



# **NORTHRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK - School Year 2023-2024**

**Northridge Elementary  
9200 Northridge Road  
Johnstown, OH 43031**

**[www.northridge.k12.oh.us](http://www.northridge.k12.oh.us)**

**[www.facebook.com/NorthridgeVikings](https://www.facebook.com/NorthridgeVikings)**

**[www.twitter.com/NRVikings](https://www.twitter.com/NRVikings)**

**[www.instagram.com/nrvikings](https://www.instagram.com/nrvikings)**

**Twitter- @NRVikings  
Facebook - @NorthridgeVikings**

**Kathleen Erhard, Principal  
Rebecca Brechbill, Assistant Principal  
Kristy Draher, School Counselor  
Pam Paise, School Secretary  
Carrie Knerr, School Secretary  
Dr. Kristine Michael, Superintendent**

Welcome to School Year 2023-24 at Northridge Elementary School. We are pleased to have you as members of our school community! This Handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with many of the opportunities and responsibilities that are yours as a student or parent at Northridge Elementary School. The staff and faculty of the Elementary are committed to working together to provide the best opportunities for your child. The building reflects the support of the community to help achieve that goal. We trust you will share the pride that the community has in this facility and vow to keep it a great educational institution. We hope that your years at Northridge Elementary will be rewarding.

**MISSION STATEMENT AND VALUES**

Mission: Empower All Students to Reach Their Fullest Potential

Values: Trust, Leadership, Communication, Collaboration, Accountability,  
Integrity and Respect

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**EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

Northridge Local School District provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer:

Dr. Kristine Michael  
Superintendent  
740-967-6631

<b>Northridge Elementary School</b>	<b>740-967-1401</b>
<b>Northridge Middle School</b>	<b>740-967-6671</b>
<b>Northridge High School</b>	<b>740-967-6651</b>
<b>Northridge District Office</b>	<b>740-967-6631</b>
<b>Peterman Transportation</b>	<b>740-967-7533</b>

## **FOREWORD**

This Student Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain District policies and procedures. Please take time to become familiar with the important information contained in this Handbook and keep the Handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this Handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal. This Handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects. This Handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the District's policies and the School's rules as of 2022. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current District policies and administrative guidelines are available from the building principal and on the District's website.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

Elementary School Student School Day Hours: 8:45 AM to 3:20 PM

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **STUDENT WELL BEING**

Student safety is the responsibility of both students and staff. Staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as evacuation procedures, fire and tornado drills, safety drills in the event of a terrorist or other violent attack, and accident reporting procedures. If a student is aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify a staff person immediately. Northridge Elementary School's rules and procedures are designed to allow students to be educated in a safe and orderly environment. All students are expected to follow staff members' directions and to obey all school rules.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate. In order to keep parents informed of their child's progress in school, parents will be provided information on a regular basis and whenever concerns arise. Many times it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver the information. The School, however, may use the mail or hand delivery when appropriate. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

Students with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs, along with physician documentation, to the School office.

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If the injuries are minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parents.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

## **SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL**

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides, unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian.

When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- C. proof of residency
- D. proof of immunizations

For enrollment information and appointments, contact the Northridge District Office at 740-967-6651.

### **SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT**

Class assignments are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. They are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's placement will be made through the Principal's office.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

No student may leave school prior to dismissal time without a parent or guardian either submitting a signed written request or coming to the School Office personally to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) or guardian without a written permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

### **WITHDRAWAL/TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL**

No student under the age of eighteen (18) is allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents and in compliance with State law. A student who otherwise withdraws from school shall be reported to the juvenile judge of the county and to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for suspension of their driver's license, if s/he is under the age of 18.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

The school must be able to contact parents if there is an emergency involving a child. Please notify the office any time a parent has a change of address, email or telephone number. A change in a parent's work phone number should also be reported to the school. If a change in address occurs, parents/guardians must provide proof of residency (ex: electric or gas bill, lease or rental agreement, mortgage agreement.)

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Ohio law obligates school officials to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Children's Services. The school does not investigate such cases and makes no other decisions in this regard. All referrals are confidential.

## **CHILD CUSTODY**

Parents are obligated to provide the school with up-to-date information regarding child custody. Copies of any court orders, explaining or limiting custody, must be on file in the school office. A court official must sign such orders. The school will be directed by this document rather than the wishes of one parent or the other.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law, including but not limited to poliomyelitis, measles, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis, tetanus, and mumps, or have an authorized exemption from State immunization requirements. Kindergarten students must be immunized against Hepatitis B and chickenpox. For the safety of all students, the school principal may remove a student from school or establish a deadline for meeting State requirements if a student does not have the necessary immunizations or authorized exemption. In the event of a chicken pox epidemic, the Superintendent may temporarily deny admission to a student otherwise exempted from the chicken pox immunization requirement. Any questions about immunizations or exemptions should be directed to the Nurses employed by the District.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

State law requires all students to have Emergency Medical Authorization information completed and submitted by a parent or guardian. This requirement must be in place in order for a student to attend school or participate in any activity off school grounds, including field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities. The Emergency Medical Authorization form is completed and at the beginning of each school year on line at the Northridge Schools update site.

## **USE OF MEDICATIONS**

Use of non-authorized medications is a violation of the School's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

## **PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS**

The administration of medication at school is addressed, in detail, in Ohio law and Board of Education policy. All medication to be administered at school will be secured, supervised, and administered by a designated person. Medication must be sent to school in the manufacturer's container or the one in which it was prescribed. Medication must be delivered to the Principal's office immediately if it is to be administered at school.

A student may possess and use a metered dose inhaler a dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms, at school or at any activity, event, or program sponsored by in which the student's school is a participant if the appropriate form is completed and on file in the office. A student who is authorized to possess

and use a metered dose or dry powder inhaler may not transfer possession of any inhaler or other medication to any other student.

In the case of epinephrine auto-injectors ("epi pens"), in addition to written permission and submission of proper forms, the parent or student must provide a backup dose to the school nurse.

