thereafter. The purpose of the fire/emergency evacuation drill is to practice safe and quick evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency. Students should walk quickly and quietly to their designated building exit, leave the building going to a destination directed by the teacher, and stand with their backs to the building until further directions are given.
- Tornado drills are held once a year. Upon hearing the announcement, students leave their classrooms, go to an interior hallway. There they should assume a squatting position with hands and arms covering their heads.
- Lock Down drills are held twice during the first twenty days of school and twice thereafter. In the event of a threatening intruder, students and teachers would respond to the announcement in the following manner: All students in hallways or bathrooms should report to the nearest classroom. Teachers should lock classroom doors, turn off lights, and create a list of students not in the classroom to provide to the principal. Students should remain quiet and stay away from the doors and windows.

Video Surveillance

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.

Visitors at School

We welcome and encourage parent visitation at school. In order to offer a safe learning environment for our students, we **require that ALL visitors** report to the office upon entering the building. The visitor will be given a visitor's badge (to be worn at all times while in the building). The visitor is asked to report to the designated location upon receipt of the badge and to check out at the office upon departure. Parents picking up students will be asked to remain in the office while the child is called from class. We welcome extended family members to join us for Spring/Fall Carnivals and PTO student performances. All children must remain with their supervising adult at all times. **Socials, Field Day, Field Trips and other school events deemed necessary by the Administration are for TES students only, children who are not TES students may not attend.**

STUDENT ILLNESS and MEDICATION

Illness at School

Parents will be notified whenever students become too ill to remain at school. Your prompt attention in providing transportation will be greatly appreciated. We have limited facilities to care for sick children at school. Also, by state law, students having contagious disease should remain at home until well. If students are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19, parents will be required to pick up their student immediately.

Medication to Students

The Amherst County School Board discourages the administration of medication during school hours and requests that whenever possible medication doses are scheduled at times other than school hours. However, when the medication is required during school hours we must closely adhere to the School Board Policy.

- Prescription medication may be given to students only with a licensed prescriber's written order or current prescription **and** signed permission form from the parent or guardian. A licensed prescriber includes all licensed physicians, dentists, physician's assistants, or nurse practitioners. Over-the-counter medication may be given to students only with written permission from the parent or guardian.
 - If this is a medication your child has never taken before, please give the first dose at home to monitor for side effects before sending the medication to school.
- Prescription medication and over-the-counter medication must be in the original container and delivered by the parent to the principal or school designee. Medication sent to school in plastic bags or other non-original containers are not acceptable.
- The written order or current prescription (original container) should include the student's name, name of medication, and direction for dosage, frequency to be administered, the licensed prescriber's name and the date the prescription was filled.
 - Medication authorization from the licensed prescriber's and parents should be received on a standardized authorization form. However, authorizations on stationery or prescription pads from the licensed prescriber or an acceptable label on the prescriber's container are acceptable if the parents/legal guardian sign the authorization form. A note from the parent may be accepted for the first dose. However, the signed authorization form must be received within 24 hours in order for additional doses to be administered.
 - Parents must bring medications to the clinic. Medication cannot be transported by students to and from school or brought on a school bus.
 - In order for non-prescription medication to be given to a student for more than five consecutive days, written permission from the child's physician shall be required.
 - Dosages for over-the-counter medication may not exceed the recommended by the manufacturer dosage unless accompanied by a licensed prescriber's written order specifying that the recommended dosage (of the manufacturer) is to be exceeded on the prescriber's instructions.
 - Possession and self-administration of prescription medication will not be permitted, except under special circumstances (noted below- asthma) with a physician's order and under the supervision of the school nurse, or principal's designee.

- Unused medication must be picked up by the end of the school year or it will be disposed of by school personnel.
- Asthma - Students diagnosed with asthma are permitted to possess and self-administer inhaled asthma medications in accordance with Amherst County Public School policy. Appropriate written information is required from the parent and doctor. Parents who wish to have their child possess and self-administer their inhaled asthma medication at school and on school property need to contact the school so that the policy can be further explained.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS and ACTIVITIES

Teaching for Learning

Our faculty and staff work diligently to continuously improve the quality of instruction that we offer our children. The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) establish the basis for our curriculum. Instructional strategies are planned and implemented to teach the SOLs and remediation programs are offered for students not working at expected grade level as needed. Ongoing student assessment is conducted to evaluate student progress and the success of our instructional practices. We will not be satisfied until we have an instructional program that is exciting and beneficial to every child. Our emphasis is on academic learning, but we also strive to offer a learning program that will help each student become a self-directed, motivated learner who practices self-discipline and thoughtful, caring behavior.

State Testing Procedures

All students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are required to take SOL Tests in the late spring to determine their levels of proficiency and future success in school. Students in grades K-5 will take the PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening). Remediation programs are offered for students demonstrating weaknesses on these tests.

