

# OTSEGO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-24



The District shall not discriminate against any protected category as required by law. Upon request to the Superintendent, the District shall make reasonable accommodations for a disabled person to participate in any building activity.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Todd Bentley  
Shannon Goodwin  
Mike Keeler  
Shelly Jirgens  
Brian Ouellette  
Scot Reitenour  
Amy Stender

**Mr. Jeffery Haase**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Mr. Thomas Reed**  
Principal  
**Ms. Tina Maxwell**  
Assistant Principal

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Otsego High School, in partnership with students, parents, and the community, is to create an engaging learning environment that supports the full potential of each student.

### **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

- Students should experience a variety of academic and co-curricular programs.
- Students should learn to think critically and to solve problems.
- The school should help students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for current and future success.
- Teachers should use instructional strategies that provide students with focus, feedback and sufficient opportunities for success.
- Teachers should collaborate on a regular basis through PLC's, using data to address learning, identifying areas and strategies for improvement as well as reasons to celebrate success.

## SCHOOL TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Superintendent's Office	269-694-7900
Director of Transportation/Operations	269-694-7940
Director of Instruction	269-694-7904
High School Principal's Office	269-694-7400
High School Attendance Office	269-694-7480
High School Athletic Office	269-694-7405
High School Guidance Office	269-694-7410
High School Fax	269-694-7499
Otsego Middle School	269-694-7500
Alamo Elementary School	269-694-7600
Dix Street Elementary School	269-694-7700
Washington Street Elementary School	269-694-7800
Business/Central Office	269-694-7900
OPS Connection/Public Relations	269-694-7910
Community Education Office	269-694-7930
Food Service Office (located in High School)	269-694-7445
Section 504 Compliance Officer	269-694-7907
Special Education (located in Central Office)	269-694-7907

# ACADEMICS

## Academic Requirements

### English:

- English I Course Sequence
- English II Course Sequence
- American Literature Course Sequence
- One credit of English electives

### Math:

- Algebra I Course Sequence
- Geometry Course Sequence
- Algebra II Course Sequence
- One credit of Math during senior year

### Social Studies:

- World History & Geography Course Sequence
- US History Course Sequence
- Government/Econ course sequence

### Science:

- Biology Course Sequence
- Chemistry Course Sequence
- Physics Course Sequence
- ½ credit Earth Science, ½ credit Environmental Science

### PE/Health:

- One credit

### Visual, Performing, or Applied Arts:

- One credit

### World Language:

- Two credits

### General:

- ½ credit Freshman Focus (may be waived by the Principal under special circumstances)

## **Total Number of Required Credits: 31.5**

The state of Michigan allows for some flexibility in meeting state graduation requirements through Personal Curriculum requests approved by the school and through other options approved by the state legislature. Students and parents can contact the school counselors for more information on these options.

The Board of Education recommends that every effort be made to keep youth in high school until they have completed requirements for graduation. In order to participate in Commencement and Swingout, you must be eligible to receive a diploma and graduate in June.

## **Allegan County Area Technical & Education Center (ACATEC) Guidelines**

- Absences from ACATEC **must** be reported to the Otsego High School attendance office as well as the ACATEC instructor.
- Transportation to and from ACATEC is by bus.
- Bus departure times are 7:40 a.m. for morning ACATEC and 11:20 a.m. for afternoon Tech- Ed students.
- Returning afternoon ACATEC students should go directly to the Cafeteria or Home.
- Students who miss their ACATEC bus will report to IHS.
- It is the ACATEC student's responsibility to read the posted daily announcements.
- Students cannot drive to the ACATEC without a signed consent form from the ACATEC. Consent to drive is on a day-to-day basis.
- Any disciplinary action with ACATEC students will be equally enforced at both OHS and at the ACATEC.
- ACATEC Phone number: (269) 673-3121

## **Classification of Students**

Students will be promoted to the next grade level if they are on a successful course for graduation within four years. Student promotion to the next grade will be based upon the following criteria:

- To be classified as a sophomore, the student must have earned at least 7.5 credits.
- To be classified as a junior, the student must have earned at least 15.5 credits.
- To be classified as a senior, the student must have earned at least 23.5 credits.

Exceptions will be made for IEP students who are not on a diploma track and for transfer students who come from schools with different credit economies.

## **Community Service**

Students are required to complete 10 hours of community service in order to earn a diploma from Otsego High School. The service can be performed at any time after entering high school. Students who transfer in after 11th grade will have this requirement reduced to five hours. Documentation of completed hours should be submitted to the main office on appropriate forms.

## **COVID-19 Information**

Parents and guardians can find the latest requirements and information on COVID-19 on our website at this link: <https://www.otsegops.org/apps/pages/COVID19>

## Credits Outside of High School

Any student who plans to take coursework outside the regular high school schedule (dual enrollment, dual credit, correspondence, on-line, night school, etc.) should confer with the counselor before beginning classes and get the coursework pre-approved for high school credit.

## Dual Enrollment

Enrollment in a college class for students who have earned a qualifying score on one of the following assessments: PSAT, ACTPLAN, ACT, or MME. The dual enrollment will be only for a class that is not offered at the high school. The high school determines which classes are appropriate. The district pays the tuition costs for the student in accordance with the state funding formula. Elective credit is transferred back to the high school.

## Dual Credit

Enrollment in a college class by any high school student for coursework and transferring the credit back to the high school. These are paid for by the student and will be elective credits.

## Early Graduation

Otsego High School expects students to attend high school for four full years. The school will make exceptions and allow a student to graduate at the completion of 11 trimesters only if the student applies for early graduation before the end of the first trimester of their senior year. The student must also demonstrate a feasible plan that would indicate valuable use of time spent outside of high school. Such a plan should include full-time enrollment in a post-secondary institution, enlistment in the military, or full-time, career-oriented, and gainful employment. Students who graduate early may participate in Swingout and Commencement if approved by the principal.

## Grading System

Otsego High School uses a twelve-point grading system, which is indicated below. Students who pass a trimester class will receive  $\frac{1}{2}$  credit toward graduation.

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

## Grading Scale

Otsego High School uses a standard 4-point grading scale as follows:

A	4.0	B-	2.667	D+	1.333
A-	3.667	C+	2.333	D	1.0
B+	3.33	C	2.0	D-	0.667
B	3.0	C-	1.667	F	0.0

## What Do Our Marks Mean?

The grades you earn are to be interpreted as follows:

A – Excellent Work	F – Unsatisfactory for Credit
B – Good Work	I – Incomplete
C – Average Work	NC – No Credit
D – Poor Work	

F (Failing) - This work is so poor in quality or incomplete in amount that it is failing. If an "F" is received as a final mark, no credit is given in that course.

I (Incomplete) - This mark indicates that the work required has not been completed, and that no mark will be given until the make-up work has been completed. If not completed within two weeks from the end of the trimester, or as otherwise arranged with the administration, the grade will be computed with the work in question counting as zero.

NC (No Credit) - Indicates the student will not receive credit for the class but a grade is not calculated into the G.P.A.

## Final Exams

The Otsego High School marking system requires that all students take a summative assessment at the end of each trimester. These final exams cannot be given early and administrative approval must be given to take them late.

The weights for final exams will be as follows:

- Freshman level courses 10%
- Sophomore level courses 15%
- Junior and Senior level courses 20%

## Michigan Merit

The State of Michigan expects all Juniors to take the state-mandated Michigan Merit Exam.

## Honors Night

Students who earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher for the current year for the first two trimesters during each year are invited to the annual OHS Honors Celebration in the spring. In addition, students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher will receive a special academic award. The academic awards are based upon the cumulative GPA after the second trimester each year, and it begins sophomore year. Students may earn an academic award up to three years.

## Graduation Honors

Otsego will recognize two groups of students for academic excellence, based upon cumulative GPA's after the second trimester of senior year:

Graduating with distinction (4.0 or higher GPA)

Graduating with honors (3.75 – 3.9999 GPA)

Commencement speakers will be the class valedictorian and salutatorian, along with the class president. If there is a tie for one of the top GPA's, the co-winner will replace the class president as a speaker. Processional leaders will be class officers. Seniors enrolled in semester-long virtual



classes will have their second semester grade in progress at a designated date in May used as a working grade for a second trimester in order to calculate their GPA for honors.

## **Online Courses**

On-line courses offered through various virtual school entities are an option for students who seek coursework outside the high school's offerings. Students desiring to enrich their program of studies in this manner should seek more information from their guidance counselor.

## **Personal Curriculum**

The parent or legal guardian of a student may request a personal curriculum for the student that modifies certain areas of the Michigan Merit Curriculum. Please contact the Guidance Office for more details.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester (12-weeks). The report card is mailed to the address of record. The card serves as a record of the student's work for the period of time indicated and as an attendance report to the parent.

## **Robotics Credit**

In accordance with guidelines and special endorsement from the state of Michigan, Otsego High School students have the opportunity to earn 1/2 elective credit each year for successful participation and personal growth in our Robotics program. Students interested in earning this credit should notify their counselor and the Robotics coach early in the school year in order to develop a plan together for the student to earn the credit. If successful, the student will earn .5 credit with a grade of "Credit" on their transcript for each year that the credit is earned. This credit would not be calculated into the student's cumulative GPA.

## **STEM Endorsement for Diploma**

Otsego High School offers students the opportunity to earn a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) endorsement on their diploma in accordance with Michigan laws that allow for this. The requirements include specific credits in Math, Science, and Technology as outlined in section 1278 of state law, and the credits can include coursework and credits in grades 7-12. Students interested in the STEM endorsement should discuss this with their counselors as early as possible to collaborate on an EDP (Educational Development Plan) that would allow the student to meet the requirements.

## **Testing Out**

The Board of a school district shall grant high school credit in any course to a pupil enrolled in high school, but who is not enrolled in the course, who has exhibited a reasonable level of mastery of the subject matter of the course by attaining a grade of not less than C+ in a final exam in the course, or, by exhibiting mastery through the basic assessment used in the course, which may consist of a portfolio, performance, paper, project, or presentation. Credit earned in

this manner will be granted based on Otsego Public Schools Board of Education policy and state law.

## **Weighted Grades**

Otsego High School gives added weight grades by adding one (1.0) point to passing grades earned in Advanced Placement courses and in dual-enrolled courses that are deemed by the OHS Faculty Council (Department Chairs) to be at a level equivalent to or above the high school AP rigor.

## **ANCILLARY SERVICES**

### **Buses**

Many students are transported in school buses owned by the school district. A student who rides a bus is to be ready when the bus comes. Cross in front of the bus when you get on or off. The driver will give you an assigned seat. All irregular conduct tending to disturb the driver or to interfere with safety in transit in any way is forbidden. Passes are needed to ride a bus other than your assigned bus; these passes can be obtained in the Principal's Office. All regular bus rules and regulations as well as school rules regarding student conduct are in effect while riding school buses. Students who abuse bus privileges may have such privileges revoked and are subject to disciplinary action.

### **Directory Information**

In compliance with the Family Right to Privacy Act, Otsego High School considers a student's name, address, grade and sex to be directory information. This information will be released generally on a need-to-know basis, but will be provided on demand. If the student wishes not to have their name given out or published; e.g. yearbook, honor roll, music programs, commencement program, etc., the student, if an adult, or student's parents/guardians are asked to file such requests in writing with the Principal annually during the first week of school.

### **Drug, Smoke, and Weapons Free Campus**

The Otsego Public School District is a smoke, drug and weapons free campus. The use or possession of any tobacco products, drugs or drug paraphernalia or weapons on school grounds, in buildings, parking lots and in vehicles on school property is prohibited by state and federal laws. Violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

### **Emergency Closings and Delays**

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify the local television station as well as send a message over the district's notification system. Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

## **Guidance**

The Guidance Counselors work closely with teachers and administrative personnel to assist the entire student body. Information about careers and occupations is provided, along with catalogs and resource materials from institutes of higher education.

Tests and student records are administered and maintained in the Guidance Office. Results of standardized tests are provided to students and parents. Also, students and parents may request to see the student's records. The counselors will interpret test results and records for those who desire such assistance. Personal counseling and scheduling of classes are other important functions of the Guidance Office. The Guidance Office has contact with many referral agencies and serves as an important link between the home and the school. The office is open at 7:30 a.m. and closes at 3:30 p.m. during the school year. Career Exploration and Michigan Virtual High School courses are coordinated through the Guidance office.

## **Individuals with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact Alice Hoekstra at 269-692-6232 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

## **Insurance**

Otsego Schools do not carry insurance to cover injury, theft, or damage to person or personal property. All students have the opportunity to take out our school-time accident insurance for a small fee. It is highly recommended that all students consider the program. Specific instructions will be issued via THE DAILY BULLETIN and in the homeroom.

## **Limited English Proficiency**

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the building principal at 269-694-7400 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

## Lockers

Each student is assigned a locker for the year, which is equipped with a combination lock. If you forget your combination or cannot work the lock, please come to the Principal's Office for assistance.

1. The administration reserves the right to inspect all lockers under its control. Furthermore, the administration deems it proper function of school authorities to inspect all lockers in the school and prevent their use in illicit ways or for illegal purposes.
2. The security and care of the lockers are the responsibility of the student. The school will provide reasonable supervision for the locker and its contents; however, the school will not be responsible, in any degree, for lost or stolen articles. Do not leave money in your locker. The student must take the utmost care to ensure that the lock is locked properly when closed. Disabling the locking mechanism may result in disciplinary action.
3. The contents of the locker are the responsibility of the student assigned to that locker. Nothing illegal should be kept in the locker nor should it be used for illegal purposes. Violation of this rule subjects the student to disciplinary action.
4. Students will exercise care and good judgment in the physical upkeep of their lockers
5. Damaged lockers or those with broken locks should be reported to the Principal's Office IMMEDIATELY.
6. Locker combinations are to be kept confidential. Students are NOT to give the combination to anyone!
7. Locker assignments are made in the fall. Students may not change lockers without administrative permission.
8. **Lockers are NOT to be shared**, (unless they are assigned).
9. Students choosing to use gymnasium lockers must purchase a school-keyed combination lock, which may be obtained at the high school Athletic Office.
10. Students unwilling to abide by these rules are to request that they not be assigned a locker. This request must be made during the first week of the school year.
11. Students may face disciplinary action for failure to comply with these rules.
12. In the event that a theft occurs, a theft report should be filled out in the Principal's Office and the police notified.

## Lost and Found

All articles (exclusive of gym clothing and equipment) that are found on the school premises should be taken to the Principal's Office. If a student loses something, report the loss at once to a teacher and to the Principal's Office. All unclaimed articles will be given to charity.

## Media Center

The librarian will establish the general procedures for use of the Media Center. While using the Media Center students are considered to be under the direct supervision of the librarian. Non-compliance with Media Center rules may lead to the loss of library privileges.

## **National Honor Society (NHS)**

The Otsego chapter of the National Honor Society, charter number 11585, exists to encourage scholarship, promote service to the community, foster good character, and help create leadership ability in its members. It inducts a limited number of Juniors and Seniors every year. Each September, Juniors and Seniors with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher are invited by announcements in the daily bulletin to provide information to be reviewed by the Faculty Council, which selects new members for induction. New members are selected based upon scholarship, character, service, and leadership. Students must show evidence in each of the four areas in order to be considered for membership in the Honor Society.

## **Outdoor Activities**

At times, classes will go outside the building for classroom activities, exposing students to normal degree of insects and plant life. Parents of students with allergies should alert the school at the beginning of each school year.

## **Student Fundraising**

Fundraising activities by school organizations must be approved in advance by the principal. Organization sponsors assume the responsibility for supervising the project, accounting for funds, making reports, and any other details involved in the project.

## **Telephone or Address Changes**

Students should inform the Guidance Office if they have a change of address or a new telephone number.

## **Telephones**

The office phones are not to be used by students except in cases of emergency. Telephone messages will be accepted in any of the offices, from parents or guardians only!

## **The School Day**

The school day begins when the student arrives at the building until the dismissal of the last class period. Before school in the morning, all outside corridor doors will be open and may be used. If students arrive at school later than 7:44 a.m., they are to enter through the southwest main entrance.

Since classes are in session throughout the entire lunch period, it is necessary that during this time students on their lunch remain out of the academic halls.

Students are not permitted in the building after 3:00 p.m. unless participating in a school activity under the supervision of a staff member.

## **Student Council**

The Student Council has a highly active role as a meeting place between the student body and the administration. Students can assume as much of the responsibility of organizing their high school activities as they are able. It is the place where problems or questions from either the students or the administration can be presented for discussion and consideration.

Representatives are selected each spring from petitions that are submitted by individual students and later elected in school-wide balloting. Each person running for the student council must have an "S" average in citizenship for their last year in high school.

## **BEHAVIOR, CONDUCT, & SAFETY**

### **Bulldog Respect Code**

Do the right thing

Do your best

Treat others as you want to be treated

Students are prohibited from disrupting teaching or engaging in behavior that poses a threat to the orderly conduct of school activities or any other lawful function of the school or school district. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to the following illustrative examples of disruptive behavior:

- failing to observe established safety rules, standards and regulations, including on the bus and in hallways;
- intentional verbal, written, or physical acts which result or have the potential to result in blocking access to school functions or facilities or preventing the convening or continuation of school-related functions;
- appearance or clothing which (1) violates a reasonable dress code adopted and publicized by the school, or (2) is substantially disruptive, or (3) is provocative or obscene; or (4) endangers the health or safety of the student or others;
- possessing or distributing literature or illustrations which significantly disrupt the educational process or which are obscene or unlawful;
- engaging in behavior which is lewd or of an overly sexual nature in the school setting;
- interfering with the operation of school buses, including delaying the bus schedule, getting off at an unauthorized stop, and willfully trespassing upon a school bus;
- possessing any item prohibited by federal law, state law, board policy or any individual school rule;
- engaging in any other behaviors prohibited in board policy or school behavior plans and;
- display of symbols on flags, clothing, literature, online, or in other areas, that school officials conclude pose a risk of serious disruption to school, including the swastika, the confederate battle flag, and other symbols affiliated with violent

protest and violence against minority groups, women, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, and other protected groups.

## **Adult Students**

In general, procedural rules at Otsego High School apply to all students regardless of age. Eighteen year olds are permitted to sign an adult-status form, giving the student complete responsibility for his own attendance, report card, and any additional communications normally sent to parents. Adult students may be required to furnish documentation for absences due to illness, appointments, etc.

## **Care for Students with Diabetes**

If your student has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan should be submitted to the school principal. Parents/guardians are responsible for and should:

1. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan with the school for their student.
2. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of healthcare providers.
3. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
4. Grant consent for and authorize designated School District representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

Your student may also be eligible for an individualized Section 504 Plan to provide needed support and accommodations so he/she can access educational programs and services. For further information, please contact the Building Principal at 694-7400.

## **Chain of Command for the Student**

Do you have an issue with a teacher?

1. Discuss the issue in person with the teacher, on the phone, or email, but do it privately.
2. If the issue is not resolved, involve your parents in the discussion with your teacher.
3. If the issue is still not resolved, include the principal or assistant principal in the discussion.

## **Chain of Command for the Parent/Guardian**

1. A classroom issue/problem is to be discussed with the teacher first.
2. A student and/or parent brings a problem to the principal. The principal will confirm if this was discussed with the teacher.
3. If discussed with the teacher, the principal will meet with the teacher, student and/or parent/guardian and identify the problem, setting measurable outcomes.
4. Action will be taken by either; the teacher, student, parent/guardian and/or principal.



## Cell Phones

Students may not use a cellular telephone, smartphone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as “sexting.” Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all cellular phones, smartphones and other electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during class time unless: (a) use of the device is provided in a student’s individualized education program (IEP)/504 Plan; (b) the school administration has granted permission for unique classroom activities (c) it is used before school up until 7:45 or during the student’s lunch period; or (d) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals. Possession of a cellular telephone or other ECD by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include confiscation of the cellular telephone or ECD.

## Classroom Expectations

In the classroom, students are expected to abide by the procedures as set forth by the individual teacher. All classroom rules, regulations, policies, etc., are in addition to the school policies and not in lieu of them. While classes are in session, students are not to be in corridors without a completed, **currently dated** pass. As there is ample time to use the restroom between classes, this is not considered to be a legitimate reason to leave class (except in emergency cases.) Students should not be permitted to leave class for purposes of getting books, supplies, etc. from their lockers. In general, students are not to bring articles to classes that might cause classroom disruption. Potential attractive nuisances such as radios, stereos, beepers, cell phones, laser pointers, etc. should not be brought to school. Appearances and/or behaviors that are disruptive will not be tolerated. Students are not to take food, drinks (with the exception of water), or book bags into classrooms.

## Personal Items

Personal items; such as backpacks and sport bags will not be allowed in the classroom. Students must place personal items in their lockers upon the start of the school day with the exception of taking their bags to gym class. They are not to be kept in classrooms, outside of classrooms, in the hallway. Any personal items found in any location other than a student’s locker will be brought to the office and the student will receive consequences.

## **Dance Policies**

Attendance at school-sponsored dances is a privilege. All school rules, including the school's discipline code are in effect during school-sponsored dances.

Students who violate the school's discipline code will be required to leave the dance immediately and the student's parent/guardian will be contacted. The school may also impose other discipline as outlined in the school's discipline code.

Any person attending a dance at Otsego High School must be a student of Otsego High School or a guest of an Otsego High School student. OHS students who want to bring a guest must obtain a guest pass from the main office and have it completed prior to the dance with appropriate signatures. An Otsego High School student is allowed one guest. A guest must be "age appropriate," defined as a current high school student/graduate up to the age of 20.

In general, persons who have withdrawn or discontinued their education prior to graduation will not be allowed as guests. The guest must accompany the OHS student to and from the dance.

Once a person leaves a dance, he or she may not return. Dancing should be done face-to-face and in an appropriate manner for the school setting. Students who dance in an inappropriate manner may lose the privilege of attending dances at the school.

## **Dismissal from Class**

Any student who is dismissed from class for disciplinary reasons must immediately report to the Principal's Office. Failure to do so will result in further disciplinary action.

## **Dress/General Appearance**

The following are guidelines for the OPS dress code:

- The wearing of clothing advertising profanity, vulgar suggestions, sexual connotations, alcohol, drugs, or tobacco are not permissible on clothing.
- Hoods are not to be worn in the building.
- Extremely short shorts and skirts are unacceptable. As a guideline, skirts and shorts should extend to the end of fingertips when standing in a relaxed state.
- Tops that expose the midriff may not be worn. In general, student's pants and shirts must overlap one another while sitting or standing. Tops must have straps.
- Undergarments of any kind may not be showing at any time. Clothing that exposes undergarments while standing or sitting is not acceptable. Also, exposed skin on any student (male or female) that occurs inside of the extended fingertip guideline area of dress code, will not be permitted.
- Chains, wallet chains, spike necklace/bracelets, choke chains etc. will be confiscated and returned when it is certain that guidelines will be followed.
- Pajamas, slippers, and blankets are not acceptable school attire.

Unless otherwise approved, these policies are in effect during the regular school day and for all school activities.

Certain classes have mandatory requirements pertaining to the wearing of protective equipment and clothing which are required by state standards e.g. protective glasses, hair-nets, goggles,

etc. Non-compliance to safety rules and regulations, as above, should result in removal from class. Students with shoulder-length hair or longer will be required to wear hairnets or other school-approved restraining devices when working in class areas in which power equipment is being used or operated.

The ultimate determination regarding the appropriateness of students' attire lies with the school administration.

Students violating the dress code will receive a warning to comply and any additional offenses may result in disciplinary action for insubordination. In general, all students are expected to wear clean, complete and reasonably well-fitted clothing.

### **Drug/Alcohol Policy**

The possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol at school, at school events, or on school property is wrong, harmful, and contrary to State and Federal Laws. Students found using, in possession of, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol will face severe consequences. The student will be suspended up to ten (10) days and be referred to the police. To have the suspension reduced, the student must:

- Provide 20 hours of service to the school (outside school hours);
- Successfully complete an approved drug or alcohol screening (scheduled before the student returns to school);
- Attend two (2) Saturday School sessions.

### **Drug Assessment**

Any student suspended for violating the Substance Abuse Policy is urged to undergo a substance abuse assessment administered by a trained professional. If the cost is not covered by the parent/guardian's insurance, the School Board will pay up to \$55.00 of this fee.

### **Electronic Entertainment Devices**

During school hours, portable music players, MP3 players, DVD players, and other electronic entertainment devices are not allowed to be used in the building except in classes where permission has been granted by the teacher. Audio and Video recording devices (including cameras) are not to be used during school hours or at school events without prior teacher or administrative approval.

### **Attending Extracurricular Activities**

Student attendance at after-school events (dances, athletic events, concerts, etc.) is a privilege that is extended to students in good standing. Students who are suspended for serious offenses (including and not limited to drugs, tobacco, any electronic inhalers or supplies, alcohol, any violence, threats, harassment, and weapons) may have their privileges to attend after-school events suspended for a period of time equal to one trimester of school.

## **Participation in Extracurricular & Co-Curricular Activities**

Student participation in athletics is governed by guidelines established in the athletic handbook. Students who participate in non-athletic activities (Robotics, Band, Choir, Forensics, etc.) are expected to meet the guidelines listed above with regard to academics, absences, and behavior. Students who violate these expectations may lose the privilege of participating in extra-curricular programs at the discretion of the administration and activity sponsors if the students are not in good standing with attendance, behavior, and academic progress.

## **Harassment/Bullying**

Bullying is any repeated mean look, gesture, word or action that hurts a person's body, feelings, friendships, reputation or property.

Bullying, intimidation and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, immigration status, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.

Bullying and harassment include the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or

benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally, in writing, or electronically with any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the school administration or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in intimidation or harassment will be subjected to disciplinary consequences as provided in this handbook, including but not limited to suspension and expulsion consistent with the school and district's discipline policy. Parents/Guardians of students who have engaged in the above behavior will be notified. Any student making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment may also be subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **Lunch & Closed Campus**

The Otsego High School is a closed campus for all students. Students may not leave the building for lunch. Students who disobey this policy will face disciplinary action for insubordination.

## **Mandated Reporters**

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Michigan Family Independence Agency.

## **Motor Vehicle Parking & Driving**

Student vehicles must be parked only in the areas designated for student parking. Once entering the school area, motor vehicles should be parked in the student parking lot immediately.

1. Lock your vehicle.
2. Assist in keeping the lot clean and safe.
3. You are not to sit in the cars during school hours nor allow anyone else to be in your car during this time.
4. Do not loiter in the parking lot or near any cars.
5. Report any accidents or thefts to the Assistant Principal and the Otsego Police immediately.
6. All state, local and school driving regulations must be observed while on School property. The speed limit on ALL school property is 15 M.P.H.

Driving is a privilege extended to students who observe the regulations established for the safety and convenience of all. Reckless and careless driving will not be tolerated. Driving privileges can be revoked and/or vehicles towed if a student is in violation of driving regulations. Failure to comply with driving policies may result in suspension or expulsion from school. Students who wish to drive scooters, motorcycles or similar types of motor driven devices must meet the same requirements as listed above.

## **Motor Vehicle Registration**

Each motor vehicle must be registered in the Principal's office on the form provided before a student will be allowed to drive and park at Otsego High School. Forms must be signed by a parent/guardian. Upon completion of the registration process, a sticker must be placed on the lower right-hand corner of the front window. Vehicle registration and permits are valid for the current year only, and the cost is \$2 per vehicle. Use of the school parking lot is deemed consent to a search if a violation of school rules is suspected. If this consent is to be withheld, all driving and parking privileges will be revoked.

## **Otsego School Campuses**

Students should not be on any other Otsego Public School campuses during school hours without checking in at the Principal's Office for permission.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas as your own without giving proper credit to the source used. At Otsego High School, plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment and a disciplinary referral. If an author's exact words are used, they must be quoted directly. If the author's thoughts or words are paraphrased, the source must be cited. Paraphrasing is more than simply rearranging a few words from the original text.

## **Physical Displays of Affection**

All physical displays of affection, excluding hand holding, will be considered unacceptable conduct at school. Extreme or continual violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

## **Skateboards**

Skateboards are not allowed on the Otsego High School Campus.

## **Visitors**

All visitors, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and proceed immediately to the main office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school.

Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag to their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to

proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in an appropriate manner will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespass and/or disruptive behavior

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES & POLICY**

Attendance is an integral component in a student's education. Learning takes place in a classroom which cannot take place through textbooks alone. Regular attendance is always essential for doing your best work in school. Employers are interested in your high school attendance record.

Students who are under the age of sixteen are required to attend school under the State Compulsory Attendance Law. For a student to obtain credit and to keep parents informed of student absenteeism, school personnel have set up a minimum standard of attendance. Every effort should be made by students and parents to see that absences are limited to reasons of personal illness or a grave, family emergency.

Each Senior is allowed one day to use as a college day with "field trip" status and will not be counted absent for this day. The student must pre-arrange the absence with the appropriate form through the attendance office. This must be done before the absence. The student must also obtain a form for an official at the college to sign to confirm the visit. This confirmation form should be turned in to the attendance office as soon as the student returns to school.

Michigan law requires that whoever has custody or charge of any child between ages 6 and 18 (unless the child has already completed high school graduation requirements) shall assure that the child attends public school during the entire school year. Michigan law requires that the student's attendance be continuous and consecutive for the school year fixed by the school district.

Michigan law includes the following exceptions to the mandatory school attendance requirement:

1. The child is attending a state approved nonpublic school, which teaches subjects comparable to those taught in the public schools to children of corresponding age and grade.
2. The child is less than 9 years of age and does not reside within 2-1/2 miles by the nearest traveled road of a public school. If transportation is furnished for pupils in the school district of the child's residence, this subdivision does not apply.
3. The child is age 12 or 13 and attends confirmation classes conducted for a period of 5 months or less.

4. The child is regularly enrolled in a public school while attending religious instruction classes for not more than 2 class hours per week, off public school property during public school hours, upon written request of the parent/legal guardian.
5. The child has graduated from high school or has fulfilled all requirements for high school graduation.
6. The child is being educated at the child's home by his or her parent/legal guardian in an organized educational program in the subject areas of reading, spelling, mathematics, science, history, civics, literature, writing, and English grammar.

## **Absences**

Missing more than 20 minutes of class will be counted as an absence. Being checked out prior to the halfway point in a class will also be counted as an absence.

## **Daily Attendance for After School Activities**

In order for a student to participate in or attend after school activities, they must be in attendance ALL DAY on the day of any activity. No exceptions will be granted without just reason and prior approval of the administration. When the activity in question occurs on a non-scheduled school day, attendance is required the last school day before the event. In general, students who are absent for any part of the school day because they are not well enough to attend school will not be allowed to participate or attend after school. Administrators can approve exceptions, however, for absences that are deemed to be unavoidable and for reasons other than not feeling well. Examples of these exceptions include but are not limited to a medical appointment that was previously scheduled, a funeral, a court appearance, etc. The final authority to grant an exception rests with the school administration.

## **Excused vs Unexcused Absences**

The school has the authority to determine whether an absence is excused or not. If an absence is not pre-arranged, the school expects the parent or guardian to contact the attendance clerk at 694-6780 by 10:00 a.m. to report the child's absence. Failure to provide information to the school office within 24 hours will result in the absence being classified as unexcused.

Absences will be excused if they meet the following guidelines:

- illness or medical appointment (with supporting documentation)
- death in the family
- medical emergency in the family
- important personal or family business that could not be done after school hours (with supporting documentation)
- pre-arranged absences requested at least two school days prior to the absence and approved by the school



## **Absence Due to Suspension**

Out-of-school suspensions are considered **excused absences**. These absences will be counted when calculations are made for absences each trimester. Missed schoolwork during a suspension can be completed for credit. The responsibility to pick up work rests with the student. Out-of-school suspension that results from failure to attend Saturday school assigned for discipline **will** count as an unexcused absence. (Note: **in-house suspension** is not considered to be an absence). Suspensions from the ACATEC are enforced at the High School and vice versa.

## **Appointments**

Students are urged to schedule medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours. However, if the appointment times are during school hours, it is expected that you will miss only ½ day or less for these appointments. To be excused during school hours for an appointment, etc., students are to present a note from home stating the reason for the requested absence. The student will be issued a permit to leave the campus, which should be presented to his/her teacher for dismissal at the correct time.

## **Homebound Program**

A student who will be absent for more than ten days due to an illness, may apply for the Homebound Program. This is a formal program with a visiting teacher. Successful participation in the homebound program will allow a student to remain in the class and earn credit. Parents/Guardians should contact the Guidance Office if these services are necessary.

## **Illness at School**

Students who are ill should not be in school. If, however, illness should occur while at school, the student should report directly to the Principal's Office. Arrangements will then be made through the student's parents or other responsible party for transportation home. Leaving school without permission is counted as a "skip" for the time missed. Any student leaving school early must clear this time through the Principal's Office.

## **Make-Up Work**

In all cases of make-up work, it is the obligation of the student to obtain the assignments and make the necessary arrangements to complete the work. Students will be given time, equal to the number of days absent, to turn in work after an absence, unless other satisfactory arrangements can be made with the teacher(s) for whom make-up work must be completed. Make-up work for absences due to suspension is due the day of return from the suspension. Obtaining work that is required during a suspension is the responsibility of the student; this can be done with assistance from the Principal's office. All work missed due to absenteeism should be made up.

## **Maximum Days Absent**

OHS allows students to be absent from class for 10 days per trimester without consequence to their grades. (Please see the truancy policy for more information regarding unexcused absences.) Students who accumulate more than 10 absences in a class in a trimester may put their credits in jeopardy. Moreover, students with excessive absences who are struggling academically may be required by their instructors to attend academic sessions outside the school day. These sessions will be arranged by the teacher, parent and student.

The student may earn credit if:

- the student has satisfactorily made up missing work, **and**
- has earned a passing grade in the class.

If the student has unexcused absences, credit may be earned if:

- the student has attended Saturday School for the unexcused absences, **and**
- has satisfactorily made up missing work, **and**
- has earned a passing grade in the class.

Students who accumulate more than ten absences in a trimester and fail to meet the above criteria will receive an “NC” (no credit) or an “F” in the course. A grade of NC does not factor into a student’s GPA; a grade of F does factor into the GPA.

It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardians to remain aware of individual attendance records and to promptly communicate reasons for absences to the school office to avoid unexcused absences.

## **Pre-Arranged Absences**

Pre-arranged Absence forms, which may be obtained in the Attendance Office, are required for all absences in which advance notice is available. The forms are only used if a student will be absent more than one day. Arrangements for an absence of this type should be completed two school days prior to the absence. Failure to properly submit an advance absence form may result in unexcused absences. These forms are generally not used for absences scheduled by the school.

## **Request for Homework**

In case of extended illness, assignments may be requested through the Principal’s Office. Please allow two days for this material to be collected.

## Saturday School

The OHS Saturday school program gives students with unexcused absences an opportunity to make up for the absence. Students who exceed the absence limit and have unexcused absences can serve one Saturday school for each unexcused absence in order to be eligible for a credit extension at the end of the trimester. Saturday school may also be offered as an alternative to out-of-school suspension at the discretion of the Administration. Saturday school sessions are typically held once a month, with added opportunities at the end of each trimester. Saturday school sessions will be announced via the daily bulletin.

## Tardiness

Punctuality is one of the traits most desired by future employers. There is sufficient time between classes to handle the necessities (use of restrooms, locker visits, etc.) and arrive at your next class on time. Excessive tardiness is unnecessary and is considered to be insubordinate. The following procedure will be in effect regarding tardiness:

1. All tardiness, with the exception of those for which a student has a properly completed pass from another staff member, will be recorded by the teacher and reported in Infinite Campus.
2. Upon the fourth and each subsequent tardy in a trimester, the student will receive a 40-minute detention to be served within five school days. This detention will take place in the in-house suspension (I.H.S.) room from 2:50-3:30 pm. The office will send the student an email reminder of the detention.
3. Failure to serve the detention within the five-day period will result in Saturday school. Failure to serve an assigned Saturday school session will result in an in-house suspension. This suspension will be counted as an **unexcused absence**.
4. Students who are missing more than twenty (20) minutes of class, will be marked absent. Students returning from excused or pre-arranged absences will be given passes (no tardy, no penalty) to enter class.

## Truancy (Skipping School)

This is a case of absenteeism whereby the student stays out of or leaves school without the knowledge of his/her parents or school authorities. Skipping school is a serious matter. Students who are under the age of sixteen (16) are violating the State Compulsory Attendance Law. Moreover, a skip will result in the possibility of suspension from school. In many cases, when the student is less than sixteen years of age, school authorities are required to contact the juvenile division of the probate court.

Once a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, a truancy warning letter will be issued. At seven (7) unexcused absences, the assistant principal will contact the family to set up a meeting to discuss a plan to improve attendance. At ten (10) unexcused absences, the student will receive a truancy referral to the Allegan County Truancy Officer.

Otsego High School does not condone any "Senior Skip Day." Seniors who choose to participate in a planned "skip day" will face disciplinary action that may include loss of privileges to participate in Swingout and commencement.

# ATHLETICS

## Sportsmanship

Since interscholastic athletics is an extension of the classroom, Otsego Public Schools feel there are lessons to be learned every time students are involved in an event as a participant or a spectator. One of the most valuable lessons to be learned is that of good sportsmanship. Our school has joined a statewide campaign to promote good sportsmanship called "Good Sports are Winners!" The purpose of this program is to raise our awareness of what is acceptable when showing your pride and school spirit.

Otsego Public Schools wants students to be involved in the events that students are interested in and to enjoy these events. Otsego Public Schools also urge students to exhibit exemplary behavior to show their pride and school spirit. In a word, "respectful" best sums up the behavior students should exhibit when representing our school at an athletic event. Students should respect what is going on at the contest and treat our opponents like they would treat a teacher or classmate.

Otsego Public Schools urge students to take a few moments to review the guidelines for sportsmanship, which is expected to be followed at athletic events. Remember, spectators are in the public eye as much as any athlete, and Otsego Public Schools hope that this positive example will help set the tone for those around so that all may enjoy the athletic events.

## Sportsman Expectations (Home & Away)

- During the National Anthem, students are to face the flag, remove their hats, and behave respectfully until the end of the anthem.
- Proper language is to be used at all times. No swearing or language that is offensive to others will be tolerated. Individual and group vulgarity is unacceptable, as is verbal harassment and booing of players, coaches and officials.
- Obscene gestures are unacceptable.
- Dangerous and boisterous behavior, such as pushing, shoving or fighting, and passing of students is not acceptable.
- The throwing of objects at fellow spectators, band members, cheerleaders, officials, players or onto the playing surface is unacceptable and could result in an injury. Our team could even be penalized by the game official.
- Respect is the key to good sportsmanship. Opponents should be respected. They are not enemies, but fellow teenagers who happen to attend other schools.
- Be modest and humble in victory or defeat. It is easy to be a good winner and difficult to show class when you lose.
- Acknowledge good plays by both teams.
- Be concerned with anyone who is injured. Give concerned applause when an injured athlete is aided from the field.

## **What the School Desires at Athletic Events**

- A large student turnout
- Exemplary sportsmanship from players and fans
- To be proud of its teams and fans at contests.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

On the following pages, is the Code of Conduct, which the Otsego Board of Education expects students of the Otsego Public Schools to adhere to while enrolled in this school system. The codes, as set forth herein, apply to the expected conduct of all pupils from Kindergarten through grade twelve. It also identifies broad categories of student misconduct, defines conditions under which students may be suspended or expelled, and specifies the procedural due process safeguards that will be utilized for the benefit of the student in its implementation.

### **Philosophy Concerning Student Discipline & Conduct**

The primary objective of student discipline and control is to produce a school environment that is conducive to learning. Every activity must be able to be justified educationally, and complete attention must be directed to the teaching-learning process.

1. Discipline may be defined as the control of conduct of the individuals themselves or by external authority. It includes the entire program of the individual student adapting to life in our society and involves two major emphasis:
  - a. To guide the student so that he/she enhances the immediate efforts of teachers and other students in the learning situation; and that, therefore, the pupil's behavior does not have a detrimental effect, in the classroom, on the school system.
  - b. To assist the student in becoming a responsible, productive and self-disciplined citizen within the school, in preparation for assuming adult responsibilities. At least by the time the student reaches high school age, it is expected that he/she will assume personal responsibility for his/her own behavior.
2. The school system has a responsibility to assist each individual to assume more responsibility for their own actions as they mature and gain experience. The best and most lasting discipline is self-discipline. For this reason:

The best discipline is preventive in nature rather than regulatory and restrictive. A student's behavior in school is directly related to many internal and external factors, including:

- a. The student's self-image
- b. Active participation in both the curricular and extracurricular activities of the school
- c. Motivation to learn
- d. Understanding and support received from parents, teachers and other adults.

Since the students are basically motivated to learn and meet standards of acceptable behavior, the role of the teachers and other school employees should be one of guiding students in understanding, establishing and maintaining these acceptable behavioral standards.

3. The staff should make every effort to solve disciplinary problems within the school setting and without excluding a student from school. Disciplinary action may fall in the following categories:
  - a. **Detention** - A specified amount of time at lunch, before school, or after school.
  - b. **In-House** - Isolation of the student within the school
  - c. **Suspension** - The exclusion of a student from school for a specific period of time. These suspensions will be for a period not to exceed ten school attendance days. Students may not attend or participate in any school activities or events until the suspension has been completed. Procedure:
    - i. A student shall be fully informed of the charges brought against him or her, including the rationale for the action and the condition of time and termination.
    - ii. The Principal or the Principal's designee, shall immediately make a reasonable effort, preferably by telephone, to notify the parent or legal guardian of action. If telephone contact cannot be made, a note sent home with the student will be considered "reasonable effort." Written notation of such contact, or attempted contact, shall be made in the student's cumulative file.
    - iii. The initial contact shall be followed by written communication to the parent or guardian, stating the charges, reasons, and conditions of the separation or suspension. A copy of this communication will be placed in the student's file.
    - iv. A suspension of more than one school day but not more than 10 may be appealed in writing to the principal and/or superintendent in accordance with board policy.
  - d. **Expulsion** - The permanent exclusion of a student from school. Expulsion requires Board of Education action.

Parents/Guardians should be informed and involved whenever a student exhibits a history of unacceptable conduct. Records of such involvement shall be maintained in the Principal's Office. The Principal or his designee shall be responsible for documenting evidence to support any action of suspension or expulsion, as well as efforts to solve the problems. Such documentation shall be in writing.

The authority of the Board of Education to authorize suspension or expulsion and to make reasonable rules and regulations relative to anything whatsoever necessary for the proper establishment, maintenance, management and carrying on of the public schools, including regulations relative to the conduct of pupils concerning their safety while in attendance at school or en route to and from school is granted in sections 340.613 and 340.614 of the SCHOOL CODE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN.

Also, because the board believes that the students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe environment; students are to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the school administration.

Assuming the responsibility granted to it by law, the Otsego Board of Education establishes the following categories of misconduct (while a student is under jurisdiction of the school) as those that may result in suspension, or expulsion from the Otsego Public Schools. These categories are general in nature and are not all inclusive:

- Matters pertaining to laws and general rules.
- Matters pertaining to citizenship
- Matters pertaining to attendance
- Matters pertaining to safety of themselves or others.

## **Procedure**

The Superintendent shall make recommendation for the expulsion of a student from school to the Board of Education. Such action is generally taken upon recommendation of the Principal. The Principal's recommendation shall be communicated to the Superintendent in writing, signed by the Principal and accompanied by the Student's cumulative file. Except in cases stemming from extreme overt behavior, it is expected that parental conferences would have been held at the building level prior to the exclusion recommendation. The following procedure shall be followed:

1. The student shall be under suspension pending recommendation of the Superintendent to the Board and pending the Board's decision.
2. The Superintendent's recommendation to the Board shall be in writing. It shall include the basis of the charge. A copy of the recommendation shall be transmitted to the parent or guardian of the student being considered for expulsion.
3. The Board of Education shall set the date, time and place of hearing, and shall transmit written notice of the same to the parent or guardian at least five school days before the hearing.
4. The hearing procedure shall follow that set forth in 3-d above.

Efforts shall be made by the school, but not guaranteed, to provide alternate means by which a student under an extended suspension or expulsion may continue his education. Such opportunities may include evening or summer courses that might be available in this school system or in the area, correspondence courses, special programs, or school system.

## **Restorative Practices**

The administrative team at Otsego Public Schools realizes that suspension and expulsion are serious consequences, and we also value the importance of healthy relationships between students and staff. With disciplinary actions that warrant a suspension or expulsion, the administration shall consider restorative practices.

Restorative Practices Defined: If the District determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community caused by the student's misconduct. Restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that:

1. are initiated by the victim;
2. are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least fifteen years old, by the victim;
3. are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team");
4. would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these.

Prior to suspending or expelling a student according to board policy (except for possession of a firearm in a weapon free school zone) the Board (Superintendent) shall consider the following factors:

1. the student's age;
2. the student's disciplinary history;
3. whether the student has a disability;
4. the seriousness of the violation or behavior;
5. whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member;
6. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior;
7. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior.

Teachers, Staff and OHS Administrators may use the questions below to more fully understand the behavior situation with the goal of correcting the behavior.

1. What are you doing?
2. What are you supposed to be doing?
3. Are you going to do it?
4. What are you going to do about it?

## **Search & Seizure**

In order to maintain order safety and security in the school, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects.



## **School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left There by Students**

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

### **Students**

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting the search will produce evidence the particular students have violated or is violating either a law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in the light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination.

### **Seizure of Property**

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

## **When & Where Conduct Rules Apply**

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

- 1) On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
  - 2) Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
  - 3) Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;
- or
- 4) Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school

environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to:

- a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or
- b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

**PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

We want our students to have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and improve behavior. It is important that students and parents see that disciplinary measures are progressive.

In other words, the penalties are more severe with each additional offense or a given behavior.

**NOTE:**

All levels of discipline are also subject to police involvement. The district reserves the right to recommend more severe discipline based on the nature of the violation.

**VIOLATIONS & CONSEQUENCES**

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
Theft	<p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Damaging, Defacing, or Destruction of Property	<p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Misuse of Driving or Parking	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b> Parental contact Suspension of driving privileges for 1 month</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b> Parental contact Suspension of driving privileges for year</p>

Possession of Stolen Property	<p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Arson, Attempted Arson, or Bomb Threat	<p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Insubordination On or Off School Property or at Any School Activity	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>
Violation of State or Local Fire Codes	<p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Threatening or Intimidating Acts, Hazing, or Bullying	<p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Forms of Racial, Ethnic, Religious, or Sexual Harassment	
Conduct That Materially or Substantially Interferes with the Educational Process	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>
Public and Physical Displays of Affection (PDA)	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>
Use of Profane or Obscene Written or Spoken Language or Gestures	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>
Use or Possession of Pornography	
Continued Class Disruption and/or Disrespect	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p>

	<b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact
Use and/or Possession of Unauthorized Prescriptions, Unlawful Drugs, Behavior Altering Substances, Look Alike Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, Alcohol, or Any Over-the-Counter Drug Not Properly Registered with the Office	<b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion <b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion <b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion
Distribution or Sale of Unlawful Drugs, Behavior Altering Substances, Look Alike Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, or Alcohol	<b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, recommendation for expulsion
Missed Detentions (Discipline for missed academic detentions will not exceed 1-day suspension)	<b>Step Scale</b> 1 Saturday School 1 ISS or 2 Saturday School 1 OSS
Cell Phone Infraction	<b>Step Scale</b> Detention Saturday School 1 ISS or 2 Saturday School
Possession or Use of Tobacco (including vape and dab pens) on School Property or During the School Day	<b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral <b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral <b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion
Cheating, Plagiarism, Copying Somebody Else's Work/Allowing Somebody to Copy, Using Prohibited Resources, Failure to Cite a Source	<b>Level 1</b> 0 (zero) on assignment, Detention, parent contact <b>Level 2</b> 0 (zero) on assignment, 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact <b>Level 3</b> 0 (zero) on assignment, Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact
Verbal Attack or Assault	<b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion
Physical Attack or Assault	<b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion

Conduct Which Jeopardizes the Safety of Yourself or Others	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>
Possession of a Weapon	<p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, police referral, recommendation for expulsion</p>
Possession of Explosives or Fireworks	<p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Fighting on School Property or Leaving School Property with the Intention of Fighting	<p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>
Computer Tampering/Unauthorized Access, Modification or Destruction of Private Files	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days In-school suspension or Saturday School, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>

## Attendance Infractions

Violation	Consequence
Tardy Policy	<p><b>Instance 1-3</b> Warning, restorative practices, parent contact</p> <p><b>Instance 4</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Instance 4+</b> Detention, Parent contact</p>
Skipping Classes	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> In-school suspension</p>
Procedural Infraction (Not Checking Out – No Note)	<p><b>Level 1</b> Warning, restorative practices, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Referral to administrator</p>
Skip & Phone Lie, Forged Note	<p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> In-school suspension</p>

# **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

## **Preamble**

Otsego Public Schools provides access to technology resources including access to the Internet. These resources all interact internally within the district and externally to systems located all over the world. These resources are limited to educational purposes only. These purposes are to provide access to electronic resources to promote and enhance student and staff learning consistent with district educational goals and objectives. This acceptable use policy ensures that use of the network by students and staff is done in an appropriate manner. Use of technology is a privilege and not a right. Users are obligated to respect and protect the rights of every other user and act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Failure to abide by this policy may result in loss of privileges, disciplinary action and/or legal action.

## **District Technology Resources**

Educational technology resources consist of, but are not limited to:

- Computers (Desktops and Laptops)
- Handheld Devices (Palms)
- Software
- Communication Lines and Devices
- Graphing Calculators
- Printers
- Scanners
- Digital Cameras
- Data Projectors
- Email
- Classroom Performance Systems
- Document Cameras
- Classroom Sound Systems
- MP3 Players
- Wired and Wireless Network

## **Internet Safety Measures**

Internet Filtering – Federal

The Superintendent shall be responsible for directing appropriate District technology staff to

bring all District technology resources into full compliance with all federal requirements regarding Internet filtering software to assure that District discounts for Internet access and internal connection under the federal E-rate program are not jeopardized.

Student Internet activities using District technology resources will be monitored by the District to ensure that students are not accessing inappropriate sites. The District's Network Operations Center shall have an internet filtering device that blocks access to content that is obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors. The Superintendent shall be responsible for educating students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

## **Acceptable Uses/Net Etiquette**

"Acceptable use" includes but is not limited to:

- Classroom activities as assigned and sanctioned by the school/teacher.
- Research activities for classroom assignments.
- Peer review of assigned work.
- The exchange of project-related ideas, opinions and questions via email, message boards and other means.
- Accessing information via the Internet for limited educational purposes such as: Local, state, national and worldwide information and news; correspondence with scientists and scholars; collaboration with peers on projects and problem-solving strategies.
- Access, via the Internet, the Science Learning Network (SLN), Library of Congress, Educational Resources and Information center (ERIC), Smithsonian Museums, university library catalogs, and other like sources in the pursuit of legitimate curricular goals.
- Proper e-mail and Internet etiquette is acceptable and expected, and should include:
  - Being polite and courteous in all communications and language
  - Assisting others in the use of the system, and helping others who are looking for ideas or information
  - Posting and sharing information that is interesting and helpful to other users
  - Always using the network as a resource to further one's own education and that of others
  - Being mindful of network security, and immediately reporting any bugs, errors, or security problems to the system administrator

## **Prohibited Uses**

Prohibited use includes but is not limited to:

- Transmitting or downloading any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulations.

Including, but not limited to material that is copyrighted, threatening, harmful, sexist, racist, sexually explicit, obscene or protected by trade secrets

- Accessing non-educational multi-use (chat rooms) talk sessions or “recreational” games
- Engaging in any unauthorized commercial activity, product advertisement or political lobbying
- Use of the school’s equipment by businesses or non-school sponsored community activities. Applications for such use should be submitted by request and shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the system administrators or advisory committee.
- Use of technology to distort the truth, to lie, or to misrepresent someone else
- Use of any technology intentionally to harm or harass anyone
- Giving your password to anyone for any reason
- Vandalism – defined as any attempt to harm, destroy, or disrupt the operation of the network, hardware, software, or the data of any other use on the system or any other system including, but not limited to, the uploading, creation, or knowing transmission of computer viruses.
- Use of Social Networking Sites for non-educational purposes (i.e. MySpace, Facebook, and others)
- Tunneling or use of proxy sites to bypass the district’s internet filter.
- Posting of unauthorized pictures/videos of faculty/staff members/students on social networking sites (i.e. MySpace, Facebook, and others).
- Use of streaming music sites.

## **Disclaimer**

The school district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services it provides. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries or service interruptions caused by unforeseen network problems or a user’s errors or omission. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user’s own risk. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. The district does not guarantee that materials stored on the system will be private. Network administrators may review the information stored on the system to determine whether it is being used properly.

If students choose to bring their own devices (i.e. SmartPhones, iPads, iPods, iPod Touches, etc.) for use during school (if approved by a teacher/Administrator), the district is not responsible for providing technical support to those devices. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy, 7530.01 is incorporated into this Acceptable Use Policy by reference.

## **Safety Warning**

As a school district participant, it is expected that you will be respectful of the rights and privacy of others. When engaging in activities on web pages, e-mail, and two-way communications, the following guidelines should be strictly adhered to:



- Never ask for or give information about (you, friends, teachers, locations).
  - Never list personal information, pictures, last names, or rosters on web sites or web pages.
  - Do not reveal your identity in any way. This includes your name, personal address, phone number, location, city, school name, team name or any other information that may give others information to identify you in any way.
  - Do not reveal the identity of others. This includes their name, personal address, phone number, location, city, school name, team name or any other information that may give anyone information to identify others (friends, teachers) in any way.
  - Immediately tell an adult if you receive anything that is inappropriate, threatening or uncomfortable.
  - Never agree to get together or meet with anyone you meet online without permission of an adult.
  - Never send photographs or anything else without the permission of an adult.
  - Do not use technology devices to intimidate, bully, or harass others.
- Never violate ethical rules.
  - Never send or receive software that you have not created.

## **Consequences for Violation of Policy**

Any user violating or demonstrating the intent to violate any of the guidelines set forth in the acceptable use policy may face disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the policy violation or number of past violations, the district may take one or more of the following disciplinary actions.

1. Restriction or loss of use of technology resources
2. Disciplinary action imposed by the Administration up to and including expulsion from the district.
3. Restitution
  - Replacement cost
  - Reimbursement of cost for repair
  - Reimbursement of technician time
4. Law enforcement notification
  - Responsibility for unauthorized charges, expenses and fees
  - Mandatory training / in-service before further use is allowed
5. Responsibility for unauthorized charges, expenses and fees
6. Mandatory training/in-service before further use is allowed
7. Legal action

