



**EMBRACE CHALLENGE,
DISCOVER YOURSELF.**

NICHOLS SCHOOL

**MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK
UPDATED 07-25-2019**

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WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dear Middle School Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year and to the 128th year of Nichols School. Thank you for entrusting your child to the caring professionals of the Nichols Middle School. We are privileged to work with your child and welcome his/her many positive contributions to the Nichols community.

We are pleased to offer this handbook to Middle School families. This handbook shares our rules and policies, practices, and procedures. The guidelines outlined in this handbook are intended to inform and set a positive tone for all aspects of student life - academic, athletic, artistic, and social. We encourage your use of this handbook now and throughout the school year.

Please carefully review this handbook with your child. If questions arise, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Paul C. Errickson

Head of Middle 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 extra-curricular 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.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE NICHOLS SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Nichols School holds high expectations for its entire 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, Chris Burner, represents the entire school to all its constituencies. The Head of School 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 Middle School, Paul Errickson, is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Middle School. The Head of Middle School's duties are to lead the Middle School faculty and to work closely with the Middle School Dean and Team Leaders in overseeing the academic and personal progress of every student. The Head of the Middle School collaborates with the Department Chairs in the coordination of the curriculum and consults regularly with the Head of School, Head of the Upper School, and Athletic Director. The Head of the Middle School represents the Middle School at various events and functions, including meetings of the Parents' Council and Board of Trustees, and leads school meetings and assemblies in the Middle School. The Head of the Middle School is available to students and families for academic counseling and problem solving.

The Middle School Dean of Students, Greg Plumb, is responsible for the management of student behavior and implementation of the discipline system. The Dean of Students serves as a member of the Student Conduct Committee (SCC) and oversees all discipline issues. Duties also include the management of the Middle School advisory program and our House competitions. The Dean works with team leaders on community service projects and field trips.

The Director of Inclusivity and Community Building, Dr. Ramone Alexander, provides support to all members of the Nichols community, with particular focus on students. The Director of Inclusivity and Community Building ensures that support, opportunities for engagement, leadership programming, and resources are available and easily accessed. The Director of Inclusivity and Community Building 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 Middle School meetings in order to build community.

Team Leaders, Christine Roach (5th), Julie Alford (6th), Wendy Mittlefehldt (7th), and Kari Achatz (8th), help to oversee the student experience at their grade level. Team Leader responsibilities include: coordinating discipline efforts on grade level with the Dean of Students; organizing and facilitating weekly faculty team meetings to discuss students, grade level issues, initiatives, and programs; and attending weekly Team Leader meetings with the Dean and Head of Middle School.

The Student Advisors meet regularly with their advisees to share curricular and extra-curricular 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 School Counselor, Mary Flanigan, is responsible for assisting students with academic, social, and personal pressures that are interfering with the students' experience at Nichols. The School Counselor does not provide ongoing or long-term counseling for students but may make appropriate recommendations when students require advanced or continuous services. There may be situations where the School Counselor works in conjunction with the School Mental Health Counselor.

The School Mental Health Counselor, Danielle Vallas, 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.

The School Nurse, Michelle Derenda, 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.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

ACADEMIC SECTIONING IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Philosophy

The following items are considered when creating academic groupings: ability and potential in math, ability and potential in all other classes, academic maturity, gender balance of class, social fabric of class, and class size.

Process

Each spring, the grade level teachers meet to discuss placement for the following academic year. Each of the items above is reviewed carefully in determining the number and range of groupings. For example, if the following year the grade grows from two to three sections, the teachers will determine into how many sections the group will be divided. The breakdown of sections may change year to year based on the academic strengths and weaknesses of each grade.

The admission of new students also plays a role in sectioning as we typically add a section of students in grades six, seven, and eight each year. This factor will also influence the groupings in each grade.

Academic placements will be made over the summer and will be reflected on the student's schedule. A child does not automatically remain in the same section from year to year. Occasionally sectioning changes will take place during the year if a child is sectioned inappropriately or not working to potential.

The Role of Parents in Sectioning

Please recognize that the sectioning of children is not a perfect science. We strive to place students in appropriate groupings where they are challenged academically. Effort and high performance do not always translate into placement in a particular group. Please respect the collective wisdom of our teachers as they are always looking out for the best interests of your child. Please speak with the Head of Middle School if you have questions concerning your child's academic placement.

Conferences

Parents' Go-To-School Night takes place on Thursday, September 19, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. During the evening's gathering, the teachers describe their courses and their expectations for students. Parent Conference days are scheduled on December 5 and 6 so parents can meet individually with their child's teachers to discuss each student's progress. In addition to these scheduled conferences, faculty will meet with students and parents when the need arises. The advisor will call parents of his advisees at approximately the middle of each trimester with an update on their child's academic and social progress.

Marking Periods

The school year is divided into trimesters, each of which is approximately twelve weeks in length. Grades and Progress Reports are sent to parents electronically at the end of each trimester.

ACADEMIC REVIEW

The Nichols Middle School Academic Review Committee meets at the end of each trimester to review student performance in the classroom and overall contribution to our community. Students who are not working to potential may be placed on the status of Warning or Probation for the next mark period.

ACADEMIC STATUS

When students are experiencing academic difficulty, the Academic Review Committee may vote to place a student on one of the following levels of academic status.

- **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 certain period of time if the student has responded well.

- **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 certain period of time if the student has responded well. Students on Academic Probation will not be issued a re-enrollment agreement.

Academic Warning and Probation are communicated to the parents by the Head of Middle School. In both cases, an expectation of improvement is discussed with an appropriate plan of action. 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 will not be invited to re-enroll the following school year.

ADVISORY PROGRAM

The Nichols Middle School Advisory Program prepares our students for the work of life, emphasizing citizenship and personal integrity.

Every middle school student is assigned to an advisor who oversees the student's academic progress throughout the school year and serves as a conduit between the School and parents. The primary purpose of the advisor/advisee relationship is to give the student a mentor and advocate who can provide guidance on academic and social issues, assist with setting and achieving goals, and help the student make the most of their time at Nichols. Parents and students should use the advisor as the first point of contact for any questions or concerns about all School-related matters.

COMMUNICATION

Our parents and teachers are united in the desire for students to become committed, successful learners. Open lines of communication between school and home are essential, as is student accountability for school preparation. The advisor's close relationship with the student helps to foster sound work habits. Regularly, teachers and advisors will remind and assist students to meet academic obligations. They will contact parents to enlist their support if a student falls behind. We ask that parents call the advisor when circumstances at home may be affecting a student's performance in school.

Over the four years of Middle School, the nature of teacher communication with parents will change. The School aims to make students responsible for their achievement and increasingly independent as learners. It is as important to let students realize the consequences of irresponsibility as it is to prevent students from bearing the burden of tasks they are not yet ready to undertake. Determining just how much to expect of a student at any time in the process of maturation is best done with the combined resources of school, family, and student.

HOMEWORK

Homework is crucial to the academic progress of students at Nichols. It teaches responsibility and provides an opportunity to learn about the organization of time. Homework also encourages the incorporation of material and skills by providing practice and repetition of material presented in class. It provides for independent study and the accomplishment of projects and assignments that cannot be completed within the structure of a class. Students are expected to turn in assigned homework when it is due.

Homework should be completed by the student with minimal parental help, unless such participation is an integral part of a specific assignment. Parents can be helpful in ensuring that there is a quiet area for study and that there is a clearly scheduled time for the completion of school-assigned work. As students grow older, they need to take on increasing responsibility for doing this themselves.

Parents should feel free to answer specific questions and to help with directions. It is often more educational for a parent to help a student by asking leading questions that encourage the student to think through the task rather than simply answering the questions. Quizzing students as a test preparation technique is very useful.

Throughout the course of the year, students are required to do a variety of special projects, some of which may take a good deal of time at home. If the amount of help that the child should receive from parents is unclear, please contact the teacher immediately. The goal of these projects is not the production of a “professional” finished product, rather, it is student participation and learning.

When a student is absent due to illness, the homework or portions of it may be able to be made up. The School asks parents to remember that sick children are often in no shape to do or profit from homework. If a student is able to do homework when ill, the assignments will be available after 2:15 p.m. from the Front Office, or please see each teacher’s MySchoolApp page for assignments. It is left to the discretion of each teacher to determine when missed assignments are due, although we urge students to complete missed work as soon as is reasonable.

GRADING SYSTEM

A+ = 12

C = 5

A = 11

C- = 4

A- = 10

D+ = 3

B+ = 9

D = 2

B = 8

D- = 1

B- = 7

F = 0

C+ = 6

Highest Honors will be awarded to students who achieve an average of 10.0 with no grade below A-.

Honors will be awarded to students who achieve an average of 9.0 with no grade below B.

Commendations will be awarded to students who achieve an average of 8.0 with no grade below B-.

Students must maintain an average of 5.0 or better to remain in good standing. If a student falls below 5.0, the Academic Review Committee will consider a variety of options, including mandatory remediation, as requirements for the student to ameliorate the situation.

Teachers use letter grades to record student progress. Listed below are the numerical equivalents of the letter grades:

A = Superior Achievement - (100-90): A+ =100 - 97, A = 96 - 93, A- = 92 - 90. Consistent excellence: neat, prompt, thorough, accurate to a high degree, shows initiative, intellectual curiosity, and creativity; a comprehensive grasp of concepts to a marked degree. Written work is excellent both in content and mechanics.

B = Strong Achievement - (89-80): B+ =89 - 87, B= 86 - 83, B- = 82 - 80. Commendable: neat, prompt, shows initiative, and thorough understanding of the material. Written work is good in both content and mechanics. A grade of B+ at Nichols is an Honors grade and should be regarded as such. It signifies distinctive mastery, not simply competency.

C = Satisfactory - (79-70): C+ =79 - 77, C= 76 - 73, C- = 72 - 70 . A grade in this range indicates that, while passing and in no danger of failing, the student has not achieved mastery of the subject. A student may have worked very hard, but for some reason was not able to make superior connections with the material, or the student took an erratic approach to the material that hampered the student's ability to make superior connections with that material.

D = Minimal Achievement - (69-60): D+ =69 - 67, D = 66 - 63, D- = 62 - 60. Limited mastery: day-to-day work is irregular and not always satisfactory. In sequential courses, it should serve as a warning sign of possible future problems. The grade of D- indicates that while a student is technically passing, the work is unsatisfactory, and that the student must take positive steps to improve. If not, a failing grade may result. At the end of the year, a grade of D- will normally lead to a requirement of summer work before credit is finalized.

F = Failing Work - (below 60). Unacceptable work: test results, papers, homework assignments, and class work are not up to standard. F indicates work of such low distinction that the student will not receive credit for the course.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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 that is 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 or Middle 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 Middle 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 middle school, 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 will be required to have a hearing with the SCC. The likely outcome of the hearing will 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 will as a matter of course inform the child's parents of our concerns in a confidential meeting; we will ask the parents to pursue our questions with their son or daughter. In addition, if students approach members of the faculty to express concern about drug/alcohol use by their friends or classmates, we will 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 local highly regarded 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 with 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.

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.

Is a safe place where students can share concerns about all health issues including but not limited to mental health, substance and relationships.

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
- Phone call to parent or guardian from Core Group member

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 a School administrative team. 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 guardian 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 proscribed 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 will 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 will be subject to suspension from School. The parents of all the students involved will be notified, and appropriate action will be taken by the SCC.

COUNSELING SERVICES

There may be times during the year when a student will experience personal, social, or academic problems. The School Counselor or 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, the School Counselor 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 Middle School indicating such denial of services.

DRESS CODE

Mandatory Uniforms:

A uniform is mandatory for Middle School students. Uniform choices can be found on the website of our chosen vendor, Lands' End:

www.Landsend.com/uniforms Code: 900126202

Uniform choices consist of any of the options listed under the Nichols School code. You may purchase any of the items available as options that fit your child's comfort level.

The Nichols School logo is mandatory on polo shirts (both long- and short-sleeved), turtlenecks, and sweaters only. It is optional on all other uniform pieces. If sweaters are chosen as part of your child's uniform, we recommend leaving one at school at all times of the year, given the fluctuations of the heating/cooling system in Regan Hall. Finally, please put your child's name on all pieces of his/her uniform for ease in identifying lost or mislaid items.

Supplemental Pieces:

These are the pieces that complete the uniform, but can be purchased anywhere, according to personal taste. Please follow the guidelines below when making your purchases.

- Khaki pants or Lands End selected skirts (should be of a length nearly touching the knee).
- Socks must be worn during the school day and can be any color, but should be designed for dress shoes and not for athletic footwear. Also, students should wear different socks during the school day versus during their athletic periods.
- Tights, nylons, or non-athletic leggings must be worn with skirts from November 1 through Spring Break.
- Dress shoes/boots must be worn and be closed toe/heel. Heel height maximum 1-1/2 inches. Shoe laces should be non-athletic and appropriate to the dress shoe.
- Sandals, flip-flops, slippers, etc. are not allowed.
- Shorts of a length nearly touching the knee are permitted from September 1- October 31 and from Spring Break until the end of the school year.
- Winter boots are allowed between November 1 and Spring Break, but they must fit under cuff of uniform pants, must be neatly tied/fastened.
- Solid color button down shirts are allowed accompanied with a tie.

The dress code is an important tool to help create a school atmosphere of learning and growth. As trends change, we attempt to adjust our policies accordingly. When making decisions around particular items of dress, we often refer to the ‘spirit’ of the dress code.

SCHOOL HOURS AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED INFORMATION

The Nichols Middle School Administrative Office is open daily from 7:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

ARRIVAL

Students may arrive at School any time after 7:30 a.m. Students should not arrive before 7:30 a.m. because there is no designated supervision. If a student must arrive before 7:30 a.m., s/he can wait in the Middle School foyer. First period class begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Attendance is taken at that time. A student who is late to School must obtain a LATE SLIP from the Front Office before going to class. Arriving late to School puts your child in jeopardy of missing vital material, announcements, and classroom discussions. Students arriving late also have difficulty organizing their materials and preparing for their busy schedule of classes, rehearsals, practices, and extracurricular activities. We have witnessed added levels of stress at the beginning of the day for children arriving late. If a student accumulates five unexcused Late Slips in a trimester, they will be asked to serve a detention. If tardiness continues to be an issue, more serious disciplinary action may be considered.

DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed Monday through Friday at 3:30 p.m. A faculty member on Late Duty assists students with departure until the buses leave. The suburban buses collect students between 3:30 p.m. and 3:50 p.m. Students are not allowed to leave campus during School hours (7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.) unless written authorization from their parents is provided to the Front Office.

Students are expected to be picked up by 4:00 p.m. Supervision is available for Middle School students who remain past 4:00 p.m. in Bright Place. In the interest of the safety of the students, we ask that you pick up your child immediately after school or arrange alternative means of supervision. Students playing in away games are returned to the gym for pick up. Students are reminded to take their book bags with them to any after-school game. A staff member is in the office until 3:45 p.m.

CAMPUS TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Middle School Car Procedures:

Procedures are the same for 7:50 a.m. drop-off and 3:30 p.m. pick-up. Please note: Middle School classes begin at 8:00 sharp.

Enter the Middle School entrance on Amherst Street (the entrance closest to Colvin Avenue). Before the circle, make the first right into the Middle School parking lot. The parking lot traffic is one-way. Drive through the parking lot and stop at the Middle School drop-off/pick-up point in front of the Regan Hall main entrance to drop off/pick up your child. Proceed into the circle, bearing right and exit the circle onto Amherst Street. The circle traffic is one-way and is a one-car lane. Please do not attempt a left-hand turn onto Amherst Street when exiting.

IMPORTANT:

- The circle is a one car lane. No parking or standing is permitted in the circle.
- Please help to keep the traffic moving by having your child ready to exit/enter your vehicle as quickly as possible.
- Visitor parking is available in the Middle School or Mitchell Hall lots.
- There are no left hand turns onto Amherst Street between 7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Middle School - School Bus Procedures

School buses will enter the campus at the Amherst Street gates near the soccer field and proceed to the bus stop behind Center '63. All Middle School students will exit and board school buses at this location.

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.**

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.

Appropriate 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, Instagram, Snapchat 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.

We have noticed that several of our students are bringing laptops and tablet devices to school. The School cannot be responsible for laptops and personal electronic devices brought onto the campus. Please remind your child about her or his responsibility for securing against theft and protecting from accidental damage this expensive equipment.

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 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 the School’s 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.

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 if they need login assistance.

HONESTY

By accepting membership in our School community, students and faculty alike commit themselves to personal integrity and honor. Nichols believes that there is no more important value than honesty. To this end, Nichols faculty endeavor to teach appropriate methods for using and citing outside sources. So that there can be a clear understanding of one's responsibility, the School has formulated the following statement on academic honesty.

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 On-line-Aids. Foreign Language Translation Programs are prohibited. Information from on-line 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 Middle School Dean of Students 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 Dean agree that plagiarism has occurred, the Dean will refer the matter, with all relevant documentation, to the Head of Middle School. The Head of Middle School will then take one of two courses of action:

- If the student has committed no previous academic-honesty offenses, then the matter may be referred back to the teacher for assessment of a grade penalty (according to the department's guidelines) and short-deadline rewrite. The Middle School 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 may be sent directly to the SCC for action.

All suspected plagiarism cases will be discussed at the outset with the teacher and the Middle School 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

Student work is expected to represent the individual student's skills and knowledge. To represent the work of another person (from text or from classmate) as his or her own is a most serious affront to the entire School community and constitutes a major infraction of the School's basic principles. Such occurrences will be handled on an individual case basis. The student will redo the assignment and beyond that, the consequences may range from a note to the advisor to expulsion from the School. The involved faculty member(s), the Middle School Dean of Students, Head of the Middle School, and the SCC are involved in such situations and will decide what course of action will be taken.

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 medication.***

All medication (INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION) 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.

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 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 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 use 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	Dean of Students
Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC)	Freshman Dean
School Counselor	Sophomore Dean
Head of Upper School	Junior Dean
Head of Middle School	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.

BACKPACKS

Students may use backpacks to carry books to and from school. During the school day, students should store their backpacks in their lockers, as backpacks cannot be carried between classes.

CELL PHONES

While we discourage students from bringing cell phones to School, we do recognize that they can be useful at the end of the school day to coordinate transportation. Any cell phones brought onto campus are the responsibility of the student; Nichols Middle School is not responsible for any misuse. Students must keep their cell phones, turned off, in their lockers during the School day. Students are not allowed to have cell phones on their person during the day (8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.). Students are not permitted to capture digital images with their cell phones at any Nichols event without the permission of the Dean or the Head of the Middle School. Violation of these policies will result in detention and in the phone being confiscated and returned only to the student's parent or guardian. Further consequences will be determined by the Dean.

In addition, in fifth and sixth grades, students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to School. If they do bring cell phones to school, they must store them turned off in their lockers during the entire school day. They are not allowed to be taken out at any time after arriving on campus and during the day unless specifically directed by a teacher. Cell phones may be used after 3:30 p.m. in two locations only: the front foyer and the bus waiting area gym foyer.

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
 - 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/ss/p/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.

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.

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

The students of Nichols Middle School are expected to behave in a courteous and respectful manner to fellow students and toward all adults in the School. The overriding rule is that students must at all times behave in a manner that shows respect for the feelings, rights, and property of others and of the School. The School wants all students to live by the values of truth, respect, and responsibility.

The Nichols Middle School believes that students who experience success and are meaningfully engaged in appropriate material do not often display behaviors which need correcting. However, when a student demonstrates behavior that is inappropriate or dangerous to the student and/or others, we will approach the situation with the expectations that students must accept responsibility for their behavior. We recognize that students at this age will make errors in judgment, and our overarching goal is to balance our efforts to help students accept responsibility for their actions and learn to make better decisions following a disciplinary incident with the need to provide a safe and courteous environment for all students. Depending on the age and stage of the student, a variety of strategies will be used to help the student to understand what happened and to look for ways to avoid any future repetition of the behavior.

The School attempts to make consequences for errant behavior both meaningful and appropriate relative to the infraction. In serious cases of inappropriate behavior, suspension and dismissal from the School may occur. The decision of the Head of School is final in disciplinary matters.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

To ensure the success of every student, the following list of expectations will be enforced from the time students arrive on campus until they leave School grounds for the day.

- Follow all specific rules and directions established by School personnel for classrooms, dining room, library, office areas, School buildings and grounds, assemblies, field trip buses, sports activities, and any other School-sponsored activities.

- Use or consumption of gum, candy, food, or beverages during School hours is strictly prohibited. Lunch food should remain in the dining room. Food and beverages allowed at School-sanctioned functions will be confined to the appropriately supervised areas. Use of vending machines is prohibited during School hours.
- Backpacks may be used to bring materials to and from School. During the school day, however, backpacks must be stored in the locker and may not be used. School materials, apparel, musical instruments, sports equipment, and personal belongings should be stored either in lockers or in specifically designated areas. Students may only use School-issued locks and should use only their assigned lockers.
- Please be on time to School. School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. each day. If for some reason you arrive at School late, report directly to the Front Office and notify the Administrative Assistants of your arrival. Be in attendance, be on time, and be prepared for all classes and School activities.
- Inappropriate language, “put-downs,” fighting, and rudeness will not be tolerated. Confrontations (including verbal or physical exchanges) will be handled by the Middle School Dean of Students and the SCC.
- Sports equipment (bags, sticks, etc.) must be stored properly and cannot be carried from class to class during the day.
- Skateboards, electronic games, magic or sports cards, toys, squirt guns, large amounts of money, and irreplaceable items (a family heirloom, for example) should be left at home.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

The aim of our disciplinary policy at Nichols Middle School is to find the teachable moment in every situation and help our students learn from their missteps so that they can be productive members of our School community. We expect all of our students to follow the rules stated in the handbook and set by classroom teachers to the letter and spirit, but we recognize that middle schoolers will have lapses in judgment from time to time. The disciplinary process has two major components: restitution and consequence. When students make restitution for their wrongs, they take an active role in trying to “make things right” with the School and their peers. The restitution piece may involve an apology for wrongdoing, making a plan for the future to avoid being in a similar situation to demonstrate to the School that students have learned from their mistakes, and to the extent possible, undoing any damage the students' actions may have caused. This process is an important part of learning how to take responsibility for one’s mistakes and should not be confused with punishment.

For serious and/or recurring offences, students may also face a consequence for their actions, in addition to making restitution. We aim to make the punishment proportionate, reasonable, and when possible, related to the original offense. These can include detention, suspension from sports for a predetermined amount of time, community service, or suspension from a School activity, such as a dance or field trip. For instances requiring more serious consequences, the SCC will be convened (see Disciplinary Procedures).

Whenever possible, minor disciplinary infractions are dealt with either immediately by a classroom teacher or the appropriate team leader, or by the Middle School Dean of Students for more serious infractions and those not taking place in a classroom environment. The Middle School Dean of Students and Head of Middle School will decide whether the action merits further discussion with the SCC. Students who have committed minor disciplinary infractions may meet with the appropriate team leader and receive a consequence without having to meet with the SCC.

DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS

Middle School students are expected to comply with the letter and spirit of the rules presented in this Handbook. Violations of these rules are divided into two categories on the basis of severity:

Major Violations. Serious violations and disregard for major behavioral expectations will result in a student being sent to the Middle School Dean of Students and the Head of Middle School. Consequences may include appearing before the SCC, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Students will also be placed on behavioral status such as “warning” or “probation” depending on the severity of the situation. Status is given as a measure reflecting the student's need to change behavior and meet the standards of the School. Re-enrollment contracts are withheld from students while on behavioral status.

Major violations include:

- Use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol in School or at any School function, including class trips.
- Dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism.
- Serious disregard for the academic or personal rights or safety of others in the community.
- Disrespect toward a student, faculty or staff member, or guest of the School.
- Stealing from another member of the community.
- Fighting-both parties will be considered equally responsible.
- Using tobacco on School grounds or at a School function, including class trips.
- Inappropriate use of technology.
- Cutting class.
- Repeated minor violations when the student has not made appropriate adjustments or improvements to his/her behavior.

Minor Violations. Minor violations may be referred to the Team Leaders for detention. Parents may be notified in writing with a list of the infractions.

Minor violations include:

- Use of cell phone during School hours.
- Unexcused lateness to a class, sports, or school activity.

- Uniform violation.
- Using inappropriate language.
- Disruptive behavior in class, sports, or school activity.
- Inappropriate behavior of a minor nature (e.g., littering, gum chewing, eating outside the dining hall, using the vending machines during school hours, etc.).
- Failure to sign in or out.
- Interfering with another student's lock or locker.
- Dishonesty regarding homework, tardiness and language.

ATTENDANCE

TARDY POLICY

All students are expected to be in the first period classroom by 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive late must sign in at the Front Office and obtain a LATE SLIP. The school asks parents to plan doctor, dentist, and similar visits for after-school hours whenever possible. On occasions when your child is to be dismissed early, parents must send in a signed note requesting early dismissal, indicating the time of departure and who will be picking up the student. **Please note that early dismissal notes should be turned into the Front Office at the beginning of the school day.**

Students coming to School late or returning from midday appointments must sign in at the Front Office. When leaving early, parent/parent designee must sign out students.

ABSENCE POLICY

The School year is interrupted by a variety of generous vacation times. It is strongly suggested that families plan their vacations to match these published dates. Missing a significant amount of time is difficult for students. The introduction of new content and the practice of skills are missed, and the student often returns with work to be made up.

Participation in class lectures and discussions is an essential part of the learning process that private study outside of School cannot replace. Therefore, regular attendance is a crucial element of academic success at Nichols Middle School. If a student misses 10% or more (17+) School days, either consecutively or cumulatively, they may not be promoted to the next grade level without the consent of the Academic Review Committee, which may require that the student make up some or all of the missed coursework, either during the summer or with a tutor. This includes excused and unexcused absences. Excessive tardiness, excused or unexcused, that negatively impacts class participation may be considered absenteeism and subject to the same review by the Academic Review Committee. Additionally, five or more late arrivals in a term will result in a detention.

It is the student's responsibility, not the School's, nor teachers', to make up academic work within a reasonable time limit established by the teacher(s). The Head of Middle School must be informed in writing well in advance of such absences. Family trips and non-Nichols athletic

contests resulting in a child missing School are considered unexcused absences. Frequent unexcused absences, or absences without advance notification, may result in academic penalty.

Please do not ask our faculty to prepare an individualized “vacation study” package of work (other than assignments in textbooks or prepared materials) for students who are taken out of School for family vacations and/or non-Nichols athletic contests. Teachers are not expected to administer exams or quizzes earlier or later than scheduled because of student absence (other than illness).

MEDICAL LEAVE 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, Head of Middle School, Dean of Students, and Team Leaders. All medical leaves of a physical nature are handled by the School Nurse, Head of Middle School, Dean of Students, and Team Leaders. 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, Head of Middle School, Dean of Students, Team Leader, 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.

WEATHER-RELATED CLOSING

Announcements regarding closings are posted on the Nichols website at 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

TEXTBOOKS AND THE CAMPUS STORE

Students may resell textbooks at year's end if the text will be used for the following year. Each student is provided a charge account (billed monthly to parents) at the Campus Store. All textbooks will be charged to this account. The Campus Store is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

LOCKERS

All Middle School students are assigned a locker at the beginning of the year. Students must have a school-issued lock purchased from the bookstore. The Front Office keeps records of combinations for students who have forgotten or misplaced them. 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. All Middle School students are also assigned a gym locker.

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.

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. 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.

MESSAGES TO STUDENTS AND USE OF THE TELEPHONE

Parents may call school to leave messages for their children. **We ask parents to call before 1:00 p.m., if possible, so that we can get the messages delivered on a timely basis.**

Students may use the Front Office telephone while at School to call home if there is an emergency situation or a change of schedule or transportation. Students must get permission from a teacher or the Middle School Administrative Assistant to make any calls. **We discourage students, however, from calling home for homework, athletic shoes or equipment, and books that have**

been left at home. We encourage parents to resist the temptation to deliver these items to School. We hope to encourage individual responsibility for materials needed for school. A few left-at-home occasions may help to jog the memory the next time.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

All Middle School students participate in sports each day. The sports program recognizes developmental differences among students. Its goal is to develop individual competence in a number of sports and to build confidence in each student about her or his physical abilities. The School encourages students to practice good sportsmanship and to value the team experience. If a student is unable to participate in sports due to illness or injury, s/he is expected to report to No Sports Study Hall.

The Middle School athletic program is an important part of the Nichols curriculum. As such, all students are expected to follow the rules set by Nichols School and its coaches. All students will treat the Nichols locker rooms, sports fields, buses, fellow students, staff, and coaches with the respect set forth in this Handbook. Students are expected to comply with the letter and spirit of the rules at all Nichols events, home and away. The Middle School athletic program allows for another portal to reinforce the values taught in the classroom.

Fifth and sixth graders are introduced to the skills and rules of team sports. These include soccer, field hockey, touch football, ice hockey, basketball, lacrosse, softball, tennis, and baseball. Physical fitness is increased through a variety of games: tumbling, skating, handball, badminton, volleyball, squash, and rock climbing (indoor climbing wall).

The seventh and eighth grade sports program emphasizes interscholastic team competition. Several sports, as mentioned above, are available for each of the three sports seasons. Dance is also available as an option.

Nichols will not waive Middle School athletic requirements in lieu of participation in non-Nichols programs. The Middle School athletic program is a vital part of the curriculum and we expect full student participation. Students are encouraged to participate in teams and activities outside of school, but may not use these activities as “substitutes” for programs offered by the School. It is important that students who choose to participate in athletic programs outside of school plan ahead so that they successfully balance their academic and extracurricular commitments.

Students should bring all sports equipment to School in an appropriate, sturdy, and clearly labeled sports bag. In mid-August, families receive a list of recommended athletic supplies for gym class. Throughout the year, mouth guards, shin guards, and Nichols sportswear may be purchased from the Campus Store. Team uniforms are provided by the school and must be returned at the end of each season.

ATTENDANCE AT SPORTS

All students are expected to participate in the sports program every day unless they are excused due to an injury. Under most circumstances, students who are injured are expected to attend sports to observe. To excuse a student from sports, please send a written request (preferably a physician's note) to the Administrative Office for our records. A physician's note is required for more than three days' absences. Any questions about team sports, games, or practices should be directed to the Athletic Office.

SPORTS HOTLINE

There are frequent changes to the sports schedule published at the beginning of each season. Daily updated information is available after 2:00 p.m. on the Nichols Sports Hotline at 332-5111, including directions. Athletic Information is also posted on the Nichols website at www.nicholsschool.org.

Receipt of Middle School Handbook and Acknowledgement of School Policies

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of and have read the Nichols School Middle 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 _____