Parents can help their children with these tests by:

1. Encouraging children to take schoolwork seriously, being a good listener and asking questions when they don't understand.
2. Insisting that they read **daily** beyond the school day. This can include reading aloud to your child.
3. Helping them memorize basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts which are the cornerstone of more sophisticated math skills/concepts.
4. Insisting they complete homework assignments.
5. Regularly discussing the SOLs that are currently being taught in each of the subject areas.
6. Maintaining regular contact with their teacher(s).

School Quality Profiles

School Quality Profiles are online reports that provide parents with a way to review the status and achievements of Virginia's public schools. This information can be accessed at <https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/>.

VVAAS

VVAAS is a new individualized report of your child's SOL testing history. With this report, you can learn about your child's SOL performance over time and any patterns that may be present in your child's testing history. It is available for students in grades 3-12 and can be accessed through our PowerSchool Parent Portal: <https://amherst.psisjs.com/public/home.html>

Balanced Assessment Plan

According to the Code of Virginia, all students (grades 3-8 and high school) in Virginia Public Schools are required to be assessed in certain academic areas through Standards of Learning (SOL) Assessments. Parents may find more information about these assessments and others, as well as a sample SOL opt-out form in the ACPS Balanced Assessment Plan available on the division website under Assessment.

Title I School-Wide Programs (Elementary)

Title I is a federally funded program available at our elementary schools that is designed to provide extra support to students who are performing below grade level expectations in their reading. ACPS works to provide parents ways to support students in their learning, as outlined in each school's Parental Involvement Policy. More information about this policy, the Title I program, and parent's rights can be found on our website.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Amherst Tiered Systems of Support (ATSS)

Our school places an emphasis on practices that will promote positive outcomes for all of our school community. Amherst Tiered Systems of Support (ATSS) integrates academics, behavior and mental health into a single decision-making framework for establishing the supports needed for our school to be an effective learning environment for everyone. We are a practicing ATSS school with certain expectations surrounding behaviors that we wish to see in all students and adults alike. Our emphasis at TES is on becoming “**Team Players**” being “**Trustworthy**” and being “**Thoughtful**”. These expectations are consistently encouraged and taught to all students and throughout the year.

Family Life Curriculum

The Amherst County Public Schools have a Family Life curriculum based on the state guidelines. Parents invited to discuss the objectives with their child's teacher. Parents who wish for their child to opt out the program must specify this desire in writing to the classroom teacher.

School Counseling

An elementary school counselor works on a full-time basis with classrooms, groups of students, and individual students. Any parent wishing to contact the school counselor may do so by phoning the school office.

Special Education Services

ACPS offers instructional activities to students in need of special education services. Questions about special services should be directed to the Director of Student Services or the principal.

ACPS TAG (talented and gifted education program)

The Amherst County Public School Division is committed to an educational program that recognizes the special value and need of the individual student. We believe that gifted students need a qualitatively differentiated K-12 program that takes into consideration individual learning styles and special abilities. ACPS talented and gifted education program is the school division's name for the gifted education program. Referrals are accepted on an ongoing basis for students in grades K-12 from teachers, parents, guardians, students, peers, and individual members of the community. Each school's identification committee, which is composed of teachers, counselors, and administrators, handles the referrals. This committee is responsible for the screening and assessment process, which includes collecting parent checklists, teacher observations, standardized and informal testing results, classroom performance data, and portfolios; a student profile is developed for each candidate. This process must be completed within 65 working days of receipt of parental permission to assess the student. Any decision regarding identification or placement may be appealed by parents through a formal process. Brochures describing the referral policy and the identification procedures and services of Amherst County Public Schools' TAG program are disseminated to all schools for distribution on registration day.

Field Trips

Teachers may schedule field trips for their students. The trips must have educational value to enhance classroom instruction and the grade level Standards of Learning. All trips must be approved in advance by the principal and central office personnel. In order to participate, each student must secure parental permission and demonstrate appropriate behavior consistently. Specific information about field trips will be sent home prior to each trip by the teacher. A required number of adult chaperones will be invited by the teacher to accompany the class in order to assist the teacher in the supervision and safety of the students. Additional parents may accompany the class upon request of the teacher. If a charter bus is required, parents will be notified in advance of the cost per person in order to pay the cost of the bus. Refunds will not be given unless the vacant seat is re-purchased. **All trip chaperones must be fingerprinted and approved by the ACPS Board Office. Field trips are for TES students only.**

Fundraisers

Elementary students shall not participate in door-to-door fundraising activities.

