

# AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS

Falcon Fives Pre-Kindergarten Program  
Austintown Elementary School  
Parent Handbook  
2022 - 2023

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Falcon Fives Pre-Kindergarten Program! Our Pre-Kindergarten, located within Austintown Elementary School (AES), is designed to meet the needs of all of our students and prepare them for Kindergarten. Our goal is to create a warm, nurturing environment where students and families can learn and grow. We are pleased that you have chosen to include us in the growth, development and education of your child! This handbook contains information regarding our mission, policies and procedures. Our license, compliance report and inspection forms are posted and available upon request.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Falcon Fives Pre-Kindergarten Program aligns to the district's, which is to "provide an inspiring education that strengthens and prepares our students for unlimited future opportunities." We also pride ourselves in providing a family-friendly environment that is safe and nurturing. Our school climate shows that we are dedicated to our children and families, as well as, to the personal achievement of every student. Falcon Fives, in partnership with the entire school community, provides a strong foundation to meet the demands of an ever-changing society. We aim to ensure that every child is challenged, prepared and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society.

The Falcon Fives Instructional Team is dedicated to meeting the needs of diverse learners by providing a developmentally, responsive and academically challenging curriculum, accompanied with intensive, supportive teaching. Implementing comprehensive Literacy and Math Frameworks, along with data-based, differentiated practices, we ensure students are motivated to progress and achieve. We provide a rigorous, dynamic, comprehensive curriculum that reflects the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills our students will need to become successful adults, and eventual Fitch graduates.

We maintain a safe, inviting climate and make every effort to empower students to value themselves and others, as well as, to serve their community with honesty, integrity and responsibility. Meeting the needs of the whole child ensures we are giving children tools for success that will last far beyond their years in Ohio's preK-12 public education system.

Our teachers are passionate, motivated, enthusiastic and experience continued professional growth. Teachers reflect on current practices and research, which fosters continued student learning and ensures continuity in our curriculum and instruction. Our tradition of a strong school board and administrative leadership, excellent teachers and staff, positive parental involvement and community support, enables all students to reach high intellectual, physical, artistic, social and emotional standards. We share with our community the responsibility for the education of all students.

## **Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Falcon Fives Pre-Kindergarten Program is that students should be provided a wide variety of new and unfamiliar opportunities to experience the rewarding joy of learning, growing self-confidence and developing leadership skills. Establishing a classroom atmosphere that encourages curiosity, innovation, invention, problem solving and persistence significantly increases the level of student engagement and accelerates academic growth.

## **Program Goals**

Our goal is to use Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards as the foundation for helping students experience continued levels of growth in the five learning domains that prepare pre-kindergarteners for future success. These learning domains include:

1. Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
3. Approaches Toward Learning
4. Language and Literacy Development
5. Cognition and General Knowledge

## **Daily Schedule** **(Monday-Friday)**

<b>Time Period Monday-Friday</b>	<b>Academic Learning and Activities</b>
8:45 am - 9:00 am	Arrival
9:00 am - 9:25 am	Morning Work/Announcements/PBIS/PAX
9:25 am - 9:50 am	Circle Time/Calendar/Songs
9:50-10:20 am	Recess
10:20 am - 10:30 am	Heggerty (Phonemic Awareness); Sound Wall
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Language Arts
11:00 am - 11:30 am	Lunch
11:30 am - 11:50 am	Rest Time
11:50 am - 12:20 pm	Math (Bridges)
12:20 pm - 12:45 pm	Science or Social Studies
12:45 pm - 1:00 pm	Story Time/Story Extension
1:00 pm - 1:15 pm	Restroom Break/Handwashing/Snack Time
1:15 pm - 1:45 pm	Centers
1:45 pm - 2:00 pm	Daily Review/Good-Bye Song
2:00 pm - 2:15 pm	Dismissal

### **Notes:**

**\*Library Special is from 12:10-12:50pm; Thursdays (Miss Scott); Fridays (Miss DelColle)**

**\*Recess: Blue Playground-Miss DelColle/Miss Scott**

### **Morning Drop-Off Note**

→ Morning drop-off time is 8:45-9:00am, next to the main office

### **Afternoon Pick-Up Note**

→ Afternoon pick up time is 2:00-2:15pm, next to the main office

**\*Schedule rotation may change**

### **Attendance**

Although compulsory attendance doesn't start until Kindergarten, daily attendance is taken in our Brightwheel app and reported to our AES Attendance Secretary. If your child is absent, we ask that you notify us in advance via Brightwheel. We also ask that you send in a doctor's note or handwritten parent note for the absence. This will change the absence from an unexcused absence to an excused absence in our system.

### **Curriculum**

The daily curriculum and instruction and play-based activities are rooted in Ohio's Early Learning & Development Standards for pre-kindergarten. These standards include the five learning domains listed below and are taught through our PK curriculum, AEPS.

1. Approaches Toward Learning
2. Cognition and General Knowledge
3. Language and Literacy
4. Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
5. Social and Emotional Development

\*Heggerty phonemic awareness, phonics wall and Bridges math, are aligned to our K-2 curriculum and also taught in the Falcon Fives program.

### **Calamity/Waiver/Snow Days and Delays/Early Dismissal**

The days that Austintown Elementary School is closed, our PK will also be closed. If the elementary school is operating on a two-hour delay (for any reason), our PK will start their day at 11:00am (students can begin arriving at 10:45am) and conclude at the regularly scheduled time of 2:00pm.

