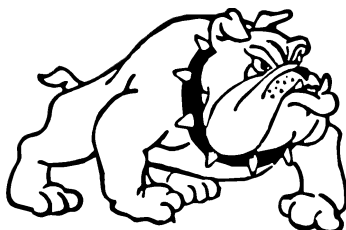


# **OTSEGO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**



**540 Washington Street  
Otsego, Michigan 49078**

**(269) 694-7500 (Main office)**  
**(269) 694-7580 (Attendance)**  
**(269) 694-7500 (Athletics)**

Mark VanderKlok, Principal  
Sarah Patin, Assistant Principal

## **Otsego Public Schools Board of Education**

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Amy Stender     | President      |
| Shelly Jirgens  | Vice President |
| Todd Bentley    | Treasurer      |
| Mike Keeler     | Secretary      |
| Shannon Goodwin | Trustee        |
| Michael Dafoe   | Trustee        |
| Scott Ernestes  | Trustee        |
| Jeff Haase      | Superintendent |

## **Otsego Middle School Administrative Team**

|                 |                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Mark VanderKlok | Principal                  |
| Sarah Patin     | Assistant Principal        |
| Kaleigh Buris   | Social Worker              |
| Joy Fullam      | School Counselor           |
| Diane Hitchcock | Student Support Specialist |

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

# OTSEGO MIDDLE SCHOOL

## TEACHERS AND ASSIGNMENTS 2024-2025

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Nate Alkire       | STREAM/STEM               |
| Deanne Basse      | Art                       |
| Kaelyn Black      | Spanish                   |
| Allison Breese    | Title I, ESL              |
| Tom Brown         | Social Studies            |
| Abigail DuFort    | English Language Arts     |
| Karrie Edwards    | Science/Leadworthy        |
| Jessica Grove     | Band/Choir                |
| Jake Jewett       | Social Studies            |
| Sarah Jewett      | English Language Arts     |
| Traxel Jirgens    | Math Interventionist      |
| Jake Knash        | Life Fitness/Leadworthy   |
| Michael Kuiper    | Science                   |
| Chad LaRowe       | Social Studies            |
| Ashley Leneway    | Reading intervention/ELA  |
| Meredith Lincoln  | Choir                     |
| Christy McEvoy    | Math                      |
| Perri Mercer      | Math                      |
| Mary Meyer        | Social Studies            |
| Stormie Moore     | Special Education-Level 2 |
| Lucy Neumann      | Special Education         |
| Cameron Ouellette | English Language Arts/AIM |
| Mitch Piersma     | Band/General Music        |
| Tera Secord       | Health/Physical Education |
| Lori Smalldon     | Math                      |
| Heather Sokoloski | Math                      |
| Chad Steffes      | Science                   |
| Jennifer Sutton   | Science                   |
| Madison Thomas    | Special Education         |
| Emily Whitenack   | Special Education         |
| Beth Zartman      | English Language Arts     |

# OTSEGO MIDDLE SCHOOL

## SUPPORT STAFF 2023-2024

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Savannah Devine | Administrative Assistant               |
| Carrie Curtiss  | Attendance and Athletics Secretary     |
| Anna Starr      | Behavioral Health Services Coordinator |
| Melissa Garrett | District Diagnostic Consultant         |
| Sarah Maxwell   | District Therapist                     |
| Karlee Junkins  | Inclusion Coach                        |
| Taylor Dendel   | Occupational Therapist                 |
| Aubrey DeHaan   | Speech Pathologist                     |
| Tina Kalleward  | Media Center                           |
| Alizah Harris   | Paraprofessional                       |
| India Polingo   | Paraprofessional                       |
| Chelsea Rice    | Paraprofessional                       |
| Ric Saucedo     | Head Custodian                         |
| Gary Gomber     | Custodian                              |
| Jon Curtiss     | Custodian                              |
| Josh Scott      | Custodian                              |

Welcome to Otsego Middle School and the 2024-2025 school year. We are looking forward to an exciting and rewarding school year. It is our goal to offer you the finest educational opportunities within our means. This handbook is written to act as a guide for each student and parent/guardian. Please read this information as a family so you are aware of the procedures that will be followed throughout the year. The Otsego Middle School is proud of its accomplishments. We are looking forward to a successful year.

