

Every Student. Every Day.

Our greatest contribution is to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student every day learns and grows and feels like a real human being.
—Donald Clifton

Amherst Regional Public Schools: Our Mission

Dear Everyone Learning at Amherst, Region and Pelham Schools*:

We are primed to reach the next level of achievement, engagement, and membership of every one of our students!

Our mission is for every student to achieve high-status knowledge and critical skills; to develop a positive sense of well-being and to be a contributing, responsible member of his/her classroom, school, and community; to be prepared for his/her next endeavor in learning; and to be a successful citizen in a multicultural democracy and competitive global society.

In a democratic society, academic freedom, individual rights, and collaboration are honored and civility is expected. Our schools are characterized by a spirit of community, a culture of achievement, enriching activity, and physical and emotional safety. Our schools retain adults who are skilled, talented, dedicated, and caring. Learning is meaningful, relevant, rigorous... and fun! Schools are a “safe haven” for students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation. Neither policy, procedure, nor action should allow room for discrimination of any variety. Our schools are diverse and inclusive. Daily, students work cooperatively in classrooms, laboratories and field experiences; on performing stages, athletic fields and playgrounds; and in cafeterias and on buses. We are successful and we have room to improve and grow.

We envision school culture characterized by learning, progressivism, friendliness, respect, and social justice; we approach curriculum, operations, and safety with high expectations based on professional standards, locally agreed upon guiding principles, and a keen focus on achievement. A respectful, socially-just system and high levels of student performance are not mutually exclusive.

We accomplish this building on strengths and overcoming impediments to insure the academic engagement and school membership of every student from the moment s/he enrolls to the moment s/he walks across our stage at graduation. Consequently, development of an academically focused, democratic school environment and culture is essential. Proficiency on the most rigorous of authentic and standardized assessments is our minimum expectation, with the individual and collective proverbial bar of achievement rising routinely. Professional work, aligned with teaching, curriculum, and professional development standards; student work aligned with standards of good school citizenship and behavior; operations and supports for learning aligned with regulations for safety and performance; and accountability, built into the system with benchmarks of success and guideposts for continued adult learning and development are within our sights, all within a system grounded in principles of democracy and social justice.

Our schools have a sound tradition in these areas and we acknowledge there is much more to do. We are primed to reach such ambitious expectations. We respect the need for and role of policy, standards, frameworks, and consistency while honoring tradition, professionalism, and autonomy. To achieve these ends, our focus is upon consistency, continuity, communication, challenge, and accountability. The work one observes daily reflect the remarkable successes and efforts of our students, faculty, and staff and the base upon which we look toward the future.

If you have questions or comments about any aspect of the schools, please feel free to contact me either at hochmanj@arps.org or by phone at 413-362-1823.

Enjoy!

Respectfully,

Jere I. Hochman
Superintendent

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