**Before Care will not be provided but After Care will be.** Early Dismissal days are normal arrival time and dismissal at 1:00pm. (January 20 and May 26, 2023)

### **Tuition**

#### **Monthly Tuition Information**

- A. The tuition rate for the Falcon Fives program is \$300 per month. Payments are for the entire month, with no refunds due to absences. No credit is given for school holidays, vacation, or inclement weather. The number of days in session per month is different according to the month, but all average out on a yearly basis. If a child is permanently withdrawn after tuition is paid for the month, that tuition is forfeited.
- B. In order to secure a seat in the Falcon Fives program, the first tuition payment of \$300 must be made on or before **September 2, 2022**. Failure to meet this deadline will result in being placed

on a “waitlist” for future consideration - depending upon open seat availability for the 2022-2023 school year.

- C. Failure to make tuition payments on or before the date below, for each month, will result in removal from the Falcon Fives Program.
- D. Monthly tuition for the Falcon Fives program is due according to the payment schedule below. The payment covers that month’s pre-kindergarten tuition only (pre-payment). The monthly tuition dates for the 2022- 2023 school year includes the following:

<b>September 2, 2022</b>	<b>October 3, 2022</b>	<b>November 4, 2022</b>
<b>December 2, 2022</b>	<b>January 6, 2023</b>	<b>February 3, 2023</b>
<b>March 3, 2023</b>	<b>April 3, 2023</b>	<b>May 5, 2023</b>

**Payment Method and Protocol**

**Option #1**

- Payable by Brightwheel, which is an online payment method. There is a processing fee.
- Brightwheel allows families to pay through credit card or debit card/bank account.
- Families can schedule automatic payments using this option.
- Families can make partial payments in Brightwheel, as long as the full tuition payment is made no later than the date indicated for the month.
- Families must create a Brightwheel account to utilize this payment method.

**Option #2**

- Payable by personal check made out to “Austintown Local Schools.” Please write “Falcon Fives” in the memo line. A NSF fee of \$10.00 will be applied for all returned checks. If a check is returned more than twice, future payments may only be made through Brightwheel,, cash or money order.
- Cash payments are acceptable.
- Money Orders are acceptable. Please make them payable to Austintown Local Schools with “Falcon Fives” in the memo line.
- Receipts are issued on site (at AES) for personal check, cash payments, or money orders, in the main office or through your child’s teacher (receipt given the following business day) during school hours.
- Families can make partial/weekly payments, in advance, as long as the full \$300 tuition payment is made no later than the date indicated for the month.

**Please Note:**

- In person credit card or debit card payments are strictly prohibited.
- JFS options are available, please let us know if you believe that you qualify/want an application. Strict payment schedules are enforced through self-pay, until the proper paperwork is approved by JFS. Co-pays must be paid in a timely manner. Tuition payments must be paid in full until/if approval is reached. Falcon Fives staff will assist with paperwork but it is the family’s responsibility to follow up with JFS on all approvals and input of days/times attended into KinderConnect. KinderConnect info. is how the district receives payment for your child from JFS.
- Before care and after care (Extended Care) are provided for a fee. The cost is \$3 for the half-hour and \$6 for the hour. Times are from: 6:30am-8:45am and 2:00pm-4:00pm, M-F on

days that school is in session. This may be paid for at the end of the month. (post-payment)

\*The same policies for tuition, apply for Extended Care.

- Students who would like to return to Falcon Fives for a second year of PK programming, must have the previous year's payments paid in full to enroll. As students move on to Kindergarten, any outstanding balance will follow them.
- Rates are subject to change.
- A registration fee of \$25 is required upon entry. Registration fees are non-refundable. If you drop the program, at any time, after paying the fee, you will not receive a refund.

### **Before and After Care**

Before and After Care is available, Monday-Friday, when school is in session. The costs and times are:

\$3 for the half-hour; \$6 for the hour

6:30am-8:45am and 2:15pm-4:00pm

\*Before Care is not provided on two-hour delays. After Care will be.

### **Grade Reports**

Four written evaluations are issued during the school year. The written evaluations provide parents feedback pertaining to student progress and/or areas of needed growth based upon Ohio's Early Learning & Development Standards' five learning domains.

The following marks are used to communicate current progress and/or areas of needed growth:

Beginning = 1

Proficient = 3

Developing = 2

Not Assessed = N/A

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Two parent/teacher conference dates are scheduled to discuss student progress and/or areas of needed growth. We will have conferences twice a year. The dates for this school year are: **October 12, 2022, 3:45-9:45pm and February 9, 2022, 3:45pm- 6:45 pm.**

### **Cafeteria**

Each student is provided a scheduled breakfast and lunch period. Breakfast (upon request for Before Care students only) and lunch is held in the pre-kindergarten classrooms. Snacks are provided to our After Care students only. The students are expected to follow all classroom rules during breakfast, lunch, and snack. Please see the letter from our Food Services Dept. (website:

<https://www.afoodservices.com/>) posted on our PK webpage for more information.

[http://www.austintownschoools.org/userfiles/510/my%20files/2022-2023%20falcon%20fives%20flyer.p  
df?id=7863](http://www.austintownschoools.org/userfiles/510/my%20files/2022-2023%20falcon%20fives%20flyer.pdf?id=7863)

### **Recess (Indoor/Outdoor)**

Play-based learning is an important component to the overall education of a pre-kindergarten student. Students will go outside for recess when the weather permits and the temperature or wind chill factor is no lower than 32 degrees. All students are expected to go outside for recess. If your child is not permitted to go outside, he/she must have a note from you explaining why he/she cannot go out.