## **Otsego Public School District**

### **Mission Statement**

Otsego Public Schools is a student-centered learning community empowering every individual to achieve excellence.

## **Otsego Public School District Vision**

*Expect Excellence*

### **Building Theme**

“The Jennings Rule”

No child shall be made fun of, embarrassed or humiliated in any way before, during or after school hours. Each student, no matter how ‘different’ , will be accorded the respect and dignity which is his or her human right.”

*...Jennings Michael Burch*

### **Capturing Kids’ Hearts**

Above all, the culture and climate throughout the district is one of caring, concern and compassion. We know that building strong relationships with the individual student strengthens their educational experience and performance. All staff are trained in Capturing Kids’ Hearts, a national program that aims to help students achieve a higher level of learning through the simple concept of caring. OMS has been a CKH National Showcase School for the last 5 years. At Otsego Middle school we believe in taking care of our school, each other, and ourselves and in working to demonstrate the following CKH Character Traits: Empathy, Self-Direct, Teamwork, Responsibility, Respect, Kindness, Courage, Perseverance, and Integrity.

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## **After School Guidelines**

There are a number of events that occur after school. These include academic, musical and athletic activities. If you are in the building after regular school hours, it is essential that you are supervised by an adult.

Student athletes must report to their designated area and be prepared for practice no later than 3:00 pm

### **Non-Athletic**

If you are involved in a non-athletic activity after school, you should report to the specified room and check in with the adult supervisor. You must remain there for the duration of the activity.

If you are waiting for a ride home, you should be waiting in the front by our main entrance and not wandering the hallways. Be sure your parents/guardians know where to pick you up after the activity. A student is not allowed in the academic areas unless previous arrangements have been made with a staff member. This expectation is for the safety and welfare of our students.

Firm beginning and ending times will be well publicized in advance.

- Students must arrange for their own transportation unless organized by the school.
- School dress code and established behavior code will apply at all after school activities.
- Activities are for Otsego Middle School students only and are limited to those in the designated grade.
- Once a person leaves an activity, he/she will not be allowed to return.

### **Attending Extracurricular Activities**

Student attendance at after-school events (dances, athletic events, concerts, etc.) is a privilege that is extended to students in good standing. In order to be eligible to attend after-school events for the current trimester, students must have no more than 4 unexcused absences for the trimester and must be passing 4 of their six classes. Students who are suspended for serious offenses (including and not limited to drugs, tobacco, any electronic inhalers or supplies, alcohol, any violence, threats, harassment, and weapons) will have their privileges to attend after-school events suspended for a period of time equal to one trimester of school.

### **Participation in Extracurricular and Co-curricular Activities**

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

## Athletics

Student athletes must report to their designated area and be prepared for practice no later than 3:00 pm

Otsego Middle School provides a variety of athletic activities in which our students may participate, providing they meet any eligibility requirements that may apply. The following is a list of activities currently available. For further information, contact the athletic director or visit [www.otsegops.org](http://www.otsegops.org), click on the middle school and then click on athletics.

**Fall sports:** co-ed cross country (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>), football (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) and girls volleyball (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

**Winter I sports:** boys basketball (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) and competitive cheer (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

**Winter II sports:** girls basketball (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) and boys wrestling (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

**Spring sports:** co-ed track (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

Students participating in athletics must have a current physical on file that is dated on or after April 15<sup>th</sup> of that school year, consent form, \$20.00 participation fee, and a waiver form if the athlete is playing football. In order to participate, these forms must be uploaded to Final Forms. You can access that through the athletic website or <https://otsego-mi.finalforms.com/>.