### **NON-PRESCRIBED (Over-the-Counter) MEDICATIONS**

No staff member will dispense non-prescribed, over-the-counter (OTC) medication to any student.

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent authorization, the student will be brought to the School office while the student's parents are contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received.

Any student who distributes medication of any kind or who is found in possession of unauthorized medication is in violation of the School's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

### **CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES and PESTS**

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The School's professional staff may remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

Specific communicable diseases include diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

### **CONTROL OF NON-CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The School District has an obligation to protect staff and students from non-casual contact communicable diseases. When a non-casual-contact communicable disease is suspected, the student's health will be reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department. The School will protect the privacy of the person affected and those in contact with the affected person. Students and staff will be permitted to remain in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV, Hepatitis B, and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV and HBV when the child has bled at school and if students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

The District has specific responsibilities under these two laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

Additionally, in accordance with State and Federal mandates, the District seeks out, assesses and appropriately services students with disabilities. Staff members use a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, assess and, if appropriate, place students in special education and related services. Students are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment."

A student can access special education and related services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEIA), A.D.A. Section 504) and State law. Contact Mrs. Michelle McJessy at 740-967-6631 to inquire about evaluation procedures, programs, and services.

## **PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information. Northridge Local Schools maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number; date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, height and weight, dates of attendance, date of graduation, awards received, and the student's photograph.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may consult the Board's annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning.

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes;

- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and District policy, parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation. Please contact the Superintendent to inspect such materials.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco)

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

FERPA@ED.Gov and PPRA@ED.Gov.

### **STUDENT FEES AND FINES**

Students will be provided necessary textbooks for courses of instruction without cost. In accordance with State law, Northridge Local School may charge specific fees for activities and materials used in the course of instruction. As of this time, Northridge Local Schools do not charge individual student course fees.

Charges/fees may be imposed for loss, damage or destruction of school apparatus, equipment, musical instruments, library materials, textbooks and for damage to school buildings or property. Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment.



Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of grades and credits. Seniors with any outstanding fee balances (academic or extra-curricular) or who have not returned property of Northridge Local Schools will not be permitted to walk at graduation.

### **STUDENT FUND-RAISING**

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities may solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules apply to all fund-raisers:

- A. Students involved in the fundraiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.
- B. Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members without the approval of the advisor.

Students may not sell any item or service in school without the prior approval of the Principal. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property and should not bring items of value to school. Items such as irreplaceable items, jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion and should not be brought to school. The school is not liable for any loss or damage to personal valuables.

### **MEAL SERVICE**

Northridge Local Schools participate in the National School Lunch Program. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the School's cafeteria. No student may leave school premises during the lunch period.

Applications for the School's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive an application form and believes s/he is eligible, contact the Food Service Director at 740-967-6631.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

- A. All visitors must report to the office when they arrive at school.
- B. All visitors are given and required to wear a building pass while they are in the building.
- C. Staff are expected to question people in the building whom they do not recognize and who are not wearing a building pass, and to question people who are "hanging around" the building after hours.
- D. Students and staff are expected to immediately report to a teacher or administrator any suspicious behavior or situation that makes them uncomfortable.
- E. Outside doors are locked during the school day.

- F. Portions of the building that will not be needed after the regular school days are closed off.
- G. Students are not permitted to open doors to allow visitors or others into the building.
- H. All District employees are to wear photo-identification badges while in District schools and offices or on District property.

### **FIRE, TORNADO, AND SAFETY DRILLS**

Northridge Elementary School complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. The School conducts tornado drills during the tornado season following procedures prescribed by the State. The alarm system for tornadoes consists of a public address announcement. Teachers will provide specific instructions on how to proceed in the case of fire or tornado and will oversee the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building in such cases.

Safety drills will be conducted at least once per school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedures to follow in situations where students must be secured in their building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING AND DELAYS**

If the School must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify the following television stations: **NBC4, WSYX 6, WBNS 10**. Also, parents will be notified of school closings or delays via a pre-recorded telephone message delivered to the phone number on file.

### **VISITORS**

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the School. Visitors must report to the office upon entering the School to sign in to the Raptor Technology Visitor System and obtain a pass. A drivers license must be presented and scanned to gain access to the school building. Any visitor found in the building without signing in shall be reported to the Principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the School in order to schedule a mutually convenient meeting time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior permission from the Principal.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found area is in the hallway outside the gymnasium. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity or disposed of at the end of each semester.

## **USE OF OFFICE TELEPHONES**

Students must have the permission of a staff member to use the office telephone. Students will be permitted to use the office phones for:

1. School Business
2. Personal Illness (to notify parents, go home, etc.)
3. Changes in co-curricular practice/meeting schedules
4. To return calls to parents
5. Emergencies

Parents are asked to phone the office in order to contact their students. Parents are asked NOT to call or text message student cell phones. Neither students nor teachers will be called to a telephone during school hours unless there is a true emergency. Messages will be delivered to students and staff. In the case of students, messages pertaining to social and personal matters will not be accepted. Parents who wish to talk with a teacher should leave their telephone number and the teacher will reply at his or her earliest convenience.

## **USE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

***The use of wireless communication devices/cell phones causes a continuous disruption to student learning and is an interruption to the school process.***

Elementary age students are not permitted to use wireless communication devices on school property during the school day unless a staff member gives permission. Otherwise, cell phones must be turned off and out of sight.

- Cellular devices include cell phones, communicating watches and wireless headphones.
- Use of photo capable devices in restrooms or locker rooms is strictly prohibited.

If a student is in violation of this policy we will implement the following actions:

- First offense – Student will bring their cellular device to the office for the remainder of the day and the student will pick the phone up at the end of the school day.
- Second offense – Student will bring their cellular device to the office for the remainder of the day and the parent will pick the phone up at their convenience.
- Third or Additional offense – Students will bring their cellular device to the office for the remainder of the day and the parent will pick the phone up at their convenience and a consequence may be assigned.

Students found in possession of or using a photo capable device in restrooms may be subject to disciplinary action.