Except in the case of an excuse from a doctor, two days is the maximum that a child will be permitted to remain inside during recess. The principal or designee or playground supervisor will decide if recess will be outdoors or indoors based upon that day's weather conditions. Students should dress under the assumption that recess will be outside. Failure to respect or obey the teacher or playground supervisor could result in loss of recess time, or other such disciplinary action.

### **Birthdays**

Balloons, flowers, or other gifts are not to be delivered to students during school time. Birthday store bought treats may be sent to the school only with Falcon Fives staff approval. Home baked goods are not permitted. Birthday invitations are prohibited from being brought to school unless they are for the entire class (or, boys/girls).

### **Student Backpacks**

Backpacks of any kind and drawstring gym sacks are not permitted to be worn during school hours. Bags are permissible for transporting books to and from school but must be placed in a cubby during normal school hours.

### **Developmental Screening and Referral Process Peer Models**

Within 60 days of starting school, observations and a developmental screening will be conducted with your child using the ASQ: SE-2 Ages and Stages Questionnaire and the ASQ3: Social and Emotional Questionnaire. These screening and assessment tools are designed to measure the developmental performance of children in the areas of communication, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, personal-social skills, and social and emotional ability. Results are shared with our families.

### **Behavior Management and Discipline**

The Falcon Fives Program provides a safe and nurturing environment through the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS/PAX). The prekindergarten staff encourages children to express their feelings in an acceptable way. If behaviors interfere with learning and productive activities and/or safety of others, administrators, teachers, and their assistants, will inform parents and a plan will be developed to address behavior concerns. Behavioral expectations for students are posted in each classroom and reinforced daily.

The following guidelines are implemented for behavior management and discipline:

(A) The preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline. This may include an office referral.

(B) The program shall have a written discipline policy describing the philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used. This written policy shall be on file at the program, for review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate practices are to be used at all times, and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.

(C) Behavior management/discipline/PBIS policies, procedures and practices, shall ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises.

(D) The program's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

(1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.

(2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

(3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain control. Should a restraint be warranted, in an extreme case, a CPI trained faculty member will perform the hold.

(4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.

(5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.

(6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.

(7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.

(8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior.

(9) Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.

(10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

(E) The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the program's written discipline policy.

(F) All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the program's discipline policy for review upon employment.

(G) See Section 3313.66 | Suspension, expulsion or permanent exclusion - removal from curricular or extracurricular activities.

### **Class Roster**

A class roster is prepared annually and includes the name and telephone number of the child and of the child's parent. Upon request, this roster is available to each parent of a child registered in the program. Parents are asked to sign a statement indicating whether or not they wish to be included in the class roster prior to its development.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

As required by law, all school employees and administrators must immediately report any suspicions of abuse or neglect to their respective Children's Services and Det. Dina.

### **Child Find**

Child Find is a legal requirement that schools find all children who have disabilities and who may be entitled to special education services. The school must evaluate any child that it knows or suspects may have a disability. Please visit the ALSD website for more information and let our Falcon Fives staff know if you suspect that your child has a disability. <http://www.austintownschools.org/Content/32> ODE also has resources for you at:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Preschool-Special-Education>

### **Dress Code Policy**

Students should wear clothing that is durable, comfortable, washable and free of complicated fastenings. Tennis shoes or rubber soled shoes are strongly encouraged. Open-toe shoes are not permitted. Please be sure to label all outer garments such as coats, hats, boots, bookbags, etc. The school administration has discretion to address any attire that is offensive, degrading, vulgar, contrary to the educational mission of the school, that disrupts the learning environment or infringes upon the rights of others. Parents who believe that their child cannot comply with the dress code because of religious beliefs or religious dress must submit a written request for an exemption from the policy along with an explanation of how the religious belief/religion prevents compliance with the policy to the school principal at least 24 hours in advance where practicable.

### **Visitors/Unlimited Access for Parents**

State law requires that guests (including parents) enter via the main office and obtain permission from the Director/Coordinator/Building Principals upon entering. Additionally, the Austintown Local Schools will not permit visitors to go beyond the front desk without a state issued photo ID, which will be scanned by school security prior to the visitor receiving access.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his/her child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the Director.

### **Bus Transportation Policy (Educational Field Trips)**

Bus transportation is not provided for Falcon Fives students for arrival or dismissal. Should a bus be needed for a field trip, we remind our families that riding a school bus is a privilege and not a right. Students must abide by all regulations determined by the school bus policy and the bus driver. Failure to comply with all school bus safety rules will result in disciplinary action such as a verbal warning, a written bus conduct report, suspension from bus riding privileges, or permanent exclusion from bus

riding privileges. A copy of the Austintown Local Schools transportation safety rules and policies must be signed by all families.

### **School Clinic Services**

Students who are ill must be accompanied by a Falcon Fives staff member to the clinic. The staff member will remain with the student at all times. If the clinic is closed, the student should report directly to the main office. Students may not leave school due to an illness or injury without being released by the medical staff. If an injury occurs, an Injury Incident Report will be completed by the Falcon Fives and medical staff. A copy will be given to the child's family and a copy will be maintained in their records. If it is necessary for the medical staff to administer medication during school hours, the following requirements must be met prior to the administration of medication:

#### ***PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION:***

1. A Medication Administration Record (MAR) General Medication Form or the appropriate School Action Plan (Asthma, Diabetes, Emergency Allergy, Seizure) must be completed and signed by both the healthcare provider and the parent/guardian.
2. The medication must be brought to the school clinic by the parent /guardian. Students are not permitted to carry or transport an emergency medication (i.e. Inhaler, EpiPen) unless previously authorized by the school, physician, and parent/guardian.
3. All prescription medication must be labeled appropriately by the pharmacist or physician and in its original container. The label must state the student's name, dosage, and time(s) to be taken and must match the Medication Administration Record (MAR).
4. Prescription medication is administered by trained professional staff members.
5. All medication will be locked and stored out of reach of children at all times.
6. All staff members will have the proper training on medication administration.