**Participation on an athletic team is a privilege-** Participation in middle school athletics is an introduction to interscholastic sports, skill development, sportsmanship and team philosophy, which are important goals at this level. Membership on a team is to be earned by continuously adhering to the standards of conduct, both in and out of school. Playing time is guaranteed to all eligible team members during each contest – but not equally.

**Athletic Eligibility** – The student must be passing 4 classes with a D- (60%) or better to be eligible for athletic participation. An administrative check will be every Friday at 10:00 a.m. during the specific season so that eligibility will be determined on a weekly basis. Each period of ineligibility will be from Monday to Saturday. Athletes will be expected to continue practicing even when ineligible for contests. In order to participate in an athletic contest, a student must be in attendance all day on the contest day.

### Behavioral Conduct

Behavior misconduct by student-athletes will not be tolerated. Behavioral misconduct shall include but shall not be limited to:

- A. *Insubordination; or*
- B. *Any behavior or action which is negligently or intentionally injurious to a person or property or which places a person or property at risk of injury or damage; or*
- C. *Any behavior which disrupts the appropriate conduct of a school program or activity;*
- D. *Hazing, bullying, or harassment of any kind; or*
- E. *Use of profanity; or*
- F. *Exhibition of bad sportsmanship; or*
- G. *Violation of any school rules or regulations or law.*

Coaches and school officials will impose disciplinary measures appropriate to the offenses committed. The discipline imposed for any particular offense shall be at the sole and exclusive discretion of the coaching staff and school officials.



## **Absence from School on Day of Activity**

An athlete who is absent from school is ineligible for any activity on that day unless the absence has been approved by the principal/assistant principal/AD. Exceptions may be made by the coach: (1) for a medical absence pre-arranged with the coach, or (2) for a death in the athlete's family. An athlete who has one or more absences or who has been suspended from school may be suspended from participation in athletic activities by administration.

An athlete who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may be withheld from Saturday activities at the sole discretion of the coach.

### **Travel**

All athletes must travel to athletic events with their team (when transportation is provided by the school). If students have a conflict and are not able to ride the bus to the athletic event, they must have prior approval from the principal/assistant principal/AD in order to participate in the athletic event.

## **Attendance**

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

### **Notification of Absence instead**

If a student must be absent from school, it is the parent's/guardians' responsibility to properly report the absence. To properly report the absence, the parent/guardian must call the attendance office at 694-7580 the day of the absence and leave a message on the answering machine before 8:00 a.m. If a parent/guardian has not contacted the office regarding attendance, written notification by the parent/guardian must be within 48 hours or the absence will be coded as unexcused. If a student will be absent for an extended period due to illness, the parent/guardian need not phone in daily but should keep the school updated on the student's condition and request make-up work for completion at home.

**Attendance Requirements** – Students are expected to be in school on time, every day. Please attempt to schedule appointments during non-school hours. Students must be in attendance all day to be eligible for co-curricular and extra-curricular practices or performances. School related absences are exempt. The following guidelines have been established to encourage good attendance habits for your child.

- Five Absences: Parent/guardian will receive a letter from the school
- Seven Absences: Letter will be sent to parent/guardians warning of truancy referral and a meeting will be scheduled with administration. Therefore, after 7 absences the student will be considered unexcused for each additional day, unless proper documentation is provided for the absence. Documentation previous to the 7<sup>th</sup> day a student is absent can be provided by a parent/guardian. Verification will be requested for additional absences beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> day from a physician, dentist, orthodontist, optometrist, or other appropriate medical personnel.
- Ten Unexcused Absences: Student will be reported truant to the Allegan County Truancy Officer

**There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused.** Excused absences include: illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health, or other reason approved by the principal. All other absences are considered unexcused (i.e., oversleeping, faulty personal transportation, family trips that are not pre-arranged at least 2 days prior to the absence, lack of timely notice to the school office to report the absence). Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the principal.

*The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.*

### **Pre-Arranged Absences**

Pre-arranged Absence Forms, which may be obtained in the Office, are required for all absences of more than one day, for which advance notice is available. *The forms are only used if a student will be absent an entire day.*

Arrangements for an absence of this type should be completed within the required period of time prior to the absence. Failure to properly submit an advance absence form will result in unexcused absences. These forms are generally not used for absences scheduled by the school.

**Tardiness** - Each student is expected to be in his/her assigned location throughout the school day. Students arriving late to school must come to the office to sign in and get a tardy pass before reporting to class. Students arriving to school more than 20 minutes late for their first class will be marked absent. Students will be allowed three tardies per trimester. The fourth tardy, and each subsequent tardy, will result in a detention. Failure to serve the detention within the week will result in Saturday School. Failure to serve an assigned Saturday school may result in further consequences such as suspension, truancy recommendation, and/or a Parent/Guardian meeting

**Vacation During the School Year** – All vacations must be pre-excused. It is the student's responsibility to obtain a pre-excused slip from the main office at least five days prior to the scheduled absence. Make up work will be issued according to the recommendation of the teacher (before the student leaves or upon returning). It is not recommended that students go on vacation while school is in session; however, we will excuse up to 7 additional days for family vacation.

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

In order for a student to participate in or attend after school activities, they must be in attendance ALL DAY on the day of any activity. No exceptions will be granted without just reason and prior approval of the administration. When the activity in question occurs on a non-scheduled school day, attendance is required the last school day before the event.

#### **Arrival and Departure Times for Students**

- The building will be open to students at 7:15 a.m. All students are to enter the building through the doors by the gymnasium (bus loop). In order to avoid congestion at the bus drop off, parents are asked to drop their children off in the circular drop off (between the middle school and Washington Elementary).
- Students are to leave the building no later than 3:00 p.m. unless under the direct supervision of a coach, teacher or activity sponsor.

- When the students are dismissed on half days, they are to leave the building immediately after the final bell unless they have a written signed excuse by a teacher and/or administration.
- The office opens at 7:15 a.m. and closes at 3:30 p.m.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

Students are urged to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. However, if the appointment times are during school hours, it is expected that he/she will miss only one-half day or less for these appointments.

### **Leaving Campus**

The Otsego Middle School operates under a closed campus. **All students are required to stay on the Middle School grounds from the time of their initial arrival until they are dismissed at the end of the school day.** Students who must leave due to illness or an appointment must sign out in the office.

### **Request for Homework**

**In case of extended illness**, assignments may be requested through the Attendance Office. Homework will be made available after 24 hours of the request. **Students who are absent for 1 day only should obtain their work from his/her teachers upon return to school.**

### **Assemblies**

School assemblies will be held as a part of the education program. When attending assemblies, please follow these few and simple rules and any additional furnished by teachers, which will help maintain order:

- Enter and leave the assembly in an orderly manner
- Sit in your assigned area
- Show your respect to your school, your classmates, and the performer by being attentive at all times
- Show appreciation by applause – do not stomp feet or whistle
- Students should remain seated until the end of the assembly

### **Awards & Recognition of Student Achievement**

- **Scholastic awards will be presented at the end of the school year.** Those students obtaining a 4.0 for the 1st and 2nd trimester in all classes will be on the “4.0” honor roll. Those students obtaining a cumulative grade point of a 3.5 and above for the 1st and 2nd trimester will be on the Honor Roll.
- **Student of the Month** - Each month, the staff at OMS recognizes a student of the month from the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students will be nominated based on academic improvements/achievement, their efforts to assist peers, and their role modeling of responsible behaviors. Students of the Month are students that go above and beyond classroom expectations.
- **Jennings Award** will be presented at the end of the school year based off “The Jennings Rule” – No child shall be made fun of, embarrassed or humiliated in any way before, during or after school hours. Each student, no matter how ‘different’ will be accorded the respect and dignity which is his or her human right.”

## **Bicycles**

Students may ride bicycles to school. Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided by the school and students are encouraged to lock them up when not in use.

## **Cell Phones/Personal Electronic Devices**

At 7:45 a.m. until 2:46 p.m. all cell phones and other electronic communication devices (ECD), including wireless headphones, need to be stored in lockers during the school day.

Using a cell phone, smartphone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA) or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules is prohibited. The exception to this policy is if (a) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan.

Students found to have disallowed electronic devices will immediately surrender the device to the staff member who sees it, and will earn a referral. All confiscated devices will be secured in the office. Students refusing to give their device to the staff member will also receive an additional office referral for insubordination.

### **Consequences:**

Offense 1 – Student may pick up device at the end of the school day

Offense 2 – Parent/Guardian must pick up the device and meet with school administration.

Offense 3 – Phone contract with the office: Students must drop their phone off at the beginning of each school day and pick it up at the end of each school day.

Failure to Follow the Phone Contract – Failure to turn in the device each day will result in additional consequences which may include detention, suspension and/or loss of privileges (i.e. after school events, field trips, all-school assemblies).

Confiscated devices may be picked up from the school office the same day between 2:46-3:30 p.m., or any school day following.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones and other electronic devices. The District is not responsible for theft, loss, or damage of any cell phone or other electronic device.

## **Students with Diabetes**

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

- a. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan with the school for their child.
- b. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- c. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.

- d. Grant consent for and authorize designated School District representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

**Your child may also be eligible for an individualized Section 504 Plan to provide needed supports and accommodations so he/she can access educational programs and services. For further information, please contact the Building Principal at 694-7503.**

## **Discipline & Conduct**

The Otsego Middle School has the responsibility to its students and their parents/guardians to provide an atmosphere that makes it possible for all students to be successful. Students are expected and required to conduct themselves in a reasonable and controlled manner while in school. Courtesy, respect and consideration of others is a must for all students. Enforcement of the school policy is at the discretion of school administrators.

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

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

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR THE STUDENT**

1. Do you have an issue with a teacher?
2. Discuss the issue in person with the teacher, on the phone, or email, but do it privately.
3. If the issue is not resolved, involve your parents/guardians in the discussion with your teacher.
4. If the issue is still not resolved, include the principal or assistant principal in the discussion.

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR THE PARENT**

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

## **Administrative Action May Include Any or All of the Following:**

### **Code of Conduct**

On the following pages, is the code of conduct, which the Otsego Board of Education expects students of Otsego Public Schools to adhere to while enrolled in this school system. The codes, as set forth herein, apply to the expected conduct of all pupils from Kindergarten

through twelfth grade. It also identifies broad categories of student misconduct, defines the conditions under which students may be suspended or expelled, and specifies the procedural due process safeguards that will be utilized for the benefit of the student in its implementation.

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

### **Disruptive Behavior and Safety**

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

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

Discipline may be defined as the control of conduct of the individuals themselves or by external authority. It includes the entire program of the individual student adapting to life in our society and involves two major points of emphasis:

- A. To guide the pupil so that he/she enhances the immediate efforts of teachers and other students in the learning situation; and that, therefore, the pupil's behavior does not have a detrimental effect, in the classroom, on the school system.
- B. To assist the pupil in becoming a responsible, productive and self-disciplined citizen within the school, in preparation for assuming adult responsibilities. At least by the time the pupil reaches high school age, it is expected that he/she will assume personal responsibility for his/her own behavior.

The school system has a responsibility to assist each individual to assume more responsibility for their own actions as they mature and gain experience. The best and most lasting discipline is self-discipline. For this reason:

- A. The best discipline is preventive in nature rather than regulatory and restrictive. A student's behavior in school is directly related to many internal and external factors, including:
  - i. The student's self-image
  - ii. Active participation in both the curricular and extracurricular activities of the school.
  - iii. Motivation to learn.
  - iv. Understanding and support received from parents, teachers and other adults.
- B. Since the students are basically motivated to learn and meet standards of acceptable behavior, the role of the teachers and other school employees should be one of guiding pupils in understanding, establishing and maintaining these acceptable behavioral standards.

The staff should make every effort to solve disciplinary problems within the school setting and without excluding a student from school. Disciplