



**EMBRACE CHALLENGE,  
DISCOVER YOURSELF.**

**NICHOLS SCHOOL**

**UPPER SCHOOL HANDBOOK**

**UPDATED 07-25-2019**

Nichols School  
1250 Amherst Street  
Buffalo, NY 14216  
Upper School (716) 332-6300

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## **WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL**

Dear Upper School Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2019-2020 School year. Please take some time before the year begins to sit down together to review the policies in this handbook. I urge you to pay special attention to the Nichols Honor Code. The Honor Code formalizes the ethical, academic, and behavioral expectations of our community. The Honor Code is not a list of restrictions, but a promise between the school and its students. Upon becoming a member of Nichols School, you agree to abide by this code. We see this code as a tool by which to educate our students about the importance of living honorably.

The other guidelines contained in this handbook, such as the dress code and the cell phone policy, are not arbitrary laws forced upon you simply for the sake of having rules. We feel that each one of these policies serves a purpose and helps to support the mission of Nichols School. If you have questions about why certain standards exist, please stop by my office at any time, and we can talk about the reasons behind any part of this handbook. I welcome and look forward to your thoughts about the guiding principles behind our community as we embark on another year together.

Yours,

Aranya Maritme  
Head of Upper School

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

“Our aim is to train minds, bodies and hearts for the work of life,  
and to carry into all we do the highest ideals of character and service.”

Joseph D. Allen, 1911

Second Headmaster of Nichols School

## **CORE VALUES**

### **PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE**

At Nichols School, inspired teachers and students are committed to a quality standard of learning and achievement in all aspects of School life.

### **INTEGRITY OF CHARACTER**

Our community strives to cultivate each student's sense of responsibility, compassion, honesty, and self-discipline, producing confident and ethical young people.

### **TRADITION AND CHANGE**

Grounded in the wisdom of the past, we stimulate adaptive and innovative abilities to prepare our students for the future.

### **RIGOR AND BALANCE**

Our challenging expectations and structured environment bring out potential. Each student is encouraged to find the balance among academic, artistic, athletic and extracurricular involvements.

### **DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

Nichols School reflects the region's neighborhoods and the wider world, building mutual respect and understanding. In our daily school life, we strive to be a caring community for each individual.

## **HONOR CODE**

Nichols School pledges to provide its students with a safe learning environment in which they will be respected as individuals and treated fairly as members of a community.

On their part, Nichols students agree to abide by School rules and make the following assurances to the rest of the school:

- I pledge to value myself as a member of the Nichols community and hold myself up to the ethical expectations of the School.
- I pledge to treat all members of our School community with respect and fairness.
- I pledge to respect and foster the ideals of diversity in our School.
- I pledge to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty.
- I pledge to show respect and restraint while attempting to resolve conflicts.
- I pledge to respect the property of others.

# UPPER SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF

## **Administration**

Chris Burner  
*Head of School*  
Aranya Maritime  
*Head of Upper School*  
Russell Combs  
*Dean of Students*  
Ramone Alexander  
*Director of Inclusivity and  
Community Building*

## **Administrative Support**

Cathy Barish  
Ann Kern

## **Admissions Office**

Nina Barone – *Director*  
Chelsy Collins  
Adrienne Ptak  
Jamie Printz  
Laura Yusick – *Director of  
Financial Aid*

## **Arts Department**

Andrea Mancuso - *Chair*  
Amanda Besl  
Jessica Block  
Elaine Gardner  
Kristen Tripp Kelley  
Cory Shelton  
Curt Steinzor

## **Business Office**

Dan Dolan – *CFO*  
Lisa Ackendorf  
Deena Andrews  
Jennifer Clarey  
Martha Hunt

## **Campus Store**

Jeff Ryan – *Director of Auxiliary  
Services*  
Nancy Matthewson

## **Directors of Community Service**

Caitlin Crowell  
Kevin Powers

## **Registrar**

Anne Denman

## **College Office**

Mike Wagstaff – *Director*  
Meg Auerbach

Anne Denman  
Joel Siepierski

## **Deans**

Russell Combs-Dean of Students  
Erin Habelt–III Form  
Tom Franz–IV Form  
Kerry Bennett–V Form  
Chuck Ptak–VI Form

## **School Counselor**

Danielle Vallas

## **School Nurse**

Michelle Derenda

## **Advancement Office**

Leslie Garcia – *Director*  
Stephanie Angelakos  
Caitlin Domagal  
Zoe Jackson-Gibson  
Molly Lennon  
Clara Moran  
Jennifer Peresie  
Janelle Zera

## **English Department**

Lolly Errickson -- *Chair*  
Daniel Collins  
Larry Desautels  
Sarah Jacobson  
Aranya Maritime  
Laurie Ousley  
Roddy Potter  
Charles Ptak  
Andrew Sutherland

## **Facilities**

Juan Carlos Fontaneda - *Director*  
Frank Witkowski

## **Modern & Classical Dept.**

Benjamin Gerhardt – *Chair*  
Laura Arribas-Tomé  
Kerry Bennett  
Justin Gibson  
Luan Ming  
Ron Montesano  
Jean Luc Ngoma  
Bella Stack  
Nicholas Swift  
Yajie Zhang

## **History Department**

Rob Greene -- *Chair*  
Ramone Alexander  
Meg Auerbach  
Russell Combs  
Caitlin Crowell  
Tom Franz  
Kevin Powers  
Joel Siepierski  
Susannah Griffith Wales

## **Mathematics Department**

George Mauser – *Chair*  
Katherine Austen  
Tyler Bosch  
Jason DeGroat  
Erin Habelt  
Claudia O’Keefe  
Daniel Rabb  
Martin Riessen  
Amanda Simmons  
Andrew Zajdel

## **Marketing Department**

Jesse Baier – *Director*  
Jerry Theresanathan  
Joseph Ray

## **Science Department**

Philip Coburn – *Chair*  
RJ Bouchard  
Chui Sien Chan  
Joel Harden  
Larry Hiller  
Jake Morris  
Josh Ring  
Dan Rosenblum

## **Library**

Britt White – *Director*

## **Athletic Department**

Rob Stewart – *Director*  
Holly Kemp  
Shawn O’Donoghue  
Jamie Printz  
Beth Stone  
Bobby Ross  
Bambi Horton, ATC

## **Technology**

Michael Sullivan – *Director*  
Marie Benevento  
Edward Schubauer

## **EXPECTATIONS OF THE NICHOLS SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Nichols School holds high expectations for its entire community. As a family we aspire to be a community in which the dignity of each student, teacher, parent, volunteer, and visitor is respected every day. We expect each student to be a positive and contributing member of our community; therefore, it is the responsibility of each student to strive to attain the essence of our core values and to abide by the following principles:

- Each individual's dignity and right to learn are to be respected at all times.
- Human differences within our community are to be respected at all times.
- Members and guests of the Nichols School community are to be treated with courtesy.
- Personal and community property is to be treated with care.
- Language that reflects these principles must be used in this community.

Employees of Nichols School are expected to model and uphold these principles. Parents of all students are expected to support them.

### **STATEMENT ON COMMUNITY AND INCLUSIVITY**

Nichols School will endeavor to embrace and sustain diversity of all forms of human identity. It is the school's desire to foster multiculturalism within our community and to respect, nurture, and sustain the unique traits of our constituent members in an institution that is welcoming, inclusive, and safe.

We believe that a celebration of our differences and similarities will enrich the social and academic fabric of our community and achieve the aims set forth in our School's mission statement and core values. Our intention is to create an inclusive campus culture built upon a shared vision and understanding of human diversity along the lines of but not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religion, gender, ability, age, and sexual orientation as outlined in the NAIS Principles of Good Practice.

As the classroom is the heart of the School, we seek to foster multiculturalism and equity in our curriculum and our classroom practices. It is our aim to provide a complete and challenging academic experience for our students while providing them with life skills to explore, manage, investigate, and search for educational, personal, and social diversity as they strive to build more just, equitable communities.

The School recognizes that constructive discourse within the community promotes learning, understanding, and respect. As a result, it is our desire to support, expand, and implement multicultural programs and curricula to raise awareness and appreciation of diversity among faculty, staff, students, and their families.



Nichols School will continue to seek out and support diverse faculty, staff, and students to create a multicultural School community which reflects the increasing diversity of our local, national, and global community.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Head of School** represents the entire School to all its constituencies. He is ultimately responsible for staffing the School and, with the Board of Trustees, for establishing the future direction and success of the School. The Head of School is given recommendations by a wide variety of people on issues of concern to the school community, and possesses the final authority in all School matters.

**The Head of the Upper School** assembles and supervises the faculty, and works closely with the deans in overseeing the academic and personal progress of every student. She collaborates with the department chairs in the coordination of the curriculum and consults regularly with the college guidance and athletic offices. She represents the Upper School at various events and functions. Dr. Maritime is available to students and families for academic counseling and problem solving.

**The Dean of Students** is responsible for oversight of all clubs, activities and student publications at the Upper School. The Dean of Students serves as advisor to the Student Council and the Student Life discussion forum. The Dean of Students is responsible for management of the Upper School Discipline program including minor and major discipline issues. The Dean of Students with the assistance of the grade level deans develops the Wellness program and provides direction to the Upper School Advisement Program.

**The Director of Inclusivity and Community Building** provides support to all members of the Nichols community, with particular focus on students. He ensures that support, opportunities for engagement, leadership programming, and resources are available and easily accessed. Dr. Alexander responds to diversity issues as they arise in the community, provides ongoing programming regarding inclusion and community building, coordinates student and parent affinity and cross-affinity groups, and serves as the liaison with the Buffalo Prep Program. He leads Upper School meetings in order to build community.

**The Grade Level Deans** are responsible for overseeing the academic, athletic and extracurricular programs of individual students within the grade, for aiding advisors in academic counseling, for addressing grade level issues on a regular basis and for communicating directly with parents and advisors. Grade Level Deans work closely with the Head of the Upper School and the Dean of Students to develop and implement all areas of academic and non-academic life at the Upper School.

**The Director of College Counseling and the Assistant College Counselors** are responsible for all aspects of college counseling at Nichols.

**The Student Advisors** meet regularly with their advisees to share curricular and extracurricular information. The advisor system is an important one as it provides each student with an adult who

is available to provide counsel and support during the School year. Additionally, the advisor gives parents another important link to the School to discuss any aspect of their child's life at Nichols. Serving as an advisor affords the professional staff an opportunity to become better acquainted with students outside the classroom.

The strength of the advisor system is largely dependent upon effective communication. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's advisor whenever they feel it is necessary during the School year. Advisors will formally have contact with their advisees' parents at designated points throughout the year.

**The Mental Health Counselor** is responsible for assisting students with academic, social, and personal pressures that are interfering with the students' experience at Nichols. The Mental Health Counselor does not provide ongoing or long-term counseling for students but will make appropriate recommendations when students require advanced or continuous services.

**The School Nurse** is responsible for assessing the medical needs of students and recommending whether a higher level of care is needed for students who present with injuries or illnesses that occur during the school day or after-school activities.

## **MANDATORY REPORTING**

Nichols School is dedicated to the goal of protecting our students and expects all School employees to respond effectively to incidents of child abuse or maltreatment, including in the educational setting. Nichols School recognizes local, state, and national efforts to address problems associated with these issues and will work cooperatively with all agencies with responsibility for addressing such concerns. The School will not tolerate abuse or maltreatment of children or the failure to comply with this policy.

New York law requires that certain people identified as mandated reporters who know, or have reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused or maltreated by an employee or volunteer in an educational setting or a parent or other person legally responsible for the child to report such knowledge.

Mandated Reporters include, but are not limited to, teachers, school administrators, counselors, nurses, or other school personnel required to hold a teaching or administrative license or certificate. However, all employees, even those who are not mandated reporters, who know or have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or maltreatment are also required to notify a representative of the School, either the Head of School or Director of Human Resources so that appropriate action can be taken to protect the child and to record the incident. The appropriate personnel at Nichols School will assist in making the necessary reports and will maintain a record of all reports made.

New York law contains, in relevant part, the following definitions:

- “Abuse” encompasses the most serious injuries and/or risk of serious injuries to children by their caregivers. An abused child is one whose parent or other person legally responsible for his or her care inflicts serious physical injury upon the child, creates a substantial risk of serious physical injury, or commits a sex offense against the child. Abuse also includes situations where a parent or other person legally responsible knowingly allows someone else to inflict such harm on a child
- “Maltreatment” means that a child’s physical, mental or emotional condition has been impaired, or placed in imminent danger of impairment, by the failure of the child’s parent or other person legally responsible to exercise a minimum degree of care by:
  - Failing to provide sufficient food, clothing, shelter, education, or
  - Failing to provide proper supervision, guardianship or medical care, or
  - Inflicting excessive corporal punishment, abandoning the child, misusing drugs and alcohol to the extent child was placed in imminent danger
- “Reasonable cause to suspect” is when one based upon “rational observations, professional training and experience” has a suspicion that the parent or other person legally responsible for the child is responsible for harming the child or placing the child in imminent danger of harm. Reasonable suspicion may be as simple as distrusting an explanation for an injury.

Whenever an oral or written allegation is made to a mandated reporter that a child has been subjected to child abuse by an employee or volunteer in an educational setting, such person shall upon receipt of the allegation promptly complete a written report of such allegation on the form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

The form can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/pps/childabuse-neglect/>. The written report must include the following information:

- the full name of the child alleged to be abused;
- the name of the child’s parent or guardian;
- the identity of the person making the allegation and their relationship to the alleged child victim;
- the name of the employee or volunteer against whom the allegation is made, and;
- provide a listing of the specific allegations of child abuse in an educational setting.