Library/Media Services

The Library/Media Center plays an important role in the school. The library helps children to grow in their academic abilities and their love for reading. Students are asked to take special care of all books and materials that they

borrow from the library. A fine will be charged for damaged books and replacement cost will be charged for lost books. ***"Reading is the key to our future."***

Chromebooks will be issued to each student. The Chromebooks are property of ACPS and should not be personalized in any way, stickers are prohibited. The expectation is that the Chromebooks are used for educational purposes only.

Meal Program

We offer a breakfast and lunch program for our students. We strive to make our meals appealing to all of our students and we do offer some choices. Our students will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2023-2024 school year. We encourage parents to send money to school on each Monday to prepay for the "extras" for the entire week or on the beginning of the month, for the entire month. Students may purchase al-a-carte items in addition to a full meal. **Please note: Federal regulation governing child nutrition programs prohibits us from serving carbonated and caffeinated beverages through our meal program. We strongly encourage parents to follow this lead and send only healthy drinks to school for meals and snack. Please do not send items that need to be heated in the microwave oven. Microwave ovens are not available for student use.**

Moment of Silence

The Amherst County School Board recognizes that a moment of silence before each school day prepares students and staff for their respective work or school days. Therefore, each teacher shall observe a moment of silence at the beginning of the first class of each school day. The teacher responsible for each class shall make sure that each student: (1) remains seated and silent and (2) does not disrupt or distract other students during the moment of silence. The moment may be used for lawful silent activity, including personal reflection, prayer and meditation. However, the teacher responsible for each class shall not influence, in any way, students to pray or meditate or not to pray or meditate during the moment of silence. Students and employees are prohibited from praying aloud during the moment of silence.

School Pictures

Student photographs are taken in the fall and spring as a service to parents. Group pictures and/ or yearbooks will be available if interest by parents is expressed. Advance notification of the date for snapshots will be sent home by the students. This is a fundraising activity and is optional to parents.

School Volunteers- Ways to Help

Parent support is vital to the effectiveness of our overall school program. Volunteer programs involving parents and other community members can help strengthen existing school programs or introduce new programs. All parents are encouraged to become involved in our volunteer program. The primary requirement is an interest in the education of children. It is important to be dependable and be prepared if specific skills are involved. Time spent in school can make a difference in the quality of programs, which are provided.

Please note that the following possibilities for volunteers may be limited based on safety regulations surrounding Covid-19. Please contact the TES main office if you have questions surrounding volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers can serve the school in many capacities. Listed below are a few possibilities for volunteer service:

1. Main Office coverage
2. Classroom assistant for special projects
2. Chaperone on field trips
3. Make learning games/materials
4. Assist with all-school projects, including carnivals and Field Day
5. Serve as a room mother/father
6. Recess Duty
7. Lunch Duty

The Amherst County Public Schools Volunteer Program is a community based volunteer program that allows community members the opportunity to give back to their school community. ACPS values and promotes the active engagement of the community in our schools. The program allows volunteers to assist with duties such as main office coverage, recess duty, lunch duty, as well as other various activities. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please complete the Volunteer Program Registration Form

below. If you have questions, please contact the Human Resources Office at 434-943-9376 or by email at hr@amherst.k12.va.us. We appreciate your willingness to support the schools in our community!

Children benefit from volunteer programs. Volunteer time allows more time for the teacher and other staff members to be directly involved in student instruction. **All volunteers, including field trip chaperones, must be fingerprinted and approved by the Amherst County School Board Office.**

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The use of school facilities for school and student related activities as well as by outside organizations and groups shall be encouraged when these activities will not interfere with the educational program in the schools or impair the efficiency of the school. Requests for application for the use of any school facility shall be made to the building principal.

Proper protection, safety and care of school property shall be the primary consideration in the use of school facilities. The superintendent or principal reserves the right to deny usage or terminate an existing usage contract when to do so is in the best interest of the school system.

Alcohol and Tobacco Use on School Premises

The use of alcoholic beverages shall be prohibited at all times on school grounds. The use of all tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco and snuff, is prohibited on all property or vehicles owned, rented, or leased by the Amherst County Public Schools. Such prohibition shall apply at all times, day or night. This policy shall apply to all students, employees, visitors, volunteers, or other persons conducting business with the schools.

Informal Usage of Outdoor School Property

The School Board endorses the concept that the outdoor facilities at the schools serve as a park function for the community. It is understood that, in general, these facilities shall be available for free play or unstructured use during daylight hours, unless such use would conflict with another school need, including maintenance requirements. We ask that parents/guardians closely supervise their children while using the facility to assure their safety and the subsequent safety of our students. We ask that all visitors keep the area of use free of trash and well maintained.

Organizations Using the School Facilities

The organization using the building or grounds shall be responsible for adhering to Policy and crowd control measures, including adult supervision at all times and the employment of police protection when required. Such control shall be arranged in advance when deemed necessary by the superintendent or principal.

Weapons on School Property

Guns and other weapons are not allowed on school property.

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.