#### ***OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION (Non-prescription):***

1. A Medication Administration Record (MAR) General Medication form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian.
2. The medication must be brought to the school clinic by the parent /guardian. Students are not permitted to carry or transport medication unless previously authorized by the school, physician, and parent/guardian and is an emergency medication (i.e. Inhaler, EpiPen).
3. All non-prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with a permanent marker indicating the child's name. Medication not in its original container will not be administered to the student.
4. The recommended dosage on the box of non-prescription medication will be reviewed and compared to the parent/guardian's request. If the dosage exceeds the amount recommended on the medicine container/box, it must be requested by a healthcare provider's order on a Medication Administration Record (MAR). In addition, the first dose of any new medication will not be administered at school in case of an allergic reaction. Also, it is the student's responsibility (age appropriate) to report to the clinic at the designated time to receive any medication ordered. Any change to the medication must be submitted on a new Medication Administration Record (MAR). If a

prescriptive medication is to be discontinued, a written note must be provided by the healthcare provider. New medication forms must be submitted for each school year and for each medication. Parents/guardians must pick-up any unused medication. Medication will not be sent home with the child unless previously authorized and is an emergency medication.

5. Non-prescription medication is administered by trained professional staff members.

Cough drops will not be given out in the clinics. Clinic staff can use a warm salt-water gargle to ease scratchy throats. Students in grades 3-12 may bring cough drops to school with a note from the parent/guardian. However, the cough drops, along with the note, will be stored in the clinic.

### ***LICE:***

In an effort to control head lice infestations and protect all students, Austintown Local Schools maintain a “no-nit” policy to control the spread of head lice among classmates. Students will not be admitted to school if there are any visible signs of lice or lice eggs (nits). The policy is enforced in this manner:

1. If a child is found to have lice or nits, the parent will be called to take the child home and treat the infestation until all lice and nits have been removed. The school will provide information about treatment.
2. The student may return the following day if he/she has been treated and all nits have been removed.
3. A parent/guardian is required to accompany the child when returning to school and the school nurse will check the child’s head. If any nits are found, the parent/guardian must take the child back home to complete the removal.
4. For a few weeks after the child returns, head checks will be performed to monitor the possibility of reinfestation.

The Ohio Administrative Code states “a person with head lice shall be excluded from school or child care centers until after the first treatment with an effective pediculicide.” Most parents/guardians successfully treat this issue, if and when it occurs, with assistance from the school nurse. OAC 3701-3-12 K

### **Immunizations**

In order to minimize the spread of preventable illnesses in schools and to provide students with a healthier learning environment, the Board requires immunization in compliance with State Law and the Ohio Department of Health for each student unless the parent(s) files an objection. The Board may also require tuberculosis examinations in compliance with the law. Students eligible for kindergarten and students new to the district must present written evidence of similar immunizations, or written evidence to indicate they are in the process of receiving immunizations, to be completed no later than the day of entrance. Students failing to complete immunizations within 14 days after entering are not permitted to return to school.

### **Healthchek Services for Children Younger than Age 21**

# Ohio

Department of Medicaid

## fact sheet

### OVERVIEW

Healthchek services are required by the federal government. These services include a comprehensive health and developmental history to assess physical and mental health, screenings for potential health problems – including vision, hearing, and dental screenings.

Healthchek also covers:

- necessary laboratory tests,
- vaccines,
- blood lead screening, and
- health education and nutritional advice.

Providers may make referrals to other health providers for more specialized care. Healthchek services are also available to individuals covered by a Medicaid managed care plan or who are on a Medicaid home and community-based waiver.

**Additional Services**

If a screening reveals a medical condition, Ohio Medicaid can be billed for any necessary follow-up services provided to treat the child's medical condition.

SEPTEMBER 2016

## HEALTHCHEK: OHIO'S EPSDT PROGRAM

Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) service package. These are comprehensive and preventative services for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are covered by Ohio Medicaid.

### A CLOSER LOOK AT HEALTHCHEK IN OHIO

#### 1. WHEN SHOULD A CHILD GET HEALTHCHEK SERVICES?

Babies should have at least 8 Healthchek exams by their first birthday. Children should have Healthchek exams at 15, 18, 24, and 30 months. After 30 months, one exam per year is recommended until the age of 21.

#### 2. HEALTHCHEK COORDINATORS

Every county department of job and family services has a coordinator responsible for informing Ohioans covered by Medicaid about available Healthchek services. The person supports the coordination of non-medical Healthchek support services when requests are made.

Examples of these services include:

- assistance making appointments,
- transportation,
- referrals to food pantries, clothing, and heat assistance, and
- referrals to lead-free housing options.

For a list of Healthchek Coordinators, visit: <http://medicaid.ohio.gov/Healthchek>

#### 3. HEALTHCHEK PROVIDERS

Any doctor who accepts Medicaid can provide Healthchek services. Individuals can ask their doctors for Healthchek services at their next appointment. Sometimes, a provider may refer a patient for specialized care. Some services may need prior approval.

#### 4. HEALTHCHEK AND MANAGED CARE

Healthchek services are a part of the benefit package every managed care plan offers its members. Managed care plans and county Healthchek coordinators work together to ensure Healthchek services are available.

#### 5. PREGNANCY RELATED SERVICES

In many counties, the Pregnancy Related Services (PRS) and Healthchek coordinators are the same. The county's PRS coordinator can explain the importance of Healthchek services to a mother before a baby is born. They can also assist pregnant women with services like arranging transportation, making prenatal appointments and explaining the importance of attending these appointments to increase the likelihood of a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAID | WWW.MEDICAID.OHIO

help and information by contacting your county Healthchek coordinator or your managed care plan and by going to <http://medicaid.ohio.gov/FOROHIOANS/Programs/Healthchek.aspx>

## Communicable Disease Policy and Management

The Falcon Fives staff is trained annually on the symptoms, transmission and notification processes involved in the care of a child who presents any of the symptoms listed within Communicable Disease Policy and Management. Recognition of common signs of communicable disease or other illness shall occur through daily observation of each child daily as he/she enters the classroom. The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

- Notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition immediately when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.
- A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent or guardian:
  - A. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period)
  - B. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
  - C. Difficult or rapid breathing
  - D. Yellowish skin or eyes
  - E. Conjunctivitis
  - F. Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary 19 method when in combination with other signs of illness
  - G. Untreated infected skin patch(es)

- H. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- I. Stiff neck
- J. Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation
- K. COVID-19 symptoms
- A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the Director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed above as well as the following:
  - A. Unusual spots or rashes
  - B. Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
  - C. Elevated temperature
  - D. Vomiting
- Programs shall follow the Ohio Department of Health Child Day Care Communicable Disease Chart for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.
- A child suspected of having a communicable disease shall be:
  - A. Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program
  - B. Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised
  - C. Made comfortable and provided with a cot. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent or if soiled with blood, feces, vomit, or other body fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent
  - D. Observed carefully for signs of worsening condition
  - E. Discharged to parent, guardian or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.
- Each program shall have a written policy concerning the management of communicable disease. The policy shall include, at a minimum:
  - A. The program's means of training all preschool staff in signs and symptoms of illness and in hand-washing and disinfection procedures
  - B. Procedures for isolating and discharging an ill child and policy for readmitting such child
  - C. Procedures for notifying the parent or guardian immediately when a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness or has been exposed to a communicable disease
  - D. Procedures regarding the care of a mildly ill child. "Mildly ill child" means a child who is experiencing minor common cold symptoms, but who is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified in the Communicable Disease Policy and Management
  - E. Procedures for notifying all parents of enrolled children when children are exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox or lice.
  - F. Our COVID-19 Safety Plan mirrors the district's.

## **Safety Drills**

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. When the alarm sounds, everyone must promptly and quietly clear the building by the assigned route, which is posted in each classroom. When the alarm sounds during a tornado drill, students are to report to their assigned stations and remain quiet. No one is to return to the building during a fire drill or to a classroom during a tornado drill until the signal is given by the school administration. Lockdowns and other state mandated safety drills are also practiced by our Falcon Fives staff and students.

### **Bullying Policy**

Harassment, bullying, and intimidation is defined by the Ohio Revised Code as an “intentional written, verbal, graphic, physical or electronic act that a student or group of students exhibited toward the alleged victim more than once; and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student, and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student (ORC3313.666) and that false reports will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct that may include, but not limited to: detention, suspension, and/or expulsion depending on the circumstances. If you have been the victim, or know of a victim, who is suffering harassment, bullying or intimidation as defined above, please complete a Harassment / Bullying Incident Formal Report. Reports are available on the district website and in each school’s main office and should be turned in to the grade level principal of the victim. If you wish to report anonymously, please use the form on the district website. The complete Board of Education Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy and the district’s formal reporting form are included at the end of this student handbook.

### **FERPA Notification**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Austintown Local Schools receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask any Austintown Local School to amend a record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Austintown Local Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent. FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional

services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the complaint system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

## **Ombudsman/SPED Dispute Resolution**

### *OMBUDSMAN*

An Ombudsman is one who investigates, reports on and helps to settle complaints. The Falcon Fives' Director/Coordinator, Austintown Elementary Schools' Principal Team and/or our district offices want to help resolve all conflicts. However, should you feel that an Ombudsman is needed, the phone number for one is 1-877-644-6338.

## Special Education Dispute Resolution

### *MEDIATION*

Mediation is a voluntary process for resolving disputes between two parties. For mediation to occur, both sides must agree to mediate. The mediation process is facilitated by a trained impartial third party, the mediator, who helps the parties communicate with each other about their concerns in an effort to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

- [Mediation Information Sheet](#) [↓ Other Languages](#)
- [Direct Request for Mediation Form](#) [↓ Other Languages](#)
- [The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#) (**CADRE**)

### *FACILITATION*

Facilitation takes place in a team meeting, such as an individualized education program (IEP) team meeting, evaluation planning meeting or an evaluation team meeting. The facilitator is a neutral, third party who is not a member of the team and does not make any decision for the team. Having a facilitator assists the team in being productive and keeping the focus on the student. Facilitators are professional mediators who have been trained by the Office for Exceptional Children in special education processes.

- [Facilitation Information Sheet](#) [↓ Other Languages](#)
- [Direct Request for Facilitation Form](#) [↓ Other Languages](#)
- [The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#) (**CADRE**)

\*Further resources may be found at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Dispute-Resolution> and <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/District-and-School-Continuous-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Contacts>

### **Leaving School Grounds**

Leaving the school building or grounds, unless as a function of a supervised school activity or with administrative permission, is prohibited. Students are to remain in the building from the time of arrival until the official time of dismissal.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Under the Student Code of Conduct, applicable Board policy, and administrative guidelines, the term "school" refers to all instances when a student is under the authority of the school; the term "property" refers not only to school-owned property but to any property, public or private, which may be damaged during the period when the student is under the authority of the school. The rules and standards set forth apply to conduct on school premises, or on school buses or any other school vehicle, or involving school property, or at any school-sponsored event/function, or within sight of

school premises and connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school property. The rules and standards also apply to any misconduct, regardless of where it occurs, that is directed at a district employee or Board official or the property of such employee or Board Official. Students are considered to be subject to the authority of the school when they are on school buses or any other school vehicle or at school related or school sponsored events even though those activities may not take place at an actual school.

### **Student Statement of Responsibility**

Each individual who attends Austintown Local Schools will be offered many opportunities to exercise self-control and respond to individual responsibilities. School discipline policies are applicable to all students if the prohibited act(s) take place during a school activity, function, or any such school-sponsored event/function; while on property immediately adjacent to or within the line of sight of school property; on school buses or other vehicles; off of property owned or controlled by the Board of Education but that is connected to activities that occurred on school property; misconduct that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or his/her property; or misconduct that affects the operation of the school. Students are expected to comply with the directions of teachers, substitute teachers, school aides, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, principals or other authorized school personnel in a spirit of cooperation and courtesy. Failure to comply will be considered as insubordination. Insubordination includes but is not limited to:

1. Disobedience or disrespect toward any staff member or other authorized school personnel.
2. Not following school rules or proper procedures.
3. Not following assigned schedule/being in an unauthorized area.
4. Repeated misbehavior after warning.
5. Refusal to turn over electronic communication devices to school personnel when requested.

Students who are aware of a potentially escalating conflict are to encourage the parties to peacefully resolve their dispute. If necessary, staff and administration are to be notified via verbal or written means of concern. At that time, the appropriate action will be taken to help all parties resolve their dispute. Austintown Local Schools do maintain a zero tolerance policy for violent, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, including excessive truancy, menacing and harassment, whether verbal, physical, electronic or written.

Appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Person-to-Person Relationships/Threats**

Students will show proper consideration and respect toward staff members and fellow students. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for any threat by a student, whether verbal, physical or electronic, directed towards any adult. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for any threat by a student, whether verbal, physical or electronic, directed towards any other student.

### **Profane, Obscene or Vulgar Language/Gestures**

A student shall not use profane, obscene or vulgar language or gestures while under the authority of the school, while on school grounds, school buses or vehicles, or while engaged in or present at any school sponsored event or activity. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Assault/Assault and Battery**

A student shall not engage in any act or threatened act of physical or psychological violence or force causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause, physical or psychological harm or injury to another person. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Fighting**

A student shall not engage in any fight, hit, punch, kick, push, physically confront or engage in any other act of violence or force that causes harm or threatens to cause harm to another person. A student shall not instigate or encourage fighting. If a student, who is engaged in a fight, and, in the course of fighting, strikes, pushes, and/or physically restrains a staff member who is attempting to intervene, such actions may be regarded as a separate violation, specifically an assault and may result in a police report and appropriate disciplinary consequences. In such instances, the staff member retains the right to pursue legal remedies in the civil and criminal courts independent of the actions(s) taken by the school district. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Intimidation/Harassment/Menacing/Bullying**

A full copy of the district's anti-harassment and bullying policy is contained at the end of this handbook. In accordance with section 3313.666 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Austintown Local School District strictly prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any student including on school property, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored event. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### ***Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means either:***

- (a) Any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited towards another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
- Causes mental or physical harm to the other student or staff members.
  - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- (b) Violence within a dating relationship.

### **Electronic Act**

Any act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students found responsible for harassment, intimidation, or bullying through written, verbal, physical, or electronic acts.

### **False Reports**

In accordance with section 3313.666 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Austintown Local Schools strictly prohibits students from deliberately making false reports of harassment, bullying, and/or intimidation. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students who deliberately make a false report may be subject to discipline consequences.

### **Hazing (Initiations)**

Initiations of any sort are prohibited. Initiations and/or hazing are those activities into which students are coerced in order to become part of a group or activity to avoid harm. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students committing such an offense.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Inappropriate displays of affection or sexual conduct will not be tolerated. There can be no acceptance or tolerance in the school setting for inappropriate, unwelcome and at times vulgar or illegal harassment or advances of a sexual or other nature. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual flirtation, touching, advances, or propositions or pressure to engage in sexual activity.
2. Verbal or physical abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's clothing or body or otherwise graphic or suggestive comments.
4. The use of sexual degrading words to describe an individual.
5. Displaying sexually aggressive objects or photographs.
6. Sexually explicit or obscene jokes.

If a student believes he or she is a victim of such actions by another member of the school community, they should report it immediately to a principal, guidance counselor or teacher. The principal or assistant principal should be contacted if the original referral was not made there. School administration will then investigate the situation as necessary. Parents will be informed as needed. Should the accused party be proven as an offender, appropriate action will be taken. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students committing such an offense.