The person receiving the report of child abuse in an educational setting must then promptly and personally deliver a copy of such written report to the Head of School in which the child abuse allegedly occurred. In the event that the employee against whom the allegation is made is the Head of School, the report must be promptly and personally delivered to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of a written report alleging that a child has been abused in an educational setting, the Head of School (or Chair of the Board of Trustees) shall, where there is reasonable suspicion to believe that abuse has occurred:

- Where the subject child has made the allegation:
- Promptly notify the parent of such child that an allegation of child abuse has been made regarding such child and promptly provide the parent with a written statement prepared pursuant to regulations of the Commissioner of Education setting forth parental rights, responsibilities, and procedures; and
- Promptly forward such report to appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- Where the parent of the child has made the allegation:
- Promptly provide the parent of such child with a written statement setting forth parental rights, responsibilities, and procedures; and
- Promptly forward such report to appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- Where a person other than the subject child or the parent of a subject child makes the allegation:
- Promptly notify the parent of the subject child that an allegation of child abuse in an education setting has been made regarding his or her child and promptly provide the parent with a written statement setting forth parental rights, responsibilities, and procedures;
- Ascertain from the person making such report the source and basis for such allegation; and
- Promptly forward such report to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

New York law still requires that reports are also made to the New York State Child Protective Services System (“CPS”). Each report must be made immediately to the SCR mandated reporter hotline at 1-800-635-1522. Oral reports must be followed within 48 hours by a written report to the local department of social services or by visiting the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (“OCFS”) website at [ofcs.ny.gov](http://ofcs.ny.gov).

Remember, it is the School’s duty to consider the best interest of the child first, and it will err on the side of reporting. Any person who makes a report of child abuse in good faith shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability. No employee of Nichols School will be subjected to reprisal or discharge because of his or her actions in reporting abuse pursuant to the requirements of this section. A failure to report child abuse or maltreatment is a misdemeanor. Mandated reporters who fail to make a report to SCR may also be subjected to civil liability for damages.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Nichols students are expected to show respect for the rights and property of others, to exhibit courtesy and good character, and to engage in behavior that brings credit to the School and to the community, whether they are on or off campus as long as they are enrolled at the School.

## HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING AND HAZING

Harassment, discrimination, bullying, and hazing are serious offenses, prohibited by federal and/or state law as well as the policies of Nichols School. The School will not tolerate harassment, discrimination, hazing, or bullying of any kind, whether it is of a general nature or consistent with any of the specific examples described below. Where inappropriate conduct is found, the School will act promptly with the goal of eliminating the conduct and taking whatever other corrective action it deems necessary. Through education and intervention, the School makes every effort to achieve an educational environment free from harassment, discrimination, bullying and hazing.

### *DEFINITIONS*

#### HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION

Illegal **harassment** or **discrimination** is conduct or behavior which is based on age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, domestic violence victim status, history of a criminal record or other protected class or status recognized under federal, state or local law and is personally offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or is so pervasive or severe that it has the purpose or effect of:

- creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- interfering unreasonably with an individual's academic performance; or
- creating a situation where academic decisions of a student depend on his or her submitting to and/or not objecting to the behavior (*quid pro quo*).

Discrimination and harassment can take many forms. Examples include but are not limited to: (1) limiting opportunities to participate in certain clubs, teams or activities based on certain characteristics; 2) slurs, jokes, statements, remarks, questions, gestures, pictures, e-mails, texts or cartoons regarding legally protected status that are derogatory or demeaning to an individual's or group's characteristics or that promote stereotypes; 3) demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment, academic rewards, or continued participation in a program or project (*quid pro quo*); 4) offensive or unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances or touching; 5) obscene, demeaning or abusive commentary about an individual's body or other personal characteristics; 6) audiotaping or videotaping individuals in potentially embarrassing situations and/or forwarding such taped material to others; and 7) responding to refusals to provide sexual favors with verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

Often harassing behavior results from ignorance or insensitivity to the feelings of others. Being mindful of how one's behavior is affecting others, and communicating the effect of the behavior of others are good ways to minimize harassment.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Nichols School condemns and expressly prohibits sexual contact or relationships between adults and students and sexual harassment of any kind. While the School must comply with state and federal laws dealing with sexual harassment, our policy also seeks to educate members of the community about the nature of sexual harassment and to do whatever we can to prevent it from occurring.

Sexual Harassment is defined as sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which affects a student's emotional well-being or interferes with a student's academic performance or participation in co-curricular or extracurricular activities, or which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or social environment. Sexual harassment can involve student to student harassment, adult to student harassment and student-to-adult harassment.

Nichols is unequivocally committed to ensuring the safety and integrity of student growth. We endeavor to provide instruction at least annually to all members of the School community about the proper roles and relationships that comprise community life. We focus on the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries. We expect that the life experience of adults at the School will enrich the student's learning experience. We place the student's best interests above all other considerations. All sexual advances (overt or otherwise) between adults and students are prohibited, on or off the grounds, even if a student encourages or appears to encourage such advances. Sexual behavior between adults and students is considered a severe breach of trust and will be dealt with as such.

## **IDENTIFYING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment can take various forms, many of which violate state or federal laws. Not all forms of sexual harassment may be readily apparent to every member of the community. It may be direct and overt, or it may be subtle and ambiguous. It may be behavior that is repeated, or it may be behavior that occurs only once. It is not social or courting behavior between equals, but rather the assertion of power over another individual that puts that individual at a disadvantage.

Individuals might unintentionally act in a manner that others experience as sexually harassing. It is the responsibility of all members of the community to ensure that their words, actions, and interactions with others always reflect the intent to promote respect and trust. Attempts to justify such behavior as a "prank" or "joke" do not change its harassing nature if the object of the joke is not a willing participant. Whatever the basis for the harassment, it is prohibited.

When trying to identify whether behavior is "harassing," it is crucial to distinguish student-to-student interactions from sexual intimacy between students and adults, which is always prohibited. Physical contact between students that is intended and perceived by those involved as positive, healthy, and appropriate to their age and experience is likely to occur.

When these behaviors occur between an adult and a student, it is irrelevant whether the behavior is welcome or unwelcome. There is no circumstance in which these behaviors between adults

and students are permissible. The following behaviors are examples of harassing behaviors. The list is suggestive rather than exhaustive, and members of the community should seek advice and assistance in any circumstance in which they are made to feel uncomfortable by the behaviors of another.

Some examples of harassment are:

- physical assault, including rape or any coerced or non-consensual sexual relations
- sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not
- sexual physical contact
- sexual or lewd jokes, remarks, leering, whistling, brushing against the body, or other suggestive or insulting gestures or comments
- inquiries into one's sexual experiences or activities or discussion of one's own sexual experiences or activities
- audiotaping or videotaping others in sexual or other potentially embarrassing circumstances and forwarding or threatening to forward the taped material to others
- intimidating or suggestive remarks about an individual's sexual orientation, whether actual or implied
- sexually suggestive or degrading sounds or remarks (written, oral, or electronically transmitted), including graffiti and the spreading of sexual rumors, made to or about another member of the community
- the use of technology to transmit sexually suggestive, offensive, and/or degrading material, whether received at the School or elsewhere
- the open display of sexually offensive objects, pictures, and messages

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is characterized by a power differential and involves aggressive behavior that is repeated and intended to cause harm. Bullying is defined as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that

- has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or
- reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or
- reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or
- occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to the targeted student's property.

Acts of harassment and bullying shall include, but not be limited to, those acts based on a person's actual or perceived age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military

status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, domestic violence victim status, history of a criminal record or other protected class or status recognized under federal, state or local law. For the purposes of this definition, the term "threats, intimidation or abuse" shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.

Bullying can include, but is not limited to, any of the following: 1) hitting, slapping, pushing, and other physical conduct that causes bodily harm; 2) threatening in a manner that puts someone down or is cruel; 3) deliberately excluding or ostracizing someone as a way to humiliate or demean them; 4) sexually harassing conduct; 5) hazing activities.

## **CYBER-BULLYING**

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, fax machines, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings, whether on a webpage, in a blog, any form of social media, or otherwise.

Cyber-bullying may include, but is not limited to, any of the following kinds of behaviors: 1) taking a private e-mail, instant message, photograph, video, social media posting, or text message and forwarding it, or threatening to forward it to others or posting it where others can see it to embarrass or intimidate a person; 2) spreading hurtful rumors online about another person; 3) threatening or insulting through aggressive e-mails, instant messages, or text messages; 4) posting, or threatening to post embarrassing pictures of someone online without his or her permission; 5) creating a Web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation causes any of the conditions listed in the definition of bullying listed above.

## **HAZING**

Hazing is defined as conduct or a method of initiation into any student organization which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person, regardless of consent of the individuals involved.

Hazing can consist of any physical or mental activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety or mental well-being of a student or other person, or which subjects a student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

While harassment, discrimination, bullying and hazing all fall within a spectrum of interpersonal aggression and sometimes violence, they are not synonymous. Hazing is predicated on inclusion and can sometimes be overlooked because it can appear as neither particularly aggressive or as intended to harm. In addition, hazing can sometimes be confusing for students to understand because they might consent to the behavior. It is important to note that because hazing involves a group context and the power differential of current members and those seeking membership or



acceptance by the group, peer pressure and a coercive environment can exist and interfere with consent. Therefore, conduct can be deemed to be hazing regardless of a person's willingness to participate.

Under New York law, hazing may expose one to criminal liability as follows:

- A person is guilty of hazing in the first degree when, in the course of another person's initiation into or affiliation with any organization, they intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury. Hazing in the first degree is a class A misdemeanor.
- A person is guilty of hazing in the second degree when, in the course of another person's initiation or affiliation with any organization, they intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person. Hazing in the second degree is a violation.

## **HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT**

A hostile environment is one in which discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

## **RETALIATION**

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying, provides information during an investigation of such behavior, or witnesses or has reliable information about such behavior. All members of the Nichols School community should understand that behavior which may not specifically be intended to be retaliatory may be perceived as retaliatory by the target. As such, careful attention must be paid to interactions with those who have made reports or participated in investigations under this policy.

Retaliation against any individual for reporting violations of the policy, whether by the object of the complaint or someone else, will not be tolerated and will be subject to the same strict discipline as harassment, discrimination, hazing or bullying itself. Each retaliatory offense will be investigated and addressed separately. Individuals who themselves are not complainants, but who participate in an investigation, for example, as witnesses or investigators, will also be protected from retaliation under this policy.

## **LEGAL DEFINITIONS AND SCHOOL POLICY**

It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior than those provided by law may apply under the policies of Nichols School in order that we may prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct. The School reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act, or gesture, if the School determines that it is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action. Conduct need

not meet the legal definitions of harassment, discrimination, hazing or bullying to violate the School's expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable.

## **PREVENTION**

Nichols School is committed to providing the healthiest possible school environment for all members of our community. As such, the School regularly engages students and employees in opportunities to understand and put into practice community standards and expectations.

Training for students and employees that is specific to harassment, discrimination, bullying, hazing and sexual harassment is provided each School year. The aim of such training is to prevent such behaviors from occurring and to equip community members with the understanding, skills and support to adequately respond to such instances should they occur.

Training occurs for groups of students and employees around particular topics. The School may also require individuals to attend such training to improve their understanding of the issues surrounding harassment, discrimination, bullying, hazing and sexual harassment and the importance of preventing such behavior.

## **REPORTING COMPLAINTS**

Nichols School will not tolerate and responds vigorously to any reported harassment, discrimination, bullying, hazing or sexual harassment of students or employees.

Even when students or adults are not certain about whether they have been subject to or witnessed harassment, discrimination, hazing or bullying, it is important that the behavior be reported. Individuals who have been subject to such behavior often suffer in silence, believing that they are the only one to whom this is happening and wrongly feeling that they are somehow responsible. Inappropriate behavior can continue over many years because individuals think they are alone, or because they fear punishment or unwanted attention and embarrassment if they tell.

Any student who feels that she or he has been subject to discrimination, harassment, hazing, or bullying may report such concerns to the School Counselors, School Nurse, Heads of either the Upper or Middle Schools, any of the School deans or team leaders, any faculty member or advisor.

Any employee of Nichols School who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of discrimination, harassment, hazing, or bullying in violation of this policy or who becomes aware of retaliation against a student or adult who provides information concerning a violation of this policy is required to report it immediately to the Head of the Upper School and the Director of Human Resources. Such reporting does not discharge the obligation of the employee to report actions covered by reporting laws to the appropriate legal authority. Any employee may not make promises of confidentiality to a student or parent/guardian who informs him/her of an allegation of harassment, discrimination, hazing, bullying, or retaliation.

Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. Also, while the School cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School releases information concerning complaints of harassment, discrimination, hazing, bullying, and retaliation only on a need-to-know basis, such as to conduct a comprehensive investigation or to ensure that the requirements of this policy and applicable law are met.

## **RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS**

Reports of harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying and hazing involving students will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the School. In some cases, an outside investigator may be asked to conduct or to help conduct the investigation.

Harassment, discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, cyber-bullying and hazing can occur in varying degrees; hence, consequences will be determined according to the offense. Serious cases will be referred to the SCC and may result in suspension or dismissal. Less serious incidents will be resolved through counseling the students and notification of parents that this action constitutes a formal warning. The severity of the offense, and therefore the response, will be determined by a committee consisting of the Dean of Students, the Director Community and Inclusivity, and the Head of the Upper School in consultation with the Head of School.

## **FALSE CHARGES/COOPERATION IN INVESTIGATION**

Because allegations of discrimination, harassment, hazing, or bullying are serious and can be damaging to accused persons' reputations, any person who knowingly, maliciously or recklessly makes a false complaint will be subject to severe discipline. In addition, because candor and honesty are essential to the investigation and remediation process, they are required of all participants, including third-party witnesses.

The withholding of material information in an investigation by complainants, witnesses, and/or the accused party is prohibited. Students are expected to cooperate fully in an investigation conducted by the School; failure to demonstrate such cooperation will lead to disciplinary action. Abuse of the process, including falsifying information, will result in discipline being imposed, up to and including dismissal from school.

## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO**

Nichols hopes to discourage use of alcohol/drugs in three distinct ways. First, our Wellness Programs bring a variety of area experts on the use of chemical substances to the Nichols campus for all School presentations and small group discussions. We hope such programs help our students make wise choices about alcohol/drug use during both their high school and college years.

Secondly, Nichols has established and consistently enforced a strict rule forbidding students from either using alcohol/drugs/other unauthorized substances on campus or coming on to campus at any time under the influence of such substances. The School cannot and will not tolerate behavior that compromises this fundamental expectation.

Students who vape or are in possession of vaping materials or devices on campus or while on any school-related events may be required to have a hearing with the Student Conduct Committee. The likely outcome of the hearing may be Behavioral Probation and/or suspension. In addition, students found vaping may be required to be assessed by Kids Escaping Drugs.

Finally, we as a school will communicate our concerns about student alcohol/drug use to parents when we sense a pattern of behavior or work that suggests that a student is falling into involvement. Over the years we have learned to know the signs of alcohol/drug use among adolescents, which often include: a sharp drop in academic productivity, a sudden change or exclusivity in a peer group, a refusal to engage in the normal activities of the school community, rude or insolent behavior to adults, and/or widespread rumors about drug/alcohol use.

When we suspect students are falling into a pattern of drug or alcohol use that is affecting their lives at Nichols, we may as a matter of course inform the child's parents of our concerns in a confidential meeting; we may ask the parents to pursue our questions with their child. In addition, if students approach members of the faculty to express concern about drug/alcohol use by their friends or classmates, we may again call in the child's parents and raise those concerns specifically with them.

The Core Group of Nichols is a "safe-place" organization of faculty where students, suffering directly or indirectly from the use or abuse of drugs and/or alcohol, can bring their concerns to one of the identified core members. Without compromising the safety of our students, the group provides confidential and non-punitive support, intervention, and prevention strategies to aid in the "total education" of students at Nichols School.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTION PLAN**

We at Nichols believe that students should be given the tools necessary to make informed decisions about drug and alcohol use and abuse. The following list details the components of our Comprehensive Prevention Program in the Middle and Upper Schools.

### **KIDS ESCAPING DRUGS**

Nichols School has entered into a relationship with a highly regarded local Alcohol and Drug Dependency treatment agency, Kids Escaping Drugs (KED). This relationship provides a number of services to our students, faculty and parents that supplement our Drug Education initiatives as follows:

- Speakers from KED offer presentations about addiction, intervention, treatment and trends in drug and alcohol use to students faculty or parent groups.
- Available on the Nichols website is a contact link to KED for students or parents to have confidential contact with substance abuse counselors for advice or treatment services.
- Participation by Nichols with a consortium of WNY high schools at KED to develop programs for education and treatment about substance abuse.

## **FREEDOM FROM CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY**

Annually, the nationally renowned drug education organization, Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD) spends a one-week period at Nichols providing an intensive educational program for the sophomore class. Topics covered are as follows for the sophomore class:

- “How Drugs Affect our Relationships with the World”
- “How Drugs Affect our Relationships with School, Family and Friends”
- “How Drugs Affect our Relationship to our Physical Self”
- “How Drugs Affect our Relationship to our Inner Self”

During this one week period, school assemblies are conducted for the Upper School to inform the student body about the importance of the FCD program in our community. Parents are invited to School to hear about current trends in drug and alcohol education. The Upper School faculty meets with the FCD educator to learn about current trends in drug and alcohol education and to provide the faculty the opportunity to inquire about issues they are concerned about. Additionally, special programs are presented to the freshmen, junior and senior classes on topics designed to address relevant drugs and alcohol issues.

At the conclusion of the one week visit, a full evaluation of the educational program is completed by the program participants. The FCD educator also provides an assessment of the success of their program and shares insights they had acquired during their visit with the administration.

## **UPPER SCHOOL WELLNESS**

Part of Nichols’ comprehensive substance abuse prevention plan is our 9<sup>th</sup> grade Wellness program. Each 9th grade student takes part in a year-long wellness class. A major component in this program is substance use prevention. We aim to educate the students about the dangers of binge drinking and substance use and abuse. Our goal is to help the students develop strategies to make good choices during their high school years. We bring in speakers from our community, show videos, and use innovative teaching tools to help cultivate conversations surrounding these topics.

## **NICHOLS CORE GROUP**

What is the *Core Group* at Nichols?

### *Nichols Core Group. . .*

- Is a non-disciplinary faculty group designed to help and support students in handling substance use before it becomes a more serious health problem or disciplinary issue. Core Group is concerned with student drug and alcohol use as a health issue - not a violation of school rules. The Head of Core Group is School Counselor Danielle Vallas. Her direct line is 332-5121; her email address is [dvallas@nicholsschool.org](mailto:dvallas@nicholsschool.org).
- Is a safe place where students can share concerns about all health issues including but not limited to mental health, substance use, and relationship.
- Reaches out to students for whom there is sufficient concern.

### *How the Core Group System Works:*

#### **LEVEL ONE INTERVENTION**

Core Group receives referrals from the community that raise significant concern about substance use or other health issues. *The Core Group will not act on any second-hand information.* Referrals must include only first-hand, observed behaviors. ***Any community member who makes a referral will do so in strict confidentiality.*** No one outside of the Core Group will have knowledge of who made the referral. The School Mental Health Counselor will provide leadership for the Core Group and will be consulted on interventions.

#### **Action:**

- Conversation between one or two Core Group members and the student
- Concerns are shared, resources for support are discussed and encouraged
- If a significant concern is raised we will make a phone call home

#### **LEVEL TWO INTERVENTION**

Core Group receives additional reports of substance use.

#### **Action (any or all of these steps):**

- Phone call to parent or guardian from Core Group member
- Meeting with student, parent or guardian and one or two Core Group members
- Drug Testing suggested
- Counseling explored
- Resources for support are discussed and encouraged

#### **LEVEL THREE INTERVENTION**

Concern about substance use persists.

#### **Action:**

- Student's substance use is beyond the Core Group's capacity to provide support.

- Student’s situation is reviewed by an administrative team that may include the Head of Upper School, Dean of Students, and grade level Dean. Further recommendations for treatment will be made. The administrative team will discuss with the student and parents or guardian whether Nichols is the healthiest environment for the student.

The Core Group operates **in total confidentiality and independence from the administration and disciplinary system**. A student is referred to an administrative team only when substance use persists, and the Core Group recommendations to the student, and parents or guardians are not followed. The health and safety of the student, and the health and safety of the Nichols community will always drive Core Group decision-making

## **VIOLATION OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

While enrolled at the School, a student may not buy, sell, possess, or use alcohol or other unauthorized drugs or substances, including tobacco and tobacco-related products (including e-cigarettes and vaping), and/or any paraphernalia associated with the use of illegal drugs, and may not intentionally misuse products that can act as inhalants. Students are prohibited from using medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, in any manner other than as prescribed or intended by the manufacturer.

At the very least, a student who is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or any other unauthorized substance at School or at any School sponsored event (even if it is off-campus), or who possesses illegal drugs, alcohol, or any other unauthorized substance may be suspended following a hearing before the SCC. He or she may not return to School until he or she has had an evaluation by a counselor at Kids Escaping Drugs. If a student is required to undergo such an evaluation, his/her parents or guardians will be notified. Continued enrollment at Nichols School is contingent upon the student completing the assessment and recommended follow-up care.

The use of nicotine in any form on campus is a violation of School rules and will be referred to the SCC. In addition, any person who shares prescription medications with anyone other than the named person on the prescription may be subject to suspension or dismissal from School. The parents of all the students involved will be notified, and appropriate action will be taken by the SCC.

## **OTHER CAMPUS RULES**

Nichols students are expected to act with respect for others in all they do. Students must exercise respect for the conduct of classes and the work of Nichols employees by remaining well behaved and reasonably quiet on campus. Exhibiting good manners towards faculty, staff, students and visitors on campus is expected of all our students. As students leave campus during the day or for school related activities, they are expected to continue their adherence to school rules, dress code and behavioral expectations. Living in a community that upholds respect as a central value to our mission necessitates the prohibition of certain behaviors and items that threaten our core values.

Therefore, the following behaviors and items are prohibited:

- Firearms, knives, and other dangerous weapons are not permitted on the Nichols campus or School sponsored events off campus.
- As part of our campus security plan, unauthorized deliveries are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, any food delivery service. It is expected that students will eat in the dining room and take advantage of the meal plan that is part of tuition. Students are not allowed to have food delivered. Violations of this security policy may be handled through the Upper School discipline process.
- Games of chance
- Pranks on campus or off campus directed towards other members of the Nichols community
- Skateboards, rollerblades and scooters

## **DRESS CODE**

Students should take pride in the way they look each day, and dress as if they could leave the campus for an interview at any time during the day. It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with the dress code and adhere to it on a daily basis. The dress code applies to all parts of the campus, every day. Dress code may be checked daily when attendance is taken.

### **Enforcement Policy**

The final arbitrator of appropriate dress will be the Dean of Students.

Students who come to School in improper attire may be asked to change and may be required to call home or be sent home for a change of clothing. In addition, repeated dress code violations may result in the initiation of the discipline response. The discipline response is a stepped process involving an initial visit to the Minor Discipline Committee followed by a visit to the Student Conduct Committee if the student continues to disrespect school rules by coming to School out of dress code.

### **Boys**

- Dress slacks with a collared dress shirt and tie are required.
- A sweater, fleece, Nichols sweatshirt/hooded sweatshirt, or blazer may be worn over the shirt and tie.
- A turtleneck worn under a sweater, fleece, or Nichols sweatshirt/hooded sweatshirt may be worn only during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters as a replacement for a shirt and tie.
- Non-athletic shoes with trouser socks (not athletic socks) should be worn.

Not permitted: non-Nichols sweatshirt/hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts with words or graphics, running sneakers, basketball sneakers, cleats, flip-flops, mules, sandals and slippers.

### **Girls**



- A dress or skirt no shorter than two inches above the knees, or dress pants, are appropriate.
- Skirts may be three inches above the knee if worn with opaque leggings or tights.
- Non-exercise leggings may only be worn with a skirt, tunic or dress over them. A tunic is a top that reaches someplace between the top of the thigh and above the knee. Spandex leggings meant for exercise are not in dress code.
- A dress blouse, collared shirt, or an embellished cotton shirt that is not considered casual may be worn. A sweater, fleece or Nichols sweatshirt/hooded sweatshirt must be worn over any top with cut-outs or spaghetti straps.
- Non-athletic shoes.

Not permitted: spaghetti straps, non-Nichols sweatshirts/hooded sweatshirts, t-shirts with words or graphics, spandex exercise leggings, running sneakers, basketball sneakers, cleats, flip-flops, mules, sandals and slippers.

## **Boys & Girls**

Collared golf shirts may be worn **in the months of September and May**.

### **Some General Guidelines:**

- Clothing should be neat, clean and in good repair. No rips.
- Clothing where undergarments are shown is inappropriate; camisole tops must be covered.
- Spandex leggings made for exercise, graphic t-shirts, sweatpants, pajama pants, non-Nichols hooded apparel/sweatshirts, and blue denim material are prohibited.
- Running sneakers, basketball sneakers, cleats, flip-flops, crocs, sandals and slippers are not allowed.
- Hats and outdoor coats may not be worn in class, but may be worn from building to building. Baseball style hats are prohibited. All hats and caps must be removed in buildings.
- No exposed midriffs using low-ride or hip-hugging slacks with short blouses.

## **DRIVING AND PARKING**

It is important that faculty, staff, parents, and students abide by the following rules to help provide a safe environment. We are grateful for your cooperation in this matter. We ask parents and students to follow the traffic and parking regulations listed below:

- Please adhere to the 5 mph speed limit on campus.
- All traffic will enter from Amherst Street.
- No cars may park along the roadway leading from the Amherst entrance to the Colvin exit as it is a City of Buffalo fire lane. This includes behind Mitchell and along the road to Colvin.
- Parents dropping students off in the morning should drop off students behind Center 63.
- **Students will be required to park in the Colvin lot.**

- **We reserve the right to deny students on campus driving and parking privileges if they violate driving or parking rules.**

Everyone who parks in the lots provided by the School does so at his/her own risk.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE POLICY**

To maintain order on School property and at School-related events and to protect the safety and welfare of students and School personnel, Nichols School has the right to perform unannounced searches and to seize all substances or materials prohibited by School policy or state or federal law, including but not limited to controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, vaping paraphernalia, or weapons. Any item deemed to be illegal, disruptive, or inappropriate to the school environment may be seized by staff. Storage and/or return of such items shall be at the discretion of the Head of School, subject to legal impoundment.

The School also has the right to perform searches of students to determine whether they pose a danger to themselves and others. Authorized staff members may search a student's pockets, purse, backpack, gym bag, or other personal property. A student's locker is the property of Nichols School. School authorities may perform general inspections of lockers at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Students are not permitted to lock or otherwise impede access to any locker except with a **lock provided by the School. Unapproved locks will be removed and discarded.**

School authorities may perform periodic patrols of student parking lots and conduct exterior inspections of student automobiles on School property. Interior searches of student vehicles can occur to determine if substances or materials prohibited by School policy or state and federal law are contained inside. Refusal to allow access to a vehicle at the time of the search may be cause for terminating the privilege of parking on School property and may warrant further disciplinary action.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Nichols is committed to providing all students with technology-based learning opportunities that facilitate resource sharing, research, cooperative learning, education and communications. The use of computers, networks, the Internet, and other online services should be in support of education and research consistent with Nichols mission and goals.

Access to computer network resources is available to all members of the School community. In accordance with the principles of respect and integrity, Nichols seeks to provide a safe environment for the use of network resources through which all may learn, work, and obtain skills relevant to the Information Age.

The Internet links thousands of computer networks around the world, giving the Nichols community access to a wide variety of computer and information resources. Although the School

has taken precautions to protect users from inappropriate material, Nichols does not have control of the information on the Internet, and the ultimate responsibility lies with the user. The School believes the value of access to information on the Internet outweighs the risk that a user may purposely or inadvertently gain access to inappropriate material; however, the School does not condone the use of such materials and does not permit usage of such materials in the School environment. All users will be trained in the use of the network, electronic mail, and Internet communication skills.

All computers and network resources are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner and align with the Core Values of Nichols. Use of Nichols' computers and network is a privilege, and all users must adhere both to the standards of acceptable use of technology policy and behavior stated below, as well as to any guidelines given orally by an employee. Any violation of these standards may result in the loss of network access, disciplinary action, and may include legal action including, but not limited to, criminal prosecution under appropriate state and federal laws.

### **Standards of Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and Behavior on the Computer Network:**

**Inappropriate Use:** Inappropriate use of Nichols technology, including Nichols hardware, student owned devices, software, networks, the Internet, or other online services include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **General:**

- Violating any local, State or Federal law;
- Accessing another individual's materials, information, folders or files without permission;
- Violating copyright, plagiarizing or otherwise using the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission (see Copyright Guidelines below);
- Failing to follow Nichols policies while using the Nichols technology, student owned devices or failing to follow any other policies or guidelines established by Nichols administrators or their designees.

#### **Inappropriate Language or Materials:**

- The use of language that is abusive, profane, racist, or sexually offensive;
- Accessing, uploading, downloading or distributing of offensive or sexually explicit material;
- Harassment, defined as persistently annoying of another, interfering with another's work, insulting, or attacking others;
- Giving out personal information of another online such as full name, home address, phone number or Social Security number or arranging to meet anyone via the Internet;
- Creating mailing lists for non-school purposes with Nichols email addresses from the Nichols Internet site, network, or servers;
- Downloading software to Nichols equipment that has not been approved by Nichols;

- The use of any social networking site (Facebook, twitter, or others) to post or distribute photos, videos, or documents representing Nichols in contradiction of the student code of conduct.

**Hardware, Software, Network:**

- Giving out personal passwords;
- Attempting to log on or logging on with another's password;
- Vandalizing, defined as any unauthorized access and/or malicious attempt to damage computer hardware/software or networks or destroying the data of another user, including creating, uploading, or intentionally introducing viruses;
- Intentionally wasting storage or other technology resources;
- Using the network for commercial, advertisement, or political purposes;
- Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities;
- Invading the privacy of other members of the Nichols community;
- Seeking to gain or gaining unauthorized access to information resources or other computing devices or attempting to bypass security measures;
- Improperly altering the set-up of computers (e.g., desktops, icons, wallpapers, screen savers, installed software);
- Copying illegal software, or installing or using software that has not been approved by Nichols staff;
- Use of Nichols hardware, student owned devices, software, storage space or network which interferes with the academic purposes for which the school is providing these services and equipment.

**Copyright Guidelines:** All computer software is protected by copyright laws, and unauthorized transmission of licensed software (uploading, downloading, altering, or copying) is illegal. If you include information obtained from the Nichols network or the Internet in your own work, you must practice accepted rules for documentation by citing documents and by attributing authorship. Users should be aware of copyright infringements with respect to commercially available music and video.

**Student Responsibilities:** Students shall be responsible for displaying appropriate behavior and maintaining a productive learning environment when using Nichols computers, student owned devices, networks, the Internet, and other online services. Files and communications on the network shall be considered public in nature; students should not expect that files stored on Nichols servers, Nichols One Drive Account or the Nichols Internet service provider's servers will be private. Students who observe or identify a security issue should notify the School immediately. Students should show any messages that are suggestive, obscene, or threatening to an employee. If students encounter objectionable material on the Internet, they should minimize the browser and notify an employee immediately so that the site may be blocked. Students should not click any other links or graphics on the objectionable page.

**Permission:** Students must have permission from Nichols when using Nichols hardware, student owned devices, software, folders, files, networks, the Internet, or other online services.

Permission is not transferable from one student to another and may not be shared. Chat room access must be approved by the library staff or a Nichols employee.

**Privacy:** Respect the privacy of others. Users must not intentionally obtain copies of, or modify files, e-mail, passwords, or data that belong to anyone else. Do not divulge personal information such as names, addresses, or phone numbers while on the Internet.

**Courtesy:** Show exemplary behavior while using the network. The computer centers are quiet study areas. Exercise care in the use of computer equipment. The community will suffer from broken or stolen hardware. No computers are to be used for game playing at any time. Electronic devices shall not be used during class unless expressly authorized by a teacher.

**Protection of Personal Accounts:** Work only in your own account. Take responsibility for your account and its contents. Protect your password and log off when your work is complete. Report any problems with your password or account to the System Administrator. In order to ensure smooth system operations, the System Administrator has the authority to monitor all accounts. Nichols will make reasonable efforts to maintain privacy and security in this process.

**Integrity of Computing Systems:** Use of the network for any illegal activities, for hacking, i.e., the unauthorized entry into any computer systems, or for any deliberate vandalism or destruction of computer equipment or computer files is prohibited. Do not change any settings on a shared computer. Do not add files to any directory on the network besides your own user folder. Do not spread computer viruses.

**Statements of Personal Belief:** Students shall not make or publish any statement that is on behalf of, or purports to be on behalf of, Nichols without written approval from the School. Nichols may review and remove all content in any Internet or online accounts paid for or owned, in whole or in part, by Nichols without notice of any kind.

**Violations:** Nichols staff will monitor for inappropriate use of Nichols technology and student owned devices as defined by this policy. Any action by a student that is determined by an employee to constitute an inappropriate use of the Internet, network or email, is a violation of this Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. An electronic device may be confiscated at any time by an employee and they may view the contents of such device including but not limited to, texts, emails or social media postings, if it appears that the device was used in violation of School rules or this Acceptable Use of Technology Policy. Violations of this policy may result in temporary or permanent loss of access to computers, the network, and Internet access and other discipline. Students may also be assessed the cost of damages to and repair of any Nichols hardware, software or other technology resources.

**Student Cooperation:** Students shall cooperate with Nichols in any investigation of a violation of this policy, including, by providing Nichols access to and turning over students' devices such as cell phones, tablets, computers and other electronic devices to designated employees of Nichols.

**Security Risk:** Any student identified as a security risk may be denied access to Nichols technology or the use of student owned devices.

**Disclaimer:** Nichols makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology access provided. Nichols shall not be responsible for any damages suffered, including the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by any school owned or provided technology. Use of any information obtained via the Internet shall be at the user's own risk. Nichols has no responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its system and is not liable for any commercial transactions conducted through its system.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

This document is intended to be a supplement to the Nichols School Student Acceptable Use Policy. These guidelines are designed to create an atmosphere of good will, honesty and individual accountability.

Nichols School encourages its students to set and maintain high standards in their use of social networking. Since these sites reach audiences that reach far beyond our School community, students must use social media sites responsibly and be accountable for their actions when warranted.

- Social media venues are public and information can be quickly shared beyond your control. Once something is online, it really never goes away. All of the information online about you, whether posted by you or others, makes up your digital image. Be conscious of what you share online.
- Do not post, “like” or link anything (photos, videos, web pages, audio files, forums, groups, fan pages, etc.) to your social network sites that you wouldn’t want friends, peers, parents, guardians, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to access.
- Only accept social network invitations from people you know. Stalkers and identity thieves are a real threat. Never share personal information, including birthdays, social security numbers, phone numbers, or driver’s license numbers.
- Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else’s identity or creating a false identity.
- Cyber bullying is considered an act of harassment (see Harassment, Discrimination, Bullying & Hazing policy) and would subject you to the Nichols School disciplinary system. Try to act online the way you want others to act toward you. If you, or someone you know, are being bullied online or in person, it is best not to respond or react online. Instead, tell your teacher or Nichols employee and your parent(s) or guardian(s) so they can help you decide what to do next.
- The use of Nichols School logos, images, or pictures on your personal social networking sites is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action by the School.
- The use of social media by Nichols students is strongly discouraged, particularly by students who may not have the wherewithal to understand the consequences of using the medium.

- Students are prohibited from texting or instant messaging an employee of Nichols School. The exception is that while on a Nichols group or team, texting or instant messaging an employee is permitted for logistical or emergency purposes only.
- Emails exchanged between a student and an employee of Nichols School must be employed using school provided sources only.
- Be sure to follow your class and School rules about sites that you can and cannot visit. Going to an online place that you're not supposed to visit can be just as dangerous as going someplace in real life that your teacher or parents have said is not safe.
- Every social media site has privacy settings. Teachers and parents can help you set up your accounts in a safe way. But no matter how you set your privacy settings, there is no such thing as total privacy online.
- Students are prohibited from taking any pictures while in any locker room or bathroom on campus or at any school sponsored activity or trip.
- Students are prohibited from taking and posting any inappropriate pictures on school property or at any school sponsored activity or trip.
- While enrolled at the School, students are prohibited from sending sexually suggestive texts and messages and taking and sending nude, semi-nude and/or suggestive photographs, texts, or messages.

## **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICE/DIGITAL RECORDING DEVICE POLICY**

Personal communication devices with a screen can be used anywhere on campus for academic purposes (i.e. MySchoolApp, calculator) with the exception of the following locations: classrooms (unless explicit permission has been granted by a teacher), the Study Hall, all athletic changing areas, and the Flickinger Performing Arts Center once a meeting or assembly has commenced. Use of such devices for entertainment purposes (music, games, videos) should only occur in moderation and a student may be asked at any time to put away a device being used for entertainment purposes only. While walking between classes, students are expected not to be listening to music with headphones or checking phones. We value personal interaction between members of our community and guests to Nichols, and so ask that students do not travel between buildings while using their personal communication devices.

Use of such devices for any reason in prohibited spaces may result in a blue slip and confiscation of the device by an adult for the rest of the day, unless the use of the device violates the Honor Code (i.e. taking pictures of a test). If the use of the device violates the Honor Code, such use will result in an appearance before the Student Conduct Committee. In addition, possession of a communication/recording device in an exam setting is considered an Honor Code violation and will result in an appearance before the Student Conduct Committee regardless of whether the device was accessed or not. If a device is used to create an image or record anyone in a way that might be considered harassment, it will be considered an Honor Code violation and will result in an appearance before the SCC. Finally, if a device is used to create an image or record anyone in a changing area or bathroom it will be considered an Honor Code violation and will result in an appearance before the SCC.

Students bringing personal electronic devices such as laptops, tablets and smartphones to School are expected to assume responsibility for securing them against theft and protecting this expensive personal property from accidental damage. The School cannot be responsible for personal electronic devices brought onto the campus.

## **MYSCHOOLAPP**

Nichols teachers make extensive use of MySchoolApp, a learning management platform, to manage their courses. Assignments, due dates and class announcements are posted daily. Deans use MySchoolApp to share information specific to each class. The College Office conveys information about test dates, financial aid, the application process and college representatives coming to campus. Advisors and teachers will send messages directly to students in order to set up meetings, address concerns or to simply check in.

It is expected that students make the use of MySchoolApp a regular part of their day. Students are responsible for checking messages and course information regularly. Computers are available on campus for students to access MySchoolApp as needed. Students can also access MySchoolApp from their personal electronic devices.

Students and parents will receive their MySchoolApp login information prior to the start of the school year. Should students have trouble logging in to MySchoolApp, they can visit the Information Technology office on the first floor of Center '63 for assistance. Parents can also access MySchoolApp to view assignments and can contact the IT Department at [support@nicholsschool.org](mailto:support@nicholsschool.org) if they need login assistance.

## **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

In accepting membership in our school community, students and faculty alike commit themselves to personal integrity and honor. We at Nichols believe that there is no more important value than honesty.

Plagiarism is the act of using another person's ideas, writing, or work and representing any of this material as one's own. The following actions constitute plagiarism:

- Submitting under one's own name a piece of work, wholly or partially written by someone else, or submitting under one's name, without proper reference, a piece of work on which someone else has in some way collaborated.
- Changing a few words here and there from any source and using this slightly altered material as though it were one's own phrasing and of one's own authorship.
- Taking sentences, paragraphs, passages, concepts, data, or projects from a source written, oral or visual and incorporating them in one's own work without using quotation marks or citing the source of the material.
- Self-plagiarism or borrowing work from oneself. Specifically, the act of submitting a paper or any portion of a paper in one course that has previously been submitted to fulfill an assignment in another.



- Use of online aids. Foreign Language Translation Programs are prohibited. Information from online services must be cited appropriately.

In addition, all material submitted to any of the School publications must be original or carefully documented. Fabrication or faking of documentation or source material is clearly dishonest and unacceptable. Material used in debates or in discussions or meetings where students are representing the School must be original and in no way falsified or inappropriately credited.

If a teacher suspects that plagiarism has occurred on a paper, the teacher, the student, and the department chair will meet to review the work in question and to hear the student's account of the composition process, and to clarify, if necessary, the definition of plagiarism. After this meeting, if the teacher and the chair agree that plagiarism has occurred, the chair will refer the matter, with all relevant documentation, to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will then take one of two courses of action:

- If the student has committed no previous academic-honesty offenses, then the matter will be referred back to the teacher for assessment of a grade penalty (according to the department's guidelines) and short-deadline rewrite. The Dean of Students will maintain a record of all cases handled in this manner so that:
  - If the student has previously been referred on an academic-honesty matter, the case will be sent directly to the SCC for action.

**All** suspected plagiarism cases will be discussed at the outset with the Chair and the Dean of Students.

**Cheating occurs** when a student gives or receives any unauthorized assistance on homework, quizzes, tests, papers, or projects. Some obvious forms of cheating include crib sheets, looking at someone else's paper, using an open book, text messaging or use of similar technologies. But it can take other forms as well: copying someone else's homework, handing in work that is someone else's, or asking your neighbor for an answer. Nichols students do not cheat in any form, at any time. The intent to cheat is as serious as the actual offense.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR DISHONESTY**

The School takes a strong stand on all forms of personal dishonesty; instances of plagiarism and cheating will be reported to the Head of Upper School and the appropriate department. Penalties imposed are:

- A grade of F on the paper or assignment
- A requirement that the work be made-up with a highest grade of D
- Referral to the Student Conduct Committee (SCC)

**All cases of cheating and plagiarism will likely be referred to the SCC. Typically, incidents of plagiarism and cheating will result in a suspension or dismissal from Nichols.**

## DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES ON STUDY AIDS

**Use of Internet and Print Source Review Resources.** The use of source review websites or books is prohibited as substitutes for the actual reading experience and for sound scholarship. Use of these source review books as substitutes for reading and for scholarship will be regarded by the English Department as the equivalent of plagiarism. Nichols students are responsible for the complete reading of assigned or recommended texts in required and elective courses. In addition, the English Department forbids the use of these sources for purposes of paper preparation (“getting your ideas together”) or exam review, as such use frequently results in errors of fact or emphasis, confusion of ideas, and plagiarism (intentional or otherwise). We believe you owe yourself the joy of discovering the riches of reading works of literature, a discovery that source review websites and books prevent or destroy. As teachers committed to helping you improve your reading habits and abilities, we believe that a complete reading of the works we assign or recommend will stimulate your imaginations and enliven your minds. Only by a careful reading of the works can you appreciate the style and language of good writers, and become more aware of your own style and language. We also believe in the integrity of sound scholarship. Do not confuse source review websites and books, which are superficial and inaccurate, with scholarly literary criticism that can be an excellent aid to understanding. If you need guidelines for the review of your reading, your teacher will provide them upon request.

## HEALTH FORMS, IMMUNIZATIONS, MEDICATIONS AND ILLNESSES

### HEALTH FORMS

All students are required to have a current *NYS School Health Examination Form* on file with the health office. Students will not be permitted to attend School without a valid NYS School Health Examination Form. This form is to be completed by the student’s physician, or a similar computerized form from the student’s physician will also be accepted. Proof of current immunizations are required. The NYS School Health Examination Form is valid for one year through the last day of the month from the date of exam. **Physicals and immunizations must be uploaded by a parent or guardian electronically into our electronic health record system Magnus. Paper forms will NOT be accepted.** Please make note of the date of your child’s annual physical and ensure that a new exam is scheduled before it expires.

All parents/guardians must complete the online health questionnaire and permission form for each child on Magnus, our electronic student health record system. This must be completed before the start of school and/or preseason activities.

### SICK CHILD POLICY

A sick child will not be able to perform well in school and is likely to spread the illness to other students and staff. Please do not send your child to School if s/he has had a fever (>100.4 orally), vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours. If they have strep throat, they must have been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to School. The nurse should be notified of any diagnosis of a communicable disease (strep, chicken pox, etc.). If a student returns to School in contravention of this policy, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child.

If a student becomes ill during the day, the student should report to the health office located in the Middle School. The School Nurse will call to make arrangements for the student to be picked up by a parent/guardian or designated emergency contact person. Please make every effort to pick your child up promptly.

## **MEDICATIONS IN SCHOOL**

Nichols School follows New York State Education Law for medication administration in School. If a student requires medication during the school day, a signed medication order is required from the student's physician authorizing the School Nurse to administer the medication. Written permission must also be received from the parent/guardian. Please use the ***Authorization for Administration of Medication in School Form*** for this purpose. No medication will be administered without parent/guardian and physician written authorization. ***This includes over-the-counter medications.***

All medication (*including over-the-counter medications*) must be provided to the health office by the parent or guardian in the original labeled container from the pharmacy. Your pharmacist will prepare an additional bottle for School use if requested. No medications are to be transported to and from school by the student.

If you have any questions regarding student health at Nichols, please contact the health office.

## **NICHOLS CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY**

A concussion is defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a "Type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging the brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain."

### **Signs and symptoms of a concussion may include but are not limited to:**

- Amnesia
- Confusion or dazed
- Headache and/or pressure in the head
- Loss of consciousness
- Balance difficulty or dizziness, stumbling
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light/sound
- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite
- Irritability, sadness or other changes in personality, extremely emotional
- Feeling sluggish, foggy, light headed
- Difficulty focusing or concentrating
- Slowed reaction times, drowsiness
- Fatigue or sleep changes

If a student (or coach) receives a hit to the head during a Nichols School sponsored event (i.e. athletic practice or contest, classroom activity, or club event), and it is reasonable to assume the person may have sustained a concussion, due to a significant blow to the head or body, observable signs and/or symptoms or reported signs and/or symptoms, he/she is to be accompanied to the School Nurse or Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) for further assessment. The School Nurse or ATC will evaluate the individual and advise an appropriate referral. If a concussion is suspected, the School Nurse or ATC will contact the parent/guardian to advise that the student must be evaluated by a physician. The School Nurse or ATC will also contact the parent/guardian as a courtesy to advise that there was an impact even if concussion is not suspected. If a severe head or neck injury is suspected, the student is not to be moved and EMS should be activated via the Medical Emergency Response Plan.

In the event that a head injury occurs off campus or when an ATC or School Nurse is not available, the coach or other school personnel must inform the student's parent/guardian and submit a Nichols Incident Report to the School Nurse/ATC. The student must be evaluated by a physician before returning to physical activity such as athletic practice or games. In the event that a student returns to school after head injury without having been evaluated by a physician, and the student continues to experience signs and symptoms of concussion, the student may be not permitted to attend School until the student's parent/guardian submits a note from a physician clearing the student to do so. This may be required at the discretion of the Concussion Management Team whether the head injury occurred at a School sponsored or non-School sponsored event.

If the physician determines that the student has not sustained a concussion, he/she may return with a release note from the physician. Students must also be cleared through a physical exertion test supervised by the ATC before returning to any physical activity such as athletic practice or games.

If the physician determines the athlete has sustained a concussion, the School requires physician updates no less frequently than monthly until discharge, and the athlete may not return to play until passing the post-concussion test, submitting a signed release form from the physician, and completing the full Return to Play progression as outlined below. The student would also be monitored for academic progression per the Return to Learn Progression.

Students diagnosed with a concussion are not permitted to travel with sports teams, clubs or extra-curricular activities.

Nichols requires baseline concussion testing every two years for all contact sport athletes. This baseline test information is referred to in the instance of a head injury to aid in return to learn/sports participation.

## **Concussion Return to Learn Progression**

Immediately after a concussion, it is important to reduce cognitive activities such as concentrating and processing. The period of cognitive rest may mean not attending School, no homework, no computer usage and minimization of all screen time. Usually this is for a day or two.

Once there has been a significant improvement in symptoms at rest, light cognitive activity may be gradually resumed. Initially, a student may tolerate only 5-15 minutes of cognitive activity at a time. The activity should be stopped if symptoms develop.

Cognitive activity and School-specific activity should be increased gradually. A student should participate in cognitive activities in short time periods as tolerated and work up to longer periods, increasing the duration gradually, and stopping if symptoms develop.

Students may require a modified School schedule upon return to classes. Students may require decreased class time, decreased reading and note taking, placement in the classroom to facilitate seeing the board, or extra time to complete assignments and tests.

Not every student diagnosed with concussion will require academic accommodations. If a student with concussion requires academic accommodations, the student's parent/guardian will be required to submit a note from the physician outlining the specific academic accommodations needed.

If symptoms develop while at School, the student must report to the Health Office. He/she may take a rest break in a quiet, supervised area. When symptoms improve, the student may return to class.

## **Concussion Return to Play Progression:**

No student should return to play while symptomatic. If there is any doubt that the athlete has sustained a concussion, it should be treated as a concussion. Once the athlete is symptom free at rest for 24 hours, has successfully completed the post-concussion test and has submitted a signed release by the treating health care professional, he/she may begin the Return to Play Progression under the supervision of the ATC.

**Day 1:** Light Aerobic Exercise (i.e. walking, stationary bike, no resistance exercise)

**Day 2:** Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement. (Jogging, brief running, moderate intensity on stationary bike, moderate weight lifting)

**Day 3:** Heavy Non-contact training drills (sprinting, running, non-contact sport specific)

**Day 4:** Sports specific practice, NON-CONTACT ONLY, supervised by coach or ATC.

**Day 5:** Full monitored contact practice.

**Day 6:** Return to Competition.

- Allow 24 hours between each day. If any symptoms return after a testing day, allow another 24 hours rest or until symptom free to return to the previous testing day skills.

### **Upon return to School following a concussion:**

- The student's parent/guardian must provide a physician's evaluation, including any physical restrictions and/or academic accommodations. The Nichols "Return to Learn" Form is to be completed by the student's physician at intervals no less frequently than monthly or when the student's condition changes, if required at the discretion of the Concussion Management Team.
- The student will consult regularly with the School Nurse and Grade level Dean to discuss accommodations and academic support.
- The student will consult with the School Counselor upon return to school.
- The Dean will contact all teachers to explain accommodations and individualized return to learn information.
- As the student progresses, the Concussion Management team will evaluate the physician's recommendations and update the necessary academic accommodations accordingly.
- Each week, teachers will provide the Grade level Dean with an update of their classroom observations including observations related to dance, PE, and other school activities.
- The Concussion Management Team will meet bi-weekly to discuss the student's Return to Learn progress.
- The Concussion Management Team may consult with the Learning Specialist, Julia Marthia, as required.

### **Concussion Management Team:**

School Nurse

Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC)

School Counselor

Head of Upper School

Head of Middle School

Director of Athletics

Dean of Students

Freshman Dean

Sophomore Dean

Junior Dean

Senior Dean

## **CHANGE OF INFORMATION**

If at any time during the School year, there is any change in a student's home address, phone number, or parent's work information, that change should be reported to the Front Office.

## **MULTIPLE HOUSEHOLDS**

In order for the School to most effectively communicate with parents and support each student, it is important for administrators and teachers to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Please be sure to communicate to the School about primary caregivers in the event

of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from School, parental involvement in field trips or other issues, please include the School with appropriate communications and court orders. These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and assistance in minimizing the School's phone calls for clarification is important. Unless otherwise specified, each parent for whom the School has current contact information will receive a copy of the student's report card as well as other informational mailings and electronic communications.

## **STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

Nichols students are expected to be familiar with the rules and behavioral expectations outlined in the Student Handbook. Underlying these rules and our enforcement of them is the basic belief that clarity of expectations together with fair and consistent measures for accountability are crucial components in building and maintaining a sense of community at Nichols.

Nichols students further agree to abide by the School's Core Values and Honor Code.

### **CATEGORIES OF INFRACTIONS**

**Category I: The following violations will result in behavioral leave, suspension and/or expulsion:**

- Use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in School or attendance at any School function after their use.
- Dishonesty, cheating, and/or plagiarism.
- Serious disregard for the academic or personal rights or safety of others in the community.
- Stealing from another student, from a faculty member, or from the School.
- Committing any offense in violation of criminal laws.
- Repeated or gross violations of other School rules.

**Category II: The following violations will result in warning, probation and/or behavioral leave:**

- Unexcused absence from a class, morning meeting, study hall, sports, or any other School obligation.
- Smoking, using chewing tobacco or vaping on School grounds or at a school function.
- Disrespect toward a faculty or staff member.
- Fighting - both parties may be considered equally responsible.
- Failure to sign in or sign out.
- Driving violations.
- Repeated violations of any infraction in Category III.

**Category III: The following violations will result in a "blue slip"**

- Unexcused lateness to School or to any appointment, including a class, study hall or sports.

- Dress code violations.
- Using foul or inappropriate language anytime during the School day.
- Disruptive behavior in class or study hall.
- Inappropriate behavior of a minor nature (e.g., littering, gum chewing, eating outside the dining hall, etc.).
- Minor violations of rules by students are reported by “blue slips”. Consequences for these infractions are determined by the Class Deans, the Dean of Students, and the Head of Upper School on a case-by-case basis. Any student who commits a violation of a more serious nature during any academic marking period may be referred to the Minor Discipline Committee (see description of the MDC at the end of this section).

Students who intentionally cut class or Study Hall will be required to meet with the Dean of Students and their class Dean. The likely outcome of the meeting will require the student to be placed on Probation for the remainder of the year.

## **STEPS IN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS**

Students who misbehave or violate minor School rules will be engaged in a series of responses focused on educating the student and modifying unacceptable behavior. School rules and behavioral expectations will be reviewed in advisory, form and School meetings. Teachers and staff will engage students in thoughtful discussions about their behavior. Should a student continue to struggle with following School rules or behavioral expectations, the discipline process will progress in the following manner as blue slips are written:

- When two blue slips have been issued, a letter from the Dean of Students will be sent home and the student will be placed on behavioral warning for a quarter (about 8 weeks). The student will have a conversation as well with the grade level dean.
- With a third blue slip, the student will meet with the Dean of Students and a note will be sent home by the grade level dean.
- With a fourth blue slip, the student will be required to meet with the Minor Discipline Committee. The MDC may recommend a discipline response ranging from the extension of the behavioral warning to assigning the student to after-school detention for 1 to 4 days.
- With a fifth blue slip, the student will be required to meet with the Student Conduct Committee. The SCC may recommend a discipline response ranging from probation to suspension or, in extreme cases, dismissal.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE RECORDS AND INFORMATION**

The School reserves the right to use disciplinary cases as educational tools to enhance the Nichols School community. Without using names, Nichols may cite the facts of a particular case in order to clarify the issues and reduce the damage caused by rumors that might develop about the case.



Many college applications include a question to students asking if they have been suspended from school; in addition, many colleges pose that same question to the Nichols college counselors as admissions offices review applications. Nichols expects students who have been suspended to respond to such questions honestly and completely. The College Office will respond to such questions in a candid and forthright manner.

If a student is suspended or expelled following submission of a college application, Nichols will require him or her to report the disciplinary incident to the colleges where he or she has applied. We expect and counsel candidates to provide colleges a written account of what happened and how they have been affected as a result within one week of determination of the disciplinary penalty.

The disclosure policy outlined above will be followed for students who are applying to other secondary schools as well.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT COMMITTEE**

For cases involving academic or personal dishonesty, violations of the School's smoking, drug or alcohol policies, repeat violations, disrespect, vandalism, stealing or harassment, the following procedures will be followed unless in the opinion of the Head of School or his/her designee extraordinary circumstances merit alternative procedures.

A notice of the incident will be made to the Student Conduct Committee (SCC) Chairman in writing. This will be given to the student by the Dean of Students with copies provided for the Class Dean, Advisor and parent or guardian in advance of the SCC meeting at which he/she will appear. The statement should inform him/her specifically of what he/she is alleged to have done including approximate dates and some recitation of details.

The notice will inform the student of the requirement to appear before the SCC at a specific date and time with the Class Dean, Advisor or a faculty member of the student's choice. Evidence may be presented, including witnesses or affidavits, as the student may wish to rebut the evidence. Parents may request a conference with the Head of Upper School prior to the SCC meeting if they have questions or concerns. Parents are not allowed to appear at the SCC meeting.

The student will be advised that a student member of the SCC may be asked to leave the case if the student appearing before the SCC requests it. In such cases the student appearing before the committee may request that the student alternate sit on the case.

Following the SCC review of the case with the student involved, the SCC's recommended action will be reported to the Head of School. The Head of School or the Head of the Upper School will later report the final decision to the student, his/her parents and the SCC. If the Head of School or his/her designee does not accept the recommendation of the SCC, he or she may meet with the SCC to further discuss the issue before giving a final decision to the student and his/her parents. All final decisions of the Head of School or his/her designee will be transmitted by letter. The Upper School faculty will be notified of all pertinent decisions, and in cases where the Head of

School or his/her designee feels it appropriate, decisions will be reported to the student body or a particular form or group of students.

The SCC is composed of an equal number of voting faculty and student members. The faculty members are appointed by the Head of School and Head of Upper School with an attempt to represent the faculty, different areas of the School, and to provide some measure of continuity. Student members are nominated by the rising IV-VI Forms, following the student government elections, and then selected after interviews by the faculty representatives and senior class representatives of the SCC.

## **BEHAVIORAL STATUS**

The SCC will typically respond in most cases by placing the student on *Behavioral Warning* or *Behavioral Probation*:

**BEHAVIORAL WARNING** is invoked when a student's attitude and conduct are such that the School must issue a formal warning to the student and the family. This status may be revoked after a specific period if the student has responded well. Continued unacceptable attitude and conduct would likely lead to a more serious response by the School.

**BEHAVIORAL PROBATION** is invoked when a student's attitude and conduct are such that the student's place in the School is in jeopardy. This status may be revoked after a specific period of time if the student has responded well. Continued unacceptable attitude and conduct would likely lead to a more serious response by the School.

Sometimes the SCC may recommend *Behavioral Leave, Suspension* or *Dismissal*:

**BEHAVIORAL LEAVE** is invoked when a student's attitude and conduct are such that they have resulted in the School's desire to remove the student from the community. The 80% rule (see Attendance section) is in effect for any work missed while on Behavioral Leave. Behavioral Leave is not required to be reported in the college process.

**SUSPENSION** is invoked when a student's attitude and conduct are such that they have resulted in the School's desire to remove the student from the community because the student's actions have caused harm to the community or a member of the community. Suspension is the student's last chance to meet the expectations of the school in the areas of attitude and conduct. The 80% rule (see Attendance section) is in effect for any work missed while on suspension. **Suspensions will be reported in the college process.**

**DISMISSAL** is invoked when a student's attitude and behavior are such that the student has lost his/her right to continue as a member of the Nichols community and must therefore matriculate at another school. The Head of School, in all instances that may result in dismissal, is empowered to determine the appropriate response.

## **GRADE LEVEL MINOR DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES**

Each of the four grade levels in the Upper School will have a Minor Discipline Committee comprised of at least three faculty and at least three students. Grade level MDC's will hear all minor discipline cases referred by the Dean of Students. Minor Discipline Committees will follow procedures established for the SCC and render a recommendation for a disciplinary response to a specific minor behavioral infraction. Actions of the MDC will likely lead to a behavioral status issued to the student offender unless a determination of no case is arrived at. The Dean of Students and grade level Deans will inform the student of the disciplinary response. The Dean of Students will communicate in letter form the outcome of the hearing to parents and the grade level Dean will have formal contact with the parents.

After-school detention is one tool that may be utilized as part of our student accountability efforts. Detention will be held from 3:15pm to 4:15pm, Monday – Thursday. Students may be assigned to detention as a result of their meeting with the MDC. MDC may assign from one to four days of detention in an effort to help students reflect on the behavior that brought them to that point.

Detentions will be served in the week following the hearing with the MDC and supersede all other School activities – including travel for athletics or extracurricular activities. The hour of detention is to be spent in complete silence without electronic devices. Students may do homework that can be completed without electronic devices. Arriving late will result in the addition of an extra day of detention.

Because detention falls in the step between a visit with the MDC and a conversation with the SCC, students will not be surprised by the consequence and will have had numerous opportunities to address the behavioral concern prior.

Missed athletics practices, games, rehearsals and extracurricular events are potential results of an assignment to detention. Students will also be responsible for arranging alternative transportation in the event that detention prevents a student from catching a district school bus.

Because a visit to the SCC can result in a suspension, it is important to impress upon students the need to amend the behaviors that brought them to detention.

# ACADEMIC POLICIES

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To receive a Nichols diploma, students must earn a minimum of 24 credits (a full year course or its equivalent in semester courses constitutes one credit). The normal course load during grades 9-12 results in a total of 25 credits.

<b>English</b>	Students must take English every year. Senior English consists of two semester elective courses.	<i>4 Credits</i>
<b>History</b>	Students are required to take World History in 9th grade, Modern World History in 10th grade, and U.S. History in either 11th or 12th grade.	<i>3 Credits</i>
<b>Lab Science</b>	Students are required to take Conceptual Physics in 9th grade, Chemistry in 10th grade and Biology in 11th grade.	<i>3 Credits</i>
<b>Mathematics</b>	Students must pass Precalculus in order to fulfill requirements except as noted in the additional requirements section. Math in Senior year is contingent upon completion of Precalculus with a C- or better.	<i>3 Credits</i>
<b>Modern and Classical Languages</b>		
<b>Languages</b>	Students must successfully complete the third year of anyone language (except as noted in the additional requirements section).	<i>2 or 3 Credits</i>
<b>Arts</b>	Students are required to take one credit of Arts in the 9th grade year and one credit in the 11 <sup>th</sup> or 12 <sup>th</sup> grade. Ninth graders can fulfill their requirement by taking Arts III. Juniors and seniors may complete their requirement by taking Chorus, Orchestra, or a variety of other full-year arts electives.	<i>2 Credits</i>
<b>PE/Athletics</b>	Each season (fall, winter, spring), all students are required to take PE unless they meet an approved alternative (See Athletics, Physical Education, and After School Program Grid.)	<i>2 Credits (.5 per year)</i>
<b>Electives</b>		<i>4 Credits</i>
<b>Senior Thesis</b>		<i>Pass, High Pass or Honors</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<i>24 credits</i>

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- In Math and Modern and Classical Languages, students may satisfy their requirements in each department if they have completed level three (in M&CL) or Precalculus by sophomore year. In the event that a student completes both Math and Modern and Classical Languages requirements by the end of 10th grade, the student is then required to take at least one advanced course in either department before graduating.
- Sophomore Elective - All IV Formers (10th grade) are required to take a full year or two semester elective Arts courses, a second language or Computer Programming. Chorus or Orchestra will fulfill this requirement.
- Course Minimum/Maximum - Seniors must take a minimum of six courses, and they must pass all those courses in their final year. This requirement negates the use of the “wild card” credit during senior year. Seven or more courses may be approved only by the Academic Review Committee (ARC) and if the schedule permits.
- Students who fail to earn a grade of at least 50% on an average of the Mid-year and Final Exams will fail the course and be required to be tutored on the material, pass a make-up exam and receive no higher than a D on the exam average.

## **SENIOR THESIS**

Seniors are expected to research and write a proposal for a Senior Thesis that will represent their culminating educational experience, and also serves as a graduation requirement. Proposals will be written in the first half of the year and thesis development will be conducted throughout the second half of the year. All students will be required to defend their thesis within the sponsoring academic department. Thesis work will be graded as Honors or Pass.

## **HONORS STATUS**

Regardless of the level of courses, the following descriptions define Nichols’ categories of Highest Honors, Honors, and Commendation:

- Highest Honors is awarded when a student achieves a grade point average of 3.7 with no grade below C (approximately A-).
- Honors is awarded when a student achieves a grade point average of 3.0 with no grade below C (approximately B, B+).
- Commendation is awarded when a student achieves a grade point average of 2.7 with no grade below C (approximately B-).

## **ACADEMIC STATUS**

After each Quarter, the Academic Review Committee meets to review the progress of the Upper School student body. The ARC is composed of the Department Chairs, the Deans, the College Counselors, the Director of Admissions, Dean of Students, and the Head of Upper School. When students are in academic difficulty, the ARC may vote to place a student on one of the following levels of academic status:

- **Dean's Warning** is invoked by the grade level Dean with approval of the Academic Review Committee when a student's academic performance is such that general concern has been raised. The Dean will contact the student and the family to help devise a strategy for the student's academic performance to improve.
- **Academic Warning** is invoked by the Academic Review Committee when a student's academic performance is such that the School must issue a formal warning to the student and the family. This status may be revoked after a specific period of time if the student has responded well. Academic Warning does not appear on a student's record.
- **Academic Probation** is invoked by the Academic Review Committee when a student's academic performance is such that the student's place in the School is in jeopardy. This status may be revoked after a specific period of time if the student has responded well. Students on Academic Probation will not be issued a reenrollment agreement until the academic year is successfully completed. Academic Probation status does not appear on a student's record.

*Academic Warning* and *Probation* are communicated to the student and parents by the Class Dean and in writing by the Head of Upper School. In both cases, an expectation of improvement is discussed with an appropriate course of study. In the case of *Warning*, if those levels of improvement are not attained, then the student will be placed on *Probation*. If by the end of the year, the student on Academic Probation has not shown an improvement in effort and achievement, he/she may not be invited to re-enroll the following year.

Sometimes, after a disappointing year, a student is invited back for a further year on academic probation. Again, a specific time period is set (first quarter) during which the student must demonstrate improvement in order to remain at Nichols.

**Deny Re-Enrollment.** The School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to deny a student's re-enrollment for the following year if the School determines it to be in the best interests of the student or the School. If the reason is academic based, re-enrollment will be discussed at the final Academic Review Committee meeting in June.

**Summer Study.** At the end of the year parents are notified as to whether their child is required or recommended to seek summer study.

## STUDY HALLS

The Upper School study hall is located in the Reading Room of Albright Hall. Rules for study hall are:

- **III Form** - All III Formers are assigned for the 1st marking period. Throughout the III Form year all students achieving 3.7 will be excused.
- **IV Form** - Students achieving 3.3 for the III Form year are excused for the 1st marking period. Through the remainder of the IV Form year, any student who achieves 3.3 is excused from Study Hall each Quarter.
- **V Form** - Students achieving 3.0 for their IV Form year or the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period are excused for the first marking period. Through the remainder of the V Form year, any student who achieves 3.0 is excused from Study Hall each marking period.
- **VI Form** - Students achieving 2.3 for their V Form year or the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period are excused for the first marking period. Through the remainder of the VI Form year, any student who achieves 2.3 is excused from Study Hall each marking period.

Students assigned to study hall are required to attend during all free periods, drop days, or days when a teacher is absent. At the conclusion of each marking period, the Class Dean will review the recommendations for those to be placed in the study hall. No changes should be made until new lists are posted. Students are expected to report promptly to study hall. Any excuse to be absent from study hall must be in the form of a signed note from a supervising faculty member that must be presented to the proctor at the beginning of the assigned period. There will be no talking or group studying. There will be no sleeping. Failure to attend study hall will be considered a class cut. Computers used in the study hall are for academic use. This includes personal computers. Cellphone use is not allowed in study hall.

## PROCEDURE FOR DROP/ADD

After the beginning of the year, we may make adjustments to students' schedules, for example, changing from AP to regular math or dropping a difficult seventh course. Only in very unusual circumstances, and only with the approval of the Academic Review Committee, may a student drop a year course after the second full week of school or go below five courses. (Seniors and students in AP courses have until the end of the fourth full week of school.) Students dropping a year or semester course after the drop/add period of the semester will have the designation of withdrawn passing or failing on their transcript, unless that designation is waived by the Academic Review Committee.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be at School and keep all of their commitments every day when health and family circumstances permit. Sleeping in, missing classes to complete other work, or any form of cutting is not acceptable and may be subject to disciplinary response. The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and concludes at 3:16 p.m.

### ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

- **Absence due to Illness.** In the case of absence due to illness or any other emergency, a parent or guardian must advise the School Office by phone between 7:45 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. on the day in question. A message may be left on 332-6300 before 7:45 a.m. to report an absence. No student may call the School to report him or herself as absent or tardy. Falsifying a call will be treated as lying by the SCC.
- **Medical Appointments.** Medical, dental, and other legitimate appointments should be pre-arranged with the Class Dean by phone or note from a parent. **Parents are urged to make such appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.** Students returning from a medical appointment when a parent note has not been provided must have a note from the doctor.
- **Schoolwork Missed due to Absences.** Students with a pre-arranged legitimate absence should submit assignments and complete tests before departure and get assignments that will be due upon return. Students who do not notify teachers of a known absence are subject to the “eighty percent rule” (see page 32).
- **Extended Absences.** For extended absences, the parent or student should speak directly to the Class Dean, make arrangements to collect his or her assignments, and prepare a schedule to make up missed work. Upon return to School, the student should schedule tutorials to go over missed work and arrange a time with his or her teachers to take any missed tests as soon as possible. If the extended absence is unexcused, all missed academic work will be subject to the 80% rule.
- **Medical Leaves of Absence.** There may be times within the School year when a student’s health must take precedence over School responsibilities. When a physical or emotional illness begins to either render a student incapable of meeting commitments or impact directly and detrimentally on others within the community, the School must intervene and place the student on medical leave of absence in order to ensure that the student receives specialized help. This is a caring response and an attempt to help a student get well and return to school as soon as possible. In all cases, whenever possible, the School works to formulate a plan of intervention, evaluation and treatment. Medical leaves due to psychological reasons will be handled by the School Mental Health Counselor, the Division Head and Grade Level Deans. All medical leaves of a physical nature are handled by the School Nurse, the Division Head and Grade Level Dean. During a student’s absence due to mental illness, the School and the family will work to find an agreed-upon psychiatrist and/or psychologist for a psychiatric and/or psychological evaluation in order to assess the student’s condition and readiness to return



to school. This evaluation must be faxed to the School Mental Health Counselor. Following receipt of this evaluation, a meeting with the student, family, Dean of Students, Head of Upper School, Grade Level Dean, and School Mental Health Counselor will be arranged to discuss return to School. While the length of medical leaves will vary according to the specific circumstances of each child's need, it is ultimately up to the School to determine whether a student has missed too much School in order to receive credit for academic courses. In extreme circumstances, students may have to repeat courses in order to remain at Nichols.

## **WITHHOLDING ACADEMIC CREDIT**

Class instruction and participation are critical elements of each course and cannot be recaptured fully when a student misses class. *The School may withhold academic credit, subject to appeal, from any student who has accumulated.*

- twenty-one (21) or more absences in a full-year course,
- twelve (12) absences in a Semester course,
- fifteen (15) absences in a full-year course that meets four times per rotation,
- seven (7) absences in Fall or Spring PE, or
- nine (9) absences in Winter PE.

Parents will be notified in writing by the Dean of Students when a student's absences become a concern. *All absences, excused or un-excused, are subject to the provisions of this policy.* The only exceptions are those absences resulting from School-sponsored activities such as field trips, athletic competitions, or approved college visits.

## **TARDY POLICY**

The School day begins at 8:00 a.m. with class meetings, with a School meeting in the Flickinger Performing Arts Center or with an advisory meeting. Students who are late to School should sign in with the Front Office. Penalties for lateness are outlined in the Disciplinary Procedures section of this handbook. Unexcused late arrival will result in a student being ineligible for after school activities.

A student will receive a blue slip after he or she is late to School three times. When a student has accumulated three blue slips, or is late nine times, **he or she will meet with the Dean of Students and be placed on Behavioral Warning with a letter sent home informing parents of the disciplinary status.**

Students who reach six (6) unexcused lates to School will be required to meet with their grade level Dean and Advisor. The likely outcome of this meeting will be a letter home from the Dean of Students placing the student on Behavioral Warning for the remainder of the semester.

Additional unexcused lateness may require the student to meet with the Student Conduct Committee.

## **STUDENT MESSAGES**

**Messages cannot be delivered after 2:30 p.m.**

## **LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE DAY**

Permission to leave during the day can only come from the student's own Class Dean, the Dean of Students or the Head of Upper School. With such permission, students in grades 9 - 12 must sign out and back in upon their return in the Front Office. Students who violate School expectations regarding leaving campus will be referred to the Student Conduct Committee and risk suspension. Students may leave after their last commitment on Friday (including lunch and athletics) only with the approval of their Form Dean.

## **SENIOR PRIVILEGES**

Seniors may leave campus during one free academic period in the morning before lunch on the following conditions: (1) arrival at School on time by 8:00 a.m.; (2) properly executed permission form and waiver on file with the School signed by the senior's parent or guardian (or the senior if the senior is at least 18 years old); and (3) the approval of the Head of Upper School, Dean of Students or Senior Dean. Seniors must sign in and out in the front office. These privileges may be revoked at any time for an individual or the class as a whole, if they are misused. Seniors on behavioral or academic status are not allowed to exercise senior privileges.

No senior may travel in another senior's personal vehicle while on senior privileges without a properly executed permission form and waiver on file with the School.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION**

A condition of participation in the extracurricular life of Nichols including games, plays, concerts, and School-sponsored activities, etc. is attending School. Barring unusual circumstances, a student who is able to play or perform in a School function should also be able to attend School.

Therefore, a student must complete a full School day (8:00 a.m. to 3:16 p.m.) to be eligible for extracurricular participation. Students absent on a Friday may not compete or perform in the first game or activity of the weekend.

**If a student has an after-School activity on a given day and has a doctor's appointment, a doctor's note must be provided.**

## VACATION PLANS

Nichols must insist that students make their vacation and travel plans within the times and dates that are printed in the School calendar. By any standards, School vacations are generously long. Students who miss School time to meet vacation arrangements are subject to the “eighty percent rule” (see below).

Students are expected to attend exams as scheduled unless they are ill, whereupon the exam will be rescheduled by the Dean of Students. Should **extraordinary circumstances** arise, parents **must** contact the Dean of Students as early as possible to reschedule exams.

## THE EIGHTY PERCENT RULE

When a student is absent from School without a legitimate excuse he or she must make up all of the work missed but will receive only 80% of the grade earned (e.g., a score of 80% on a test would be recorded as a 64%). The eighty percent rule applies to but is not limited to the following situations:

- Absences caused by cutting School
- Absences due to disciplinary action
- Vacation trips beyond those that are part of the published Nichols calendar
- Participation in non-Nichols athletic tournaments
- Participation in non-Nichols artistic performances

If the missed schoolwork includes a test, quiz, or paper, it is up to the teacher’s discretion whether or not a makeup should be given. If no make-up is offered, the student will not be penalized. A student may be required to take an announced test or quiz before his/her absence, or on the day he/she returns to School.

## SCHOOL DEADLINES

Meeting deadlines is an important part of the School experience. Due dates for papers and other assignments are determined by individual teachers as are the penalties for lateness. A student who must be absent the day an assignment is due should make arrangements to have it delivered to School on time. *The School urges parents not to condone their child’s absence from school due to a desire or need to catch up on work or to finish a major assignment.*

## ATHLETIC TEAM PARTICIPATION

For student-athletes, attendance at every sports practice and athletic contest is mandatory except for excused absences from School. A team member is required to remain at an interscholastic

contest for its duration unless a prior arrangement has been made with the head coach. A student must complete a full School day to be eligible for athletic participation.

## **COLLEGE VISITS**

### **Seniors**

The School sanctions four (4) days of excused absences designated as college trips for seniors. Students should schedule these visits carefully, being aware of the importance of fulfilling all of their academic responsibilities, and having discussed their plans with their teachers and college counselor. The College Visit Permission Form must be completed and handed into the College Counseling Office at least one week prior to the intended trip. In the spring, when seniors are making final decisions, the School strongly urges students to limit the number of college visits and to schedule them responsibly and thoughtfully. The College Visit Permission Form is again required. The form is located in the College Office.

### **Juniors**

The School sanctions two (2) days of excused absences designated as college trips for juniors, only in the second semester. Students should schedule these visits carefully, being aware of the importance of fulfilling all of their academic responsibilities, and having discussed their plans with their teachers and college counselor. The College Visit Permission Form must be completed and handed into the College Counseling Office at least one week prior to the intended trip. The form is located in the College Office.

## **WEATHER-RELATED CLOSING**

Announcements regarding closings are posted on the Nichols website at [www.nicholsschool.org](http://www.nicholsschool.org). Families will also be notified by the Nichols School emergency notification system, School Messenger. Please note that Nichols will close when the Buffalo Public Schools are closed for weather leading to unsafe driving conditions. However, Nichols will not always follow the Buffalo Public Schools on consecutive weather-related closings and will not always follow the Buffalo Public Schools in the event of a “cold” day.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **WELLNESS PROGRAM IN THE UPPER SCHOOL**

Wellness education related to physical, mental and emotional health is provided at all four grade levels in the Upper School. The III Form Wellness Program which meets throughout the full III Form year provides our students with fundamentals for living a healthy life. This required non-graded course meets in a seminar structure which enables students to explore and discuss

wellness topics and learn about community resources on campus and in the greater community from teachers and advisors.

Following the III Form year wellness foundation course, students in the IV, V and VI Form years participate in wellness workshops that are selected to further enhance student understanding about themselves, their peers and life in a healthy community. Wellness Workshops will be presented by professional organizations from within the Western New York community as well as nationally recognized programs such as Freedom from Chemical Dependency which has provided highly effective workshops at Nichols for the past several years.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

There may be times during the year when a student will experience personal, social, or academic problems. The School Mental Health Counselor is available to meet with students to sort through the multitude of issues accompanying adolescence. We offer support in a safe space where brief, short-term consultation, counseling, and therapy are offered by drop-in or scheduled appointments. ***Information shared will be maintained on a confidential basis to the greatest extent possible, provided, however, parents, guardians and students who are 18 years or older hereby authorize information to be shared between the health care professionals and the School for the purpose of ensuring student health and safety and compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. Further, in situations in which the health care professionals have a reasonable belief that a student may be at risk to his/her self or to others, the health care professional has the authority to contact appropriate external authorities. Further, the School and School Mental Health Counselor have mandatory reporting obligations which may compel the disclosure of information (see Mandatory Reporting Policy).***

The goals of the counseling program are to encourage students to make the most of their School experience and to challenge students to grow into their own best selves. Outside referrals may be made for challenges such as emotional problems interfering with daily life at School and/or home, eating disorders, and or alcohol/drug use. Parents are contacted in any of the above situations. A team approach is used in working closely with faculty and other colleagues, both within and outside the school. In addition to these therapeutic activities, prevention is promoted through our wellness program, helping students to become healthy, concerned, responsible citizens by informing them about how to help themselves and each other.

Parents or guardians who do not wish to have their child receive such individualized counseling services must send a written statement to the Head of the Upper School indicating such denial of services.

### **General Counseling**

Brylin Hospital  
Catholic Charities

886-8200  
856-4494

Child and Adolescent Treatment Services	819-3420
Life Transition Center	836-6460
Spectrum Human Services	884-5797
ECMC Behavioral Health	898-3000

**Eating Disorders**

Narins Eating Disorders	(716)688-5372
Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders	anad.org

**Drug and Alcohol**

Alateen and Alanon	856-2520
Brylin Outpatient Adolescent Addiction	633-1927
Mid Erie Treatment	895-6700
Erie County Council Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse	831-2298
Horizon Health Services	831-1800
Kids Escaping Drugs	827-9462
Renaissance House	821-0391

**Emergency Services**

Buffalo General/Kaleida Health	859-5600
Crisis Services	834-1144

**COLLEGE COUNSELING**

The College Counseling Program at Nichols School supports students, parents and family members throughout the Upper School years. The College Counselors, in conjunction with Form Deans, work to help our students identify and develop their academic and extracurricular interests and pursue them vigorously. Colleges expect to see high school students fully engage in the programs available to them. We encourage this engagement by helping students realize their leadership potential and connecting them to opportunities that match their individual strengths.

**Freshman Year (III Form)**

Our students are introduced to the college counselors at a form/advisor meeting sometime after winter break. We want them to know who we are and to feel comfortable coming to speak to us with any questions they may have. These introductions and discussions are intended to help our new Upper School students think about their future goals and aspirations. We also hope to demystify the process as much as possible by these early talks. Parents and family members are welcome at any time to come in and speak with a counselor.

**Sophomore Year (IV Form)**

Our students start the fall off with the PSAT Test and an understanding of what is to come junior year with SAT and ACT testing. In the Spring semester, our office will pair students with one of

our counselors who will then be with them and their family throughout the college process. We will meet with each student individually and get them thinking more about their future goals, aspirations, summer plans, class choices for junior year, possible college visits and testing preparation. We will also register the students with Naviance Family Connection, a web-based program used throughout the college process. Parents and family members are welcome at any time to come in and speak with a counselor.

### **Junior Year (V Form) - Fall**

Individual counseling sessions with students and their families will take place in the fall of the junior year. These meetings help introduce students and family members to the college process and the variety of resources available. With attention paid to individual student needs, we look at the timeline for researching colleges, visiting colleges, testing and staying organized and focused throughout the process. All juniors will take the PSAT in October and the ACT in February (at Nichols). Students should also consider taking the SAT in the fall/early winter. Students and family members should also speak with a counselor about SAT subject tests.

### **Junior Year (V Form) - Spring**

Juniors start to meet regularly with their college counselor and family meetings are scheduled at significant times throughout the spring. Students are actively researching colleges and clarifying their priorities during this important year. Topics discussed include writing the college essay, completing the Common Application, understanding financial aid and scholarship information, and using Naviance Family Connection to communicate with the College Counseling Office and to stay organized. At this time, juniors also ask two teachers to write college recommendations for them. Each counselor will discuss with their students what teachers the students will ask for these recommendations. These recommendations are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, including the student or any family member. These recommendations are for Nichols School personnel, college/university admissions and private high school/PG school admissions.

### **Summer before and Senior Year (VI Form)**

Seniors continue to work one-on-one with their counselor to complete the requirements for their college applications. This is a highly individualized process and great care is taken to ensure that students have produced their best work to present to colleges. Counseling is ongoing through the application period and decision time. Positive, timely and helpful communication with parents is a key component of the College Counseling Program.

### **Resources for Students and Parents**

Nichols is a test center for the SAT and SAT Subject Tests, as well as Advanced Placement exams. Dr. Siepierski is the coordinator for SAT's and Ms. Panzica is the coordinator for the Advanced Placement exams. The Nichols School code for both is 331080.

- Evening programs with topics such as:
  - Grade Specific College Information Nights: Rising Senior Night – May of junior year; Junior Night – November; Sophomore & Freshman Night – April

- Financing a College Education (FAFSA & CSS Profile) – September
- College Representative Visits (for students only) – Over 120 colleges visit Nichols School each fall, and seniors and juniors are invited to attend brief presentations to learn about programs of interest.
- College Counseling Nichols Website – Access to important calendars, links to helpful websites and numerous resources available to download.

### **Contact Information**

Please feel free to contact a member of the College Counseling Office with any questions you may have and/or to set up a meeting. We look forward to seeing you all on campus and working with all of you on the college process.

**Mike Wagstaff**, Director of College Counseling  
[mwagstaff@nicholsschool.org](mailto:mwagstaff@nicholsschool.org), (716) 332-6330

**Joel Siepierski**, Associate Director of College Counseling  
[jsiepierski@nicholsschool.org](mailto:jsiepierski@nicholsschool.org), (716) 332-6309

**Meg Auerbach**, Assistant Director of College Counseling  
[mauerbach@nicholsschool.org](mailto:mauerbach@nicholsschool.org), (716) 332-6386

**Anne Denman**, College Office Coordinator and Registrar  
[adenman@nicholsschool.org](mailto:adenman@nicholsschool.org), (716) 332-6372

### **TESTING AT NICHOLS**

Scholastic Assessment Tests (PSAT, SAT I, and SAT II)

- Juniors and sophomores take the PSAT on October 16, 2019. For the juniors this test also serves as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT).
- Juniors normally take the SAT I for the first time in late fall or early winter.
- Juniors take an official ACT at Nichols in February 2020.
- Juniors usually take the SAT I a second time in May 2020.
- Seniors may take the SAT I or SAT II in August, October, November or December of 2019 or in January of 2020.
- The American College Test (ACT) can also be submitted, either in addition to or instead of the SAT's, on behalf of college applicants. See the college counseling staff for registration dates.
- Many colleges require or strongly recommend that candidates take the SAT II (Subject Tests) in two or three subject areas. All juniors should take SAT IIs in June. Seniors may



take SAT IIs again, pending the specific advice of their college counselor. Throughout, students need to take responsibility in signing up for the appropriate tests.

## STANDARDIZED TEST DATES FOR 2019-2020

Nichols is a test center for SAT I and SAT II as well as Advanced Placement exams. Dr. Siepierski is the coordinator for SATs. Ms. Panzica is the coordinator for the A.P. Exams. The Nichols School code for both is 331080.

For specific details, see SAT and ACT registration materials or contact the college counseling office. Relevant dates also appear on the School's website, [www.nicholsschool.org](http://www.nicholsschool.org).

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

SAT I & II	Aug. 24	ACT	Sept. 14
	Oct. 5		Oct. 26
	Nov. 2		Dec. 14
	Dec. 7		Feb. 8
SAT I	Mar. 14		April 4
SAT I & II	May 2		June 13
	June 6		

## BOOCOCK LIBRARY & INFORMATION CENTER

The Library/Information Center will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. all school days except for early dismissal for holidays, exams, snow days, etc. *Food and drink are not permitted anywhere in the library at any time.*

**Reading Room.** The Reading Room is where Upper School study hall is held. It is a silent study space. No food, drink, talking or cell phones are permitted. Students with laptops or iPads must sit at the WCD tables.

**Information Center.** The Information Center is designed for student use in the areas of research and curriculum support. There will be assistance available. The computers are for academic use only; the Authorized Use Policy (AUP) stipulations are in force at all times.

## LIBRARY CIRCULATION PROCEDURE

- Materials are checked out for 14 days; renewals are available unless someone else has requested the material.

- Current issues of magazines, reference materials and bound periodicals must be used in the Library. Reference materials and bound materials will be photocopied free of charge. Class notes, tests, extra work for teachers, or work missed due to absence WILL NOT be copied free of charge.
- All library obligations must be met at the end of each School year.
- Overdue notices will be sent out via the Class Dean at the end of each marking period. Students who do not return overdue materials two weeks after notices are sent will be billed for the replacement cost plus a non-refundable fine of \$2.00 per item.

## **LUNCH**

Students may not bring a lunch from home unless there is a specific medical condition that is confirmed by the child's physician. The School is sensitive to religious observations and will always try to provide appropriate dietary choices.

## **CAMPUS STORE**

Nichols provides a campus store located in the basement of Albright for the purchase of books, school supplies and athletic apparel. Students may resell textbooks at year's end if the text will be used for the following year. The Campus Store is open daily from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## **SCHOOL AND GYM LOCKERS**

All Upper School students are assigned a School locker and a gym locker for their convenient use during and after the School day. School locks purchased in the Campus Store must be placed on the students' assigned lockers to secure all personal possessions. **The School is not responsible for the safekeeping of students' belongings.**

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Students sometimes misplace books, other materials, and items of clothing. The Athletic and Front Offices have access to lost and found items. To avoid confusion, please identify items clearly with the student's name.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

Nichols School is not nut-free nor is it free of other foods to which students may be allergic.

## **ASBESTOS ABATEMENT POLICY**

Due to the potential hazards associated with asbestos exposure if asbestos becomes airborne, federal and state laws and regulations are in place to control activities impacting asbestos

containing materials. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with these regulations and to minimize any risk of exposure for students, employees and guests of the School. All asbestos related activities will be conducted in a safe manner and in full compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## ATHLETICS

Both Athletics and Physical Education are integral parts of the educational program for all students at Nichols School. They enhance student capacities for living and learning, and they provide socializing experiences that complement and expand upon those found in the classroom and in the community.

Nichols conducts an extensive interscholastic athletic program in the belief that competitive team experiences contribute significantly to the development of character and school spirit. We expect all members of our community to represent Nichols in a manner that is respectful of others on and off the playing fields. Our aim is to develop and maintain the highest standards of courtesy, emotional discipline, good sportsmanship, and the ability to act as good hosts and guests.

### INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

FALL		WINTER		SPRING	
Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cross Country	Cross Country	Basketball	Basketball	Baseball	Crew
Hockey	Field Hockey	Crew	Crew	Crew	Lacrosse
Golf	Soccer	Hockey	Hockey	Lacrosse	Softball
Soccer	Tennis	Squash	Squash	Tennis	Golf
Sailing	Volleyball			Track	Track
	Sailing				

### TEAM PARTICIPATION

- Eligibility.** For a student to participate in any practice or draw equipment he or she must have: a current physical on file in the health office, meet eligibility requirements of the League, and have a clear student accounts bill. In season, students must complete a full School day the day of competition. If a student has an unexcused absence on a Friday he/she may not compete in any weekend contest.

- **Academic Standing.** The Academic Review Committee, the Student Conduct Committee, or the Upper School Head can call for an eligibility meeting for any student based on academic or behavioral concerns. A student may be temporarily withdrawn from Athletics or have travel restricted if his/her academics are not in good standing.
- **Freshmen on Varsity Teams.** Any freshman who is being considered for a varsity team must be approved to compete at that level by the Head of Upper School, the Dean of Students, the Freshman Dean and the Athletic Director. Academic standing, physical and social development will be considered.
- **Early Dismissal.** It is the student's responsibility to notify each classroom teacher of his/her absence from class at least one day prior to the absence due to an athletic event. The student is responsible to make up all work missed as a result of the absence.
- **Equipment.** Students are responsible for the proper care, use, storage and return of all equipment issued to them. Personal and school valuables should be locked in lockers whenever they are not in use. Equipment and uniforms must be returned within three (3) days of the end of an athletic season. Students will be billed for the replacement cost of any missing items.
- **Team Membership.** A student who withdraws or is dismissed from a team is responsible for notifying both the coach and the Athletic Director and returning all equipment issued. The student must be enrolled in a physical education class by the following day or the resulting absences will be considered unexcused and will result in detentions.
- **Transportation.** In some cases, juniors and seniors may be given permission to drive personal vehicles to athletic contests. Those students must have on file, in advance, a completed driving permission form and waiver executed by the student's parent or guardian or the student if the student is at least 18 years old. **Only other juniors or seniors, with a similarly signed permission form and waiver on file, may ride in that vehicle.** Athletes are required to return from away events with their team unless arrangements are made to return home with his/her parents and the coach is notified. A student may be allowed to return with another parent or car pool driver providing his/her parents have signed a note indicating the travel plans and giving permission.
- **Tournaments and Overnight Trips.** Airplane flights or special transportation to state or federation tournaments will be billed to the student's account. All room and board expenses are also billed to the student's account.

## SPORTS HOTLINE

There are frequent changes to the sports schedule published at the beginning of each season. Daily updated information is available after 9:00 a.m. on the Nichols Sports Hotline at 332-5111, including directions. Athletic Information is also posted on the Nichols website at [www.nicholsschool.org](http://www.nicholsschool.org).

## ATHLETICS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

All students are required to participate in a Nichols School program all three seasons each year.

Forms 3 and 4: Must choose 2 seasons from Option A and 1 season from Option A or B

Forms 5 and 6: Must choose 2 seasons from Option A or C and 1 season from Option A, B or C

Option A		
Fall	Winter	Spring
Boys Golf V and JV Boys Cross Country V and JV Girls Cross Country V and JV Field Hockey Girls Tennis V and JV Boys Soccer V and JV Girls Soccer V and JV Girls Volleyball Boys Hockey Boys and Girls Sailing  Physical Education After School Dance	V and JV Boys Basketball V and JV Girls Basketball Coed Winter Crew Prep A Girls Hockey Prep A Boys Hockey Prep B Boys Hockey Boys Club Team Hockey Girls Squash Boys Squash  Physical Education After School Dance	Baseball V and JV Softball Boys Tennis Girls Golf V and JV Boys Lacrosse V and JV Girls Lacrosse Boys Crew Girls Crew Boys and Girls Track  Physical Education After School Dance
Option B		
Fall	Winter	Spring
Contract Sport   Team Manager	Mock Trial Team Robotics Team Contract Sport  Team Manager	Contract Sport   Team Manager
Option C		
Fall	Winter	Spring
Weight Room Independent Athletic Proposal	Nordic Sports Weight Room	Spinning Weight Room

	Independent Athletic Proposal	Independent Athletic Proposal
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- Any student who wishes to do more than one option in a season must be approved to do so by a committee composed of the grade level deans, the Head of Upper School, the Dean of Students and the Athletic Director.
- The Contract Sport option is only available for competitive sports not offered at Nichols School.
- Independent Athletic Proposals are available to V and VI form students and must be approved by a committee composed of the Head of Upper School, the Dean of Students, the Athletic Director and the Chair of the Physical Education Department. On rare occasions Independent Athletic Proposals from III and IV form students will be considered.

**Receipt of Upper School Handbook and Acknowledgement of School Policies**

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of and have read the Nichols School Upper School Handbook dated 07-25-2019. I understand that it contains information about the policies and practices of the School. I agree to comply with the policies and practices set forth in this Handbook.

STUDENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NAME (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_