Confiscated cell phones may be subject to search if the administration has reasonable suspicion the phone was used improperly. Students serving detentions of any kind or In School Restriction are not permitted to use cell phones and must present the supervisor the phone until the discipline is complete.

“Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline, possible confiscation of the device and reports made to the Licking County Sheriff.

### **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the Principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

## **SECTION II - ACADEMICS**

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the School's co-curricular and extracurricular program. No minor student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent and a current emergency medical form on file in the office. Medications normally administered at school will be administered while on field trips. The Student Code of Conduct applies to all field trips.

- A. Attendance rules apply to all field trips.
- B. While the District encourages students to participate in field trips, alternative assignments will be provided for any student whose parent does not give permission for the student to attend.
- C. Students who violate school rules may lose the privilege to go on field trips.
- D. Parents or guardians who are asked to be chaperones, must have a background check through our district website at <https://www.northridge.k12.oh.us/parents/volunteer-information>.

### **GRADES**

Northridge has a standards focused grading procedure, as well as additional notations that indicate work in progress or incomplete work. Grades indicate the extent to which the student has acquired and demonstrated the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, assignments, projects, and individual assessments.

The Elementary School applies the following reporting system:

M- The student is **meeting** the standard

P- The student is **progressing towards** mastery of the standard with classroom support

N- The student **needs more instruction or needs improvement** in this standard

\*A blank space indicates the standard was not evaluated.

### **GRADING PERIODS**

Students will receive a report card every 12 weeks (trimesters). When a student appears to be at risk of failure, reasonable efforts will be made to notify the parents so that they can talk with the teacher about what actions can be taken to improve poor grades.

### **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

A student who is withdrawing from Northridge Elementary School must:

1. Have the parent/guardian verify the withdrawal.
2. Contact teachers and return all texts and equipment that are school property.
3. Pay any financial obligation he or she may have to the cafeteria, office, library, or to any Northridge Local Schools entity.

All books must be returned and other financial obligations met before the student's transcript will be forwarded to the new school. A parent signature is required on the student records release form.

### **RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Students who display significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include, but are not limited to, academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism.

### **COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

The District provides Internet services to its students. The District's Internet system has a limited educational purpose, and has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Student use of the District's computers, network and Internet services/connection ("Network") are governed by the following principles and guidelines, and the Student Code of Conduct. Users have a limited privacy expectation in the content of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the Network.

At Northridge Local Schools, we use G Suite for Education, and we are seeking your permission to provide and manage a G Suite for Education account for your child. G Suite for Education is a set of education productivity tools from Google including GMail, Calendar, Docs, Classroom and more used by tens of millions of students and teachers around the world. Northridge students will use their G Suite accounts to complete assignments, communicate with their teachers, sign in to their Chromebooks, and learn 21st century digital citizenship skills.

In G Suite for Education Core Services, Google uses student personal information to provide, maintain, and protect the services. Google does not serve ads in the Core Services or use personal information collected in the Core Services for advertising purposes. Google provides information about the information it collects, as well as how it uses and discloses the information it collects from G Suite for Education accounts in its G Suite for Education Privacy Notice. You can read that notice online at [https://gsuite.google.com/terms/education\\_privacy.html](https://gsuite.google.com/terms/education_privacy.html)

Parents and students are advised that the District may not be able to technologically limit access through the District's Internet connection to only those services that have been authorized for the purpose of instruction, study and research related to the curriculum. Because it serves as a gateway to any publicly available file server in the world, the Internet opens classrooms and students to electronic information resources that have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages. The District utilizes a Technology Protection Measure, which is a specific technology that will protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions that are obscene, pornographic, and materials that are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. At the discretion of the Board or the Superintendent, the Technology Protection Measure may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access.

The District further utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. Nevertheless, parents/guardians are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to services on the Internet that are not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that they and/or their parents/guardians may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Parents/Guardians assume risks by consenting to allow their child to participate in the use of the Internet. Parents/Guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet. The District supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to apply for independent student access to the Internet.

Students are encouraged to use the "Network" for educational purposes. Use of the Network is a privilege, not a right. When using the Network, students must conduct themselves in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Students are responsible for good behavior on the District's computers/network and the Internet just as they are in classrooms, school hallways, and other school premises and school sponsored events. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Network, including any violation of these rules, may result in cancellation of the privilege, disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and/or civil or criminal liability. Prior to accessing the Network, students must sign the Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Agreement. Parent permission is required for minors. Parents are encouraged to discuss their values with their children so that students can make decisions regarding their use of the Network that is in accord with their personal and family values, in addition to the Board's standards.

Students must complete a mandatory training session/program regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified in Policy 7540.03 – Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety before being permitted to access the Network and/or being assigned an email address.

Smooth operation of the Network relies upon users adhering to the following guidelines. The guidelines outlined below are not exhaustive but are provided so that users are aware of their general responsibilities.

- A. Students are responsible for their behavior and communication on the Network.
- B. Students may only access the Network by using their assigned Network account. Use of another person's account/address/password is prohibited. Students may not allow other users to utilize their account/address/password. Students may not go beyond their authorized access.
- C. Students may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the Network.
- D. Students may not use the Network to engage in "hacking" or other illegal activities (e.g., software pirating; intellectual property violations; engaging in slander, libel, or harassment; threatening the life or safety of another; stalking; transmission of obscene materials or child pornography; fraud; sale of illegal substances and goods).
- E. Transmission of any material in violation of any State or Federal law or regulation, or District policy is prohibited.
- F. Any use of the Network for commercial purposes (e.g., purchasing or offering for sale personal products or services by students), advertising, or political lobbying is prohibited.
- G. Use of the Network to engage in cyberbullying is prohibited. "Cyberbullying" involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal Websites or MySpace accounts, and defamatory online personal polling Websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others." For further information on cyberbullying, visit <http://www.cyberbullying.ca>

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about a student or

school staff member on a web site or on weblog;

2. sending e-mail or instant messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to drive up the victim's cell phone bill;
3. using a camera phone to take and send embarrassing photographs/recordings of students or school staff members or post these images on video sharing sites such as YouTube;
4. posting misleading or fake photographs of students or school staff members on web sites.

To the extent permitted by the First Amendment, instances of cyberbullying off school grounds that disrupt the school environment or interfere with the learning process will be considered violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

H. Students are expected to abide by the following generally-accepted rules of network etiquette:

1. Be polite, courteous, and respectful in your messages to others. Use language appropriate to school situations in any communications made through the Network. Do not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, sexually explicit, defamatory, threatening, abusive or disrespectful language in communications through the Network (including, but not limited to, public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages).
2. Do not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
3. Do not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is told by a person to stop sending him/her messages, the student must stop.
4. Do not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
5. Never reveal names, addresses, phone numbers, or passwords of yourself or other students, family members, teachers, administrators, or other staff members while communicating on the Internet. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, disclosing personal identification information on commercial web sites.
6. Do not transmit pictures or other information that could be used to establish your identity without prior approval of a teacher.



7. Never agree to get together with someone you "meet" on-line without parent approval and participation.
  8. Check email frequently and diligently delete old mail on a regular basis from the personal mail directory to avoid excessive use of the electronic mail disk space.
  9. Students should promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable, especially any email that contains pornography. Students should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a staff member.
- 
- I. Malicious use of the Network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited. Students may not use the Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others. Students must avoid intentionally wasting limited resources. Students may not bypass or attempt to bypass the District's Technology Protection Measure. Students must immediately notify the Teacher, Principal or District Technology Administrator, if they identify a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an unlawful attempt to gain access.
  - J. All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property (i.e. copyrighted and/or trademarked). All copyright issues regarding software, information, and attributions/acknowledgement of authorship must be respected. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced.
  - K. Downloading of information onto the Board's hard drives is prohibited. If a student transfers files from information services and electronic bulletin board services, the student must check the file with a virus-detection program before opening the file for use. Only public domain software may be downloaded. If a student transfers a file or software program that infects the Network with a virus and causes damage, the student will be liable for any and all repair costs to make the Network once again fully operational.
  - L. Students must secure prior approval from a teacher or the principal before joining a Listserv (electronic mailing lists) and should not post personal messages on bulletin boards or "Listservs."
  - M. Students are prohibited from accessing or participating in online "chat rooms" or other forms of direct electronic communication (e.g., instant messaging) (other

than e-mail) without prior approval from a teacher or the principal. All such authorized communications must comply with these guidelines.

- N. Privacy in communication over the Internet and the Network is not guaranteed. In order to verify compliance with these guidelines, the Board reserves the right to monitor, review, and inspect any directories, files and/or message residing on or sent using the Network. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- O. Use of the Internet and any information procured from the Internet is at the student's own risk. The District makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Network will be error-free or without defect. The District is not responsible for any damage a user may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data, service interruptions, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet. Information (including text, graphics, audio, video, etc.) from Internet sources used in student papers, reports, and projects should be cited the same as references to printed materials. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the Network. Students or parents of students will indemnify and hold the District harmless from any losses sustained as the result of misuse of the Network by the student. Use of the Network by students will be limited to those students whose parents have signed a release of claims for damages against the District.
- P. File-sharing is strictly prohibited. Students are prohibited from downloading and/or installing file-sharing software or programs on the Network.
- Q. Students may not establish or access web-based e-mail accounts on commercial services through the Network (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo mail, etc.).
- R. Since there is no central authority on the Internet, each site is responsible for its own users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of the Board's users will be fully investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.
- S. Preservation of Resources and Priorities of Use: Computer resources are limited. Because space on disk drives and bandwidth across the lines which connect the Network (both internally and externally) are limited, neither programs nor information may be stored on the system without the permission of the principal. Each student is permitted reasonable space to store email, web, and personal files. The District reserves the right to require the purging of files in order to regain disk space. Students who require access to the Network for class-or instruction related activities have priority over other users. Students not using the Network for class-related activities may be "bumped" by any student requiring access for class-or instruction-related purposes.

- T. Game playing is not permitted at any time.

### **SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

#### **SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Northridge provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. The District authorizes student groups that are sponsored by a staff member.

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the School curriculum, but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements. Participation in these activities is a privilege and not a right, and students may be prohibited from all or part of their participation in such activities by authorized school personnel without further notice, hearing and/or appeal rights in accordance with District Policy 5610.05.

#### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

The District encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event. However, in order to ensure that students attending as non-participants are properly safeguarded, the District recommends that all elementary and middle school students must be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they arrive at the event and throughout its duration. The District will not be responsible for students if they attend without an adult chaperone. The District will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in District-sponsored events. Administration has the right to deny student attendance at school events.

#### **DANCES**

1. No Elementary student shall be permitted to attend a Middle School school dance.
2. Elementary students may have the opportunity to attend after school dances sponsored by the PTO.
3. Chaperones/advisors have the authority to ask a student to leave the premises for inappropriate attire or behavior. (Parents will be called)
4. If students leave the dance, they may not return. The advisor/administrator has final say as to re-entry.
5. All school rules apply.

### **SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT**

## **SAFETY, ORDER, AND DISCIPLINE**

The Board of Education and school administration recognizes the rights of students as individuals. It also recognizes that these rights must be balanced with the safety, order and discipline of an effective educational process in a school environment conducive to the healthy growth and development of all students. Teachers must be able to teach, supervise, and conduct their educational program. Students should not lose their right to a good education because of the disruptive actions of another student. In general, we all must consider the rights of others and assume the responsibilities that our rights place upon us. Northridge Elementary School has a zero tolerance policy relative to alcohol/drugs, violence and weapons on school property. When it comes to the safety, order or discipline of the elementary school, the administration will take appropriate action to assure that students can learn and that teachers can teach.

In addition, discipline is not in and of itself punishment. It is utilized to educate in the matter of self-control and interaction with others to reduce disruption and thereby increase the student's learning time. Discipline is an educational service to which every child is entitled to under F.A.P.E. (Free and Appropriate Public Education Act)

## **ATTENDANCE**

It is important for every student in Ohio to attend school every day. Missing school has long-term, negative effects on students, such as lower achievement and graduation rates. There are many reasons students miss school, but districts can often directly impact their students' attendance, by using data to identify and assist students who may need extra support and services. It is Northridge Elementary School's goal to target support to get students to school every day.

Attending school is both necessary and the law. State law requires school attendance until the age of eighteen. Students who do not maintain good attendance may fail, lose certain privileges, have a driver's license revoked, or be subject to truancy procedures with the court system. The school has an attendance policy to avoid these negative consequences.

Attendance is required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session or during the attendance sessions to which s/he has been assigned.

## **ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS**

It is the purpose of these guidelines to provide a clear and concise reference regarding attendance procedures. There are times when individual plans or preferences may cause you to request an exemption from the rule. The school administrator has the authority to challenge any excuse.

## **ABSENCE**

State law makes the school responsible for the whereabouts of all students, at all times, during the school day. The District has adopted policies to comply with compulsory attendance laws. Absence hours from school shall be classified as one of four types: excused, excused medical, unexcused, truancy.

The following factors are constitute a reasonable excuse for time missed at school:

- A. personal illness (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required)
- B. appointment with a health care provider
- C. illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
- D. quarantine of the home
- E. death in the family
- F. necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- G. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
- H. out-of-state travel (up to a maximum twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction) to participate in a District-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity

Any classroom assignment missed due to the absence shall be completed by the student.

- I. such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
- J. medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751
- K. service as a precinct officer at a primary, special or general election in accordance with the program set forth in Policy 5725
- L. college visitation

The District requires verification of the date and time of the visitation by the college, university, or technical college.

- M. absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status
- N. absences due to a student being homeless

### **STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN ABSENT**

1. A parent or guardian must phone, email, or send written note the school and inform the office of a student's absence before the start of the day of absence.
2. A student who fails to provide a written excuse within two days after an absence will be unexcused.

When a parent or guardian of a student has failed to report an absence, the secretary will make at least one attempt to contact the parent or guardian within 120 minutes after the beginning of each school day.

### **ADDITIONAL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

1. A student is considered 'habitually truant' if the student is absent without legitimate excuse for:
  - a. Absent 30 or more consecutive hours

- b. Absent 42 or more hours in one month
- c. Absent 72 or more hours in one year
- 2. A student is considered to have 'excessive absences' and receive a notice when:
  - a. Absent 38 or more hours in one school month with or without a legitimate excuse; or
  - b. Absent 65 or more hours in one school year with or without a legitimate excuse. Students hitting this threshold will have to provide a medical excuse for any further absences.
- 3. A student absent without the consent of his/her parent is unexcused.
- 4. A student may also be declared unexcused when he/she:
  - a. Leaves school without signing out in the office
  - b. Is absent from school without prior permission from a parent and the administration
  - c. Is absent from class, study hall, and/or lunch room without permission (skipping)
  - d. Obtains a pass to go to a certain place and does not report there
  - e. Becomes ill and goes home or stays in restroom or other non-authorized area instead of reporting to the office
  - f. Comes to school, but does not attend class
- 5. Should a student fall under the circumstances of habitually truant, an absence intervention team will collaboratively develop a specialized absence intervention plan for the student.
- 6. Absence intervention plans incorporate academic and non-academic support to help the student and remove barriers to regular attendance.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

- 1. Failing to bring a proper, written excuse upon return to school within 2 school days. Notes submitted after 48 hours will not be accepted.
- 2. Any absence not covered by the above.

### **MAKE-UP OF TESTS OR OTHER SCHOOL WORK**

Students who are absent from school shall be given the opportunity to make up missed work. The student should contact their teachers as soon as possible to obtain assignments. The number of days for completion of makeup work will be equivalent to the number of days of absence.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to an absence, s/he should make arrangements with the teacher to take the test at another time. If s/he misses a State mandated assessment or other standardized test, the student should consult with the principal to arrange for administration of the test at another time.

### **SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL**

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence.

A. A suspended student will be allowed to make-up school work missed due to suspension and will receive credit for work assigned on days missed. It will be the responsibility of the student to make arrangements in order to make up all work missed.

B. Tests may also be made up.

### **TARDINESS**

Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Failure to arrive on time is tardiness. Conscientious effort in getting to school daily on time will help to alleviate unnecessary clerical problems, disruption to classes, and avoid the need for disciplinary action. For attendance purposes, tardies will be marked excused or unexcused. An excused tardy is one that is accompanied by a note from a parent, guardian, or teacher stating an appropriate reason for the tardiness.

During each nine weeks, a student is permitted three (3) unexcused tardies before intervention. Intervention may include lunch detentions, Wednesday School, and ISS.

### **PRE-PLANNED ABSENCE**

We realize that on occasion situations occur where students will miss school for family vacations or other events. It is our expectation that parents avoid interrupting the child's educational program whenever possible as alternative measures cannot replace classroom experiences.

Parents arranging vacations or any other planned absence on regular school days need to complete form which can be obtained from the Attendance Office or can be found on our district website.

These absences can only be excused if within a student's first 65 hours of absences in a school year.

1. A written [Pre-Planned Absence Form](#), signed by the parent, must be given to the principal a minimum of five (5) days prior to the beginning date of the pre-planned absence.
2. Make-up work is required and is to be returned to the appropriate teacher within three (3) days after the student returns. Missed tests are to be taken. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher for make-up work before leaving.
3. These absences can only be excused if within a student's first 65 hours of absences in a school year (approximately 10 school days).
1. Additional days used for the purpose of vacation must be authorized by the local Superintendent of Schools.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

A major component of the educational program (at the school) is to prepare students to become responsible citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards. Students are expected to behave in accordance with Federal, State and local laws and rules and District Policies and Administrative Guidelines, and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Staff will take corrective action to discipline a student

and/or to modify the student's behavior when a student's behavior does not fall within these parameters.

School staff may report suspected criminal misconduct by a student to law enforcement. Law enforcement officers will be permitted to carry out necessary law enforcement functions in the schools, including the removal of a student from school grounds in appropriate circumstances.

### **EXPECTED BEHAVIORS**

Students are expected to:

- A. act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- B. be prompt to school and attentive in class;
- C. work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, or ethnic background;
- D. complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- E. help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
- F. act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the School.

### **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**

It is the responsibility of students, teachers, and administrators to maintain a classroom environment that allows:

- a. a teacher to communicate effectively with all students in the class; and
- b. all students in the class have the opportunity to learn.

### **DRESS CODE**

The objective of this dress code is to provide an appropriate educational environment while allowing students to dress comfortably within limits to facilitate learning. Students' attire can have a positive or negative effect on the learning process, contribute to students' success, and generate a safe and positive learning environment. We expect students to maintain the type of appearance that is not distracting to students, teachers, or the educational process of the school. Parents and children are equally responsible for the appearance of their child. There is appropriate and inappropriate attire for all of life's activities. Please help your child adhere to these guidelines. The dress code is in effect during extra-curricular activities.

- a. Hats (including stocking hats) or other head coverings, sunglasses, coats/jackets, and other items normally worn outside are to be stored in lockers during the school day and not worn to class or other indoor activities except during special occasions.
- b. Personal articles or tattoos with writing or symbols that make a reference to sex, sexual innuendo, drugs, alcohol, profanity, tobacco, death, gang associated apparel, hate groups, violence, or illegal activities or that are disruptive to the education process are prohibited.
- c. Shirts that offer a view of a student's midriff or chest area through the underarm at any point during school are prohibited for boys and girls.
- d. Spaghetti strap tops are not permitted. Shoulder areas must be completely covered as well as the bust. Cleavage may not be seen. Cut-off shirts are not permitted.



- e. Shorts and skirts may be worn when shorts and skirts are at least half way down between the student's hip and knee.
- f. Pants must be worn above the hip with a belt if necessary. A shirt that covers the waistline does not excuse pants that are worn too low. Length of pants must not exceed the bottom of shoes.
- g. Stretch pants and/or yoga pants may NEVER be "see through" and must be appropriate as determined by the administration.
- h. Writing across the buttocks is prohibited.
- i. Sleepwear, including blankets and slippers, is prohibited.
- j. Undergarments must never be seen.
- k. Ripped and torn clothing that inappropriately exposes a student is prohibited.
- l. Any heavy chain on a student used to secure wallets, worn as a belt, or worn as a necklace or bracelet is prohibited.
- m. All students must wear shoes. Slippers are not considered shoes.
- n. Other offensive symbols, flags, patches, or stickers that may be deemed offensive and/or interrupt the school process is prohibited.
- o. The administration has the final say as to the appropriateness of student attire.

Students who are representing Northridge at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

### **GANGS**

Gangs that initiate, advocate or promote activities that threaten the safety or well being of persons or that are disruptive to the school environment will not be tolerated.

Students wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures that symbolize gang membership or causing and/or participating in activities that are designed to intimidate another student will be disciplined.

### **CARE OF PROPERTY**

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student and/or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or repair. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

### **BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND INTIMIDATION**

The District will strive to provide a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The District encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while en route to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s); or violence within a dating relationship.

Any "Electronic act" means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional wellbeing. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means cyberbullying through electronically transmitted acts (i.e., Internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and 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(s).

## **COMPLAINTS**

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including the 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, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Principal or Associate Principal for review, investigation, and action.

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous 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 complaints shall be reasonably specific including the 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. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information

provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the building Principal or Assistant Principal for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or expulsion. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of District policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

### **PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY**

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the District's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

Allegations of criminal misconduct and suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or to Child Protective Services in accordance with statute. District personnel shall cooperate with investigations by such agencies.

### **ZERO TOLERANCE**

No form of violent, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, including excessive truancy, will be tolerated.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

Each of the behaviors and/or types of misconduct described below are prohibited and may subject the student to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, student conference, parent/guardian notification, parent/guardian conference, detention, in-school discipline, suspension and/or expulsion from school. Furthermore, any criminal acts committed at or related to the School will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined at school. Certain criminal acts may result in permanent exclusion from school.

#### **1. Academic Misconduct**

Students shall not cheat, plagiarize, alter, falsify, share, copy, submit work to other students, or misuse information. Authorization or credit must be given by proper citation for information obtained from any source; this includes print materials and technology-generated information.

## **2. Acceptable Use of Technology**

Students shall not use available technology tools for illegal, unethical, non-educational, and/or for-profit use. Students shall not engage in unauthorized recording using any electronic device while on school property or during school hours. (Also, see Computer & Technology Acceptable Use)

## **3. Possession/use of drugs and/or alcohol**

Possessing, using, transmitting or concealing, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, controlled substance including, but not limited to, narcotics, mood altering drugs, counterfeit controlled substances, lookalikes, over the counter stimulants or depressants, anabolic steroids, or drug related paraphernalia.

## **4. Possession/use of tobacco**

Possession, consumption, distribution, purchase or attempt to purchase, and/or use of tobacco products or electronic cigarettes or similar devices in school, on school grounds, on school buses, in Board-owned vehicles, within any indoor facility owned or leased by the Board, and at any interscholastic competition, extra-curricular event, or other school sponsored event. Tobacco products include, but are not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco. The term "tobacco" includes any product that contains tobacco, is derived from tobacco, contains nicotine, or e-cigarettes and other electronic smoking devices, but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence. Smoking of electronic, "vapor" or "juul" other substitute forms of cigarettes, or clove cigarettes is also prohibited.

## **5. Use and/or possession of a firearm**

Bringing a firearm (as defined in the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994) onto school property or to any school-sponsored activity, competition, program, or event, regardless of where it occurs, will result in a mandatory one (1) year expulsion under Ohio law. This expulsion may be reduced on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent using the guideline(s) set forth in District Policy 5610.

- A. Firearm is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) that 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 the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994). Firearms include any unloaded firearm and any firearm that is inoperable but that can be readily operated.
- B. Students are prohibited from knowingly possessing an object on school premises, in a school or a school building, at a school activity or on a school bus that is indistinguishable from a firearm, whether or not the object is capable of being fired, and indicating they are in possession of such an object and that it is a firearm or knowingly displaying or brandishing the object and indicating it is a firearm.

## **6. Use and/or possession of a weapon**

A weapon is any device that may be used for offensive or defensive purposes, including but not limited to conventional objects such as guns, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Possession and/or use of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion.

A knife is defined as any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle, a razor blade or any similar device that is used for, or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.

## **7. Knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence**

Because the District believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the Principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

## **8. Arson**

Intentional or purposeful destruction or damage to school or district buildings or property by means of fire. Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony.

## **9. Fighting or Assault**

Students shall not knowingly act or behave in such a way as that attempts or threatens to cause, or does or could cause, physical harm to another student, any school employee, or other persons. These actions include, but will not be limited to, fighting, unauthorized touching and disruptions. Students also shall not entice another to fight, either with themselves or with another student.

## **10. Gambling**

Students shall not engage in or promote games of chance, placing of bets, or risk anything of value through any medium.

## **11. Extortion**

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law.

## **12. Falsification of school work, identification, forgery**

Falsifying signatures or data, or refusing to give proper identification or giving false information to a staff member. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses, as well as use of false I.D.'s.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and will subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action.

### **13. Bomb Threats, and other false alarms and reports**

Making a bomb threat (i.e., intentionally giving a false alarm of a bomb) against a school building or any premises at which a school activity is being held at the time the threat is made may result in expulsion for a period of up to one (1) school year. Additionally, intentionally giving a false alarm of a fire, or tampering or interfering with any fire alarm is prohibited. It should be remembered that false emergency alarms or reports endanger the safety forces that are responding to the alarm/report, the citizens of the community, and the persons in the building. What may seem like a prank, is a dangerous stunt that is against the law and will subject the student to disciplinary action.

### **14. Possession and/or use of explosives and/or fireworks**

Possessing or using any compound or mixture, the Elementary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion, with substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat (including, but not limited to explosives and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs and poppers). Additionally, possessing or offering for sale any substance, combination of substances or article prepared to produce a visible and/or audible effect by combustion, explosion or detonation.

### **15. Trespassing**

Although schools are public facilities, the law allows the District to restrict access to school property. Being present in any District-owned facility or portion of a District-owned facility when it is closed to the public or when the student does not have the authorization to be there, or unauthorized presence in a District owned vehicle; or unauthorized access or activity in a District-owned computer, into district, school or staff computer files, into a school or district file server, or into the Network. When a student has been removed, suspended, expelled, or permanently excluded from school, the student is prohibited from being present on school property without authorization of the principal.

### **16. Theft, or knowingly receiving or possessing stolen property**

Unauthorized taking of property of another person or receiving or possessing such property. Students caught stealing will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students should not bring anything of value to school without prior authorization from the principal. The School is not responsible for personal property.

### **17. Insubordination**

Students are expected to comply with the reasonable directions of staff. Willful refusal or failure to follow or comply with an appropriate direction given by a staff member, or acting in defiance of staff members.

### **18. Damaging property (Vandalism)**

Defacing, cutting, or otherwise damaging property that belongs to the school, district, other students, employees or others and disregard for school property.

**19. Persistent absence or tardiness**

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or to have a legitimate excuse for their absence. Penalties for unexcused absences can range from detention to Wednesday School to Suspension to a referral to court and/or revocation of the student's driver's license. Excessive (7 or more) tardies to school may result in loss of school driving privileges.

**20. Refusing to accept discipline**

Students failing to comply with disciplinary penalties may face enhanced penalties for such action.

**21. Displays of affection/sexual activities**

Affection between students is personal and not meant for public display. Students will not engage in close physical contact. Any contact beyond holding hands is not permissible.

**22. Violation of individual school/classroom rules**

Each learning environment has different rules for students. These rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules within each learning environment, all of which will be consistent with this Code.

**22. Violation of bus rules** (see Section V – Transportation)**23. Interference, disruption or obstruction of the educational process**

Any actions or manner of dress that materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with school activities or the educational process, or which threaten to do so are unacceptable. Such disruptions include, but are not limited to, delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic and performing arts events.

**24. Harassment and/or Aggressive Behavior (including Bullying/Cyberbullying)**

The District encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Harassment and/or aggressive behavior (including bullying/cyberbullying) toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and any speech or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive learning environment. The District will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. Individuals engaging in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

Conduct constituting sexual harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

- a. verbal harassment or abuse;
- b. pressure for sexual activity;
- c. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
- d. unwelcome touching;
- e. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;

- f. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades or safety;
- g. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- h. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

Conduct constituting harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or disability may take different forms, including, but not limited to, the following:

**A. Verbal:**

The making of offensive written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

**B. Nonverbal:**

Placing offensive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures based upon a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

**C. Physical:**

Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, pushing, shoving, hissing, or spitting, on or by a fellow staff member, students, or other person associated with the District, or third parties, based upon the person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of harassment and/or aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment and aggressive behavior. Making intentionally false reports about harassment or aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Anyone having further questions concerning prohibited behaviors and/or the complaint process should request a copy of District policies and administrative guidelines 5517 and 5517.01.



**25. Hazing**

Students shall not threaten, act, or participate in or attempt to threaten, act or participate in any act or acts that injures, degrades, disgraces, or tends to injure, degrade or disgrace any student.

**26. Profanity and/or Obscenity**

Students shall not speak, write or use technology to obtain or to generate, profane, vulgar, derogatory, demeaning, sexual or other improper or inappropriate language, or use profane, vulgar, sexual or other improper or inappropriate gestures or signs or engage or attempt to engage in profane, vulgar, sexual or other improper or inappropriate actions.

**27. Fighting**

Engaging in adversarial physical contact (differentiated from poking, pushing, shoving or scuffling) in which one or the other party(ies) or both contributed to the situation by verbally instigating a fight and/or physical action. Promoting or instigating a fight (i.e., contributing to a fight verbally or through behavior).

**28. Lighting Incendiary Devices**

Unauthorized igniting of matches, lighters and other devices that produce flames.

**29. Inducing Panic**

Students shall not by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, harassment, sexual harassment, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct, cause, attempt, or threaten to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, activity, or function of the school. Students shall not urge other students to engage in such conduct for the purpose of causing, attempting or threatening to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, activity or function of the school. While this list is not intended to be all-inclusive, the following acts addressed by the code of conduct illustrate the kinds of misconduct prohibited by this rule.

**DISCIPLINE**

The building principal is charged with the proper enforcement of discipline in the total school setting. He/She has the discretionary authority to apply or authorize other certificated personnel to use the following disciplinary measures to correct student behavior. It is important to remember that the School's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school transportation, and on property not owned or controlled by the District but that is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on property owned or controlled by the District. Furthermore, students may be disciplined for conduct that, regardless of where or when it occurs, is directed at a District official or employee, or the property of such official or employee or affects school operations.

Because it is not possible to list every misbehavior that occurs, misbehaviors not listed above will be responded to as necessary by staff.

## **DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES**

### **INFORMAL DISCIPLINE**

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It may include change of seating, location, detentions assigned during lunch, and In School Restriction.

#### **Detentions**

Types of detentions may include:

- Lunch Detentions

#### **In School Restriction**

After giving students and their parents one day's notice, students will report to the office for In School Restriction.

The following rules apply to Detention and In-School Restriction:

- A. Students are required to have class assignments with them.
- B. Students are not to communicate with each other unless given permission to do so.
- C. Students are to remain in their designated seats at all times unless permission is granted to do otherwise.
- D. Students shall not be allowed to put their heads down or sleep.
- E. No electronic communication devices, cards, magazines, or other entertainment/recreational articles or devices shall be allowed in the room.
- F. Cellular phones must be given to the supervisor during Detention and In-School Restriction.

**\*\*Failure to timely serve a Detention or In-School Discipline may lead to suspension from school. Any such suspension shall be in accordance with District guidelines on suspension and expulsion.**

### **FORMAL DISCIPLINE**

Formal discipline involves removal of the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to one (1) school day, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, expulsion for up to eighty (80) school days or the number of days remaining in a semester, whichever is greater, and permanent exclusion. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Any student who is expelled from school for more than twenty (20) days or for any period of time if the expulsion will extend into the following semester or school year will be provided with information about services or programs offered by public and private agencies that work toward improving those aspects of the student's attitude and behavior that contributed to the incident that gave rise to the student's expulsion. The Superintendent at his/her discretion may require/allow a student to perform community service in conjunction with or in place of an expulsion. The Superintendent may impose a community service requirement beyond the end of the school year in lieu of applying the expulsion to the following school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension, expulsion, and permanent exclusion may be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension are entitled to an informal meeting with the building administrator prior to removal. Also, students being considered for expulsion are entitled to an informal meeting with the Superintendent or designee prior to removal. During the informal meeting, the student will be notified of the charges and given the opportunity to respond.

Students involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the School rules.

If a student commits a crime while under the School's jurisdiction, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as action through local law enforcement.

### **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Before a student is suspended, expelled, or permanently excluded from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

As long as the in-school discipline is served entirely in the school setting, it will not require any notice or meeting, or be subject to appeal.

In all cases where disciplinary action is anticipated concerning a student, the student will be given an opportunity at an informal hearing to state his or her case.

In the case of suspension, a student will be given a written notice of the intention to suspend which will contain the reasons for the suspension. Out-of-School Suspensions are considered the most severe of discipline procedures. Unlike In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions may carry with it the denial of credit for any missed work.

In the case of expulsion, the Superintendent will issue written notice of the intention to expel, which will include reasons for the expulsion. In an expulsion, the student, parent, or representative has an opportunity to appear before a hearing officer designated by the Superintendent to challenge the reasons for the expulsion.

### **SUSPENSION OF BUS RIDING/TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES**

When a student is being considered for suspension of bus riding/transportation privileges, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the reason. The student will be given an opportunity to address the basis for the proposed suspension at an informal hearing. After that informal hearing, the Principal or Assistant Principal will decide whether or not to suspend his/her bus riding/transportation privileges for all or part of the school year.

If a student's bus riding/transportation privileges are suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Administrators may search a student or his/her property (including vehicles, purses, backpacks, gym bags, etc.) with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that a search will lead to the discovery of evidence of a violation of law or school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction and the student's age. General housekeeping inspection of school property may be conducted with reasonable notice. Student lockers are the property of the District and students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in their contents or in the contents of any other District property including desks or other containers. School authorities may conduct random searches of the lockers and their contents at any time without announcement. Unannounced and random canine searches may also be conducted in classrooms, hallways, lockers, and parking lots.

Additionally, students have NO reasonable expectation of privacy in their actions in public areas including but not limited to, common areas, hallways, cafeterias, classrooms and gymnasiums. The District may use video cameras in such areas and on all school vehicles transporting students to and from regular and extracurricular activities.

Anything that is found in the course of a search may be used as evidence of a violation of school rules or the law, and may be taken, held or turned over to the police. The School reserves the right not to return items that have been confiscated.

If a law enforcement or children's services agency removes a student from school, the building administrator will notify a parent.

## **SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION**

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**

The School provides transportation for students who live within district boundaries. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting Petermann Transportation at 740-967-7753.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

Students who are riding to and from school on District-provided transportation must follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation. The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain transportation safety. Students must comply with basic safety rules.

If a student misbehaves on the bus, his/her actions may be recorded and submitted to the Principal or Dean of Students and can be used as evidence of misbehavior.

### **Penalties for Infractions**

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.

### **Transportation of Students By Private Vehicle**

When transportation by District vehicle is either not available or feasible, there may be a need to provide transportation to students by private vehicle. However, no students will be permitted to ride in a private vehicle unless written consent is provided by each student's parent using Form 8660 F2 – Parental Consent for Transportation by Private Vehicle. Upon request, parents of participating students will be given the name of the driver, the owner of the vehicle, and the description of the vehicle.