### **Weapons, Explosives, Incendiary Devices, Fireworks**

Students shall not possess, use, threaten to use, handle, transport, sell, conceal, ignite, or explode fireworks/explosives/incendiary devices of any kind. A student shall not use, possess, handle, transmit, sell or conceal any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument. Weapons and dangerous instruments include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, metal knuckles,

laser pointers, straight razors, explosives, noxious irritants, poisons, and other dangerous substances, along with any item that is a “look alike” of any of the above, or any object which is used or may be used to inflict physical harm. “Firearm” is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C.A. Sections 921-924.), which includes but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas; bomb, grenade, or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces; missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce; mine or device similar to any of the devices described above. The definition of a “knife” includes, but is not limited to a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Bomb Threats**

Making a bomb threat to a school building or any premises where a school activity is taking place is strictly prohibited. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Attendance at School Assemblies and Special Activities**

A variety of programs will be offered for the benefit of students, including pep assemblies, educational assemblies, and entertaining assemblies. Some will be open to all, others to restricted groups of relevance, depending on the nature of the program. Attendance at all school assemblies and school-related activities is a privilege, not a right. All students are expected to conduct themselves so as to show respect for the participants and others in the audience. Failure to comply with all school rules will mean ejection and restriction from future assemblies or activities.

### **Violation of Federal or State Statutes**

Students shall not violate federal or state statutes, rules, or regulations on school premises or at school activities, including, but not limited to, required immunizations.

### **Any Violation of a Law of the State of Ohio**

While students are under the auspices of the Austintown Local Schools, violation of State Law will be handled through the school and/or the appropriate legal authorities, as appropriate to the circumstances. Any violation of state law will be remanded to the appropriate legal authorities.

### **Use and Abuse of School Property and School Facilities**

All students have the opportunity to use textbooks, computers, library materials, school furnishings, school equipment and many other items, without charge. A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage, destruction or defacement to either school property or private property on school premises or during school activities conducted on school grounds or at any school sponsored event or connected activity regardless of where it occurs. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students destroying, defacing or otherwise causing excessive damage to school property or school facilities. In addition, full retribution for actual

value of damaged, destroyed or stolen items will be expected. Any intentional or reckless damage will result in demand for full restitution for actual value of damaged, destroyed, or stolen items, disciplinary action, and involvement of law enforcement as appropriate.

### **Library Books/Textbooks**

The Board of Education furnishes library books/textbooks without cost to the students. As books are issued, the serial number, the date of issue and the condition of the books are recorded by the librarian/teacher making the distribution. At the close of the school year, the books are to be returned to the staff who issued them. Allowing for reasonable use, no fines will be assessed. However, if the book has been abused or lost, fines will be charged accordingly.

### **Theft**

Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others. Theft is the unlawful taking of property belonging to another person or entity. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances.

### **Student Computer Policy**

Students are encouraged to use school computers/network and the Internet connection for teacher assigned, educational work. Unauthorized computer usage is prohibited. Failure to use computers/network for authorized educational work only will result in disciplinary action. All students must have a signed Acceptable Use Policy form in order to use school computers.

### **Internet Access for Students**

All computers in Austintown Local Schools have access to the Internet and email in accordance with all applicable policies and laws. Parents who wish to deny Internet access to their child during school hours must contact the school administration.

### **Use and Searches of Lockers, School Property, Personal Belongings, or Person**

Students are assigned lockers/cubbies for their convenience in storing books, school supplies and coats. However, such assignment does not limit the right of school officials to examine lockers when, based upon a reasonable suspicion, they believe it is necessary for the safe, "non-disruptive" operation of the school. All students will be assigned lockers and combinations. Writing on the outside and/or inside of a locker is prohibited. Also, any damage, which occurred through carelessness, kicking, slamming, etc. will be considered vandalism and subject to appropriate discipline. The Board of Education, or its designee, reserves the right to search the lockers, vehicles, desks, person, and personal belongings of a student on school grounds or at any school activity when, based upon a reasonable suspicion, it is reasonably necessary for the maintenance of order, discipline, and safety in the supervision and education of students. Random searches may also occur if permitted under the law. Appropriate disciplinary action will result. Criminal charges may also be filed.

### **Disruption of School/Conspiracy to Riot /Disorderly Conduct**

A student shall not cause any disruption of any classroom or school activity or the operation of the school or the educational process and shall not engage in any act that is potentially harmful to the health, welfare and safety of the student himself/herself, other students or staff. This shall include the incitement of others toward acts of disruption. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students committing such an offense.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

A student shall not engage in any act of cheating, plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, the removal and/or alteration of any school record. This policy also includes impersonating a teacher and/or school official. Any infraction of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

### **Distribution or Sale of Unauthorized Materials**

A student shall not distribute or sell unauthorized materials on school property. Unauthorized materials are defined as any material goods, literature, food items, or any other objects/items that are not approved by the administration. This policy includes the sale or distribution of information. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

### **False Reports /Forgery /False Impersonations**

A student shall not make false accusations or give false information on any school forms or correspondence or other communications directed to the school or school personnel. This includes forging names on passes, excuses or notes and impersonating a school official in written or electronic form on or off campus. Impersonating a faculty member in writing, electronically, and in all forms of communication, including online and social networks, is prohibited. The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for students committing such an offense.

### **Nuisance and/or Hazardous Items**

No backpacks, book bags, sack packs or other containers are permitted in the hallways, classroom, or cafeteria. Lunch containers are permitted for appropriate usage during lunch and breakfast times in the cafeteria. Any item that, in the judgment of administration disrupts, or interferes with school, is prohibited. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Any additional items that, in the judgment of the administration, disrupt or interfere with school or school activities are prohibited.

### **Electronic Devices**

Personal electronic devices will remain in cubbies during the normal school day. Use of personal electronic devices is not permitted unless authorized by the teacher.

### ***Misuse of Electronic Devices***

The misuse of permissible electronic devices in a manner distracting to other students or school personnel is not allowed. The misuse of electronic devices includes, but is not limited to:

1. Use of any electronic device in a classroom without the direction of the classroom teacher.
2. Violation of the Austintown Local Schools' Acceptable Use Policy.

3. Listening to video or audio without headphones or earbuds.
4. Use of headphones/earbuds at a volume level where others can hear.

### ***Prohibited Electronic Devices***

Recording devices, radios, pagers, laser pointers, and other electronic devices are deemed distracting to the educational environment. As such, these devices are not permitted in any Austintown Local School buildings and/or school buses.

### ***Electronic Device Restrictions and Expectations***

The following actions are strictly prohibited:

1. The video/audio recording or photography of students or staff members without their consent.
2. Accessing, sharing, disseminating inappropriate content including pornography, material with abusive language, drug/alcohol/weapon related content, or any information that can be deemed harmful or shocking to minors.
3. Using technology for interactive communication in the form of posts on social media websites, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and other Blog/Chat/Messaging sites, during the hours of school operation to include time spent in transportation unless directed by school personnel for educational purposes.
4. Any and all harassment/bullying and intimidation behaviors per the Ohio Revised Code definition which follows:

### ***Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means either:***

Any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student has exhibited towards another particular student more than once and the behavior both:

- Causes mental or physical harm to the other student;
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- violence within a dating relationship.

### ***Electronic act means:***

The appropriate disciplinary action will be administered, depending upon the circumstances, for inappropriate use of electronic devices through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device - ORC 3313.666.

### **Lost or Damaged Device**

The Austintown Local Schools assume no responsibility for the theft, loss, or damage of an electronic device brought at school or on the district's buses. Students bring these devices to the Austintown Local Schools at their own risk.

### **Hazing and Bullying (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)**

The prohibition against hazing, dating violence, harassment, intimidation or bullying is publicized in student handbooks and in the publications that set the standard of conduct for schools and students

in the District. In addition, information regarding the policy is incorporated into employee handbooks and training materials.

Hazing, bullying behavior and/or dating violence by any student/school personnel in the District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts, including electronically transmitted acts, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to haze, harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity; in any District publication; through the use of any District-owned or operated communication tools, including but not limited to District e-mail accounts and/or computers; on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop.

Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and/or attacks;
2. threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (also known as bullying, such as the following:
  - A. posting slurs on web sites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals;
  - B. sending abusive or threatening emails, website postings, comments or instant messages
  - C. using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online and
  - D. using websites, social networking sites, blogs, personal online journals, e-mails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.
6. excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes hazing or bullying, special attention is paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

### **Teachers and Other School Staff**

Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence as defined above, should promptly notify the building principal/designee of the event observed and file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed. Teachers and other school staff who receive student

or parent reports of suspected hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence should promptly notify the building principal/designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, the complaint is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a teacher or other professional employee, he/she prepares a written report of the informal complaint that is forwarded to the building principal/designee no later than the next school day.

## **Complaints-Harassment, Bullying, etc.**

### ***Formal Complaints***

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected hazing, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence. The reports should be written. Such written reports must be reasonably specific and include person(s) involved; number of times and places of the alleged conduct; the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying; and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator. They are promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

### ***Informal Complaints***

Students, parents or guardians and school personnel may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints must be reasonably specific as to the action giving rise to the suspicion of hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witness. The school staff member or administrator who receives the informal complaint promptly documents the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator is promptly forwarded to the building principal/designee for review and action.

### ***Anonymous Complaints***

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaint is reviewed and reasonable action is taken to address the situation, to the extent such action (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence.

## **Intervention Strategies**

### ***Teachers and Other School Staff***

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence in other interactions with students. School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, hazing, intimidation and bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever

they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of harassment, hazing, intimidation, or bullying.

## ***Administrator Responsibilities***

### **A. Investigation**

The principal/designee is notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected harassment, hazing, intimidation, or bullying. Under the direction of the building principal/designee, all such complaints are investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation is prepared when the investigation is complete. The report includes findings of fact and a determination of whether acts of hazing, bullying, and/or dating violence were verified. When prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action, is included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements are attached to the report. Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint is limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

### **B. Non-disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of the behavior, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassing, hazing, intimidating, and/or bullying. If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring some cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. The victim's communication and assertiveness skills may be low and could be further eroded by fear resulting from past intimidation and fear of future intimidation. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

### **C. Disciplinary Interventions**

When acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, cannot provide the basis for disciplinary action. In and out-of-school suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation. Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board, or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence is reserved for serious incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating prohibited behaviors.

Allegations of criminal misconduct are reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse is reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines.

### **Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

If, after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal/designee notifies the parent or guardian of the perpetrator, in writing, of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline is included in such notification. Strategies are developed and implemented to protect students from additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and from retaliation following reporting of incidents.

### **Reports to the Victim and His/Her Parent or Guardian**

If, after investigation, acts of bullying or hazing against a specific student are verified, the building principal/ designee notifies the parent/guardian of the victim of the findings. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator. Bullying matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited. School administrators shall notify both the parents of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or dating violence and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

### **Police and Child Protective Services**

In addition to, or instead of, filing a complaint through this policy, a complainant may choose to exercise other options including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit. Nothing prohibits a complainant from seeking redress under any other provision of the Ohio Revised Code or common law that may apply. The District must also investigate incidents of hazing, bullying and/or dating violence for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of District policy or regulations, even if law enforcement and/or the public children's services are also investigating.

All District personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies. (Approval date: December 10, 2007) (Re-approval date: August 17, 2010) THIS IS A REQUIRED POLICY

- FORMAL BULLYING, HARASSMENT, & INTIMIDATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE AND IN ALL OFFICES.

The Falcon Fives program follows all ALSD policies. These policies can be found at:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/austin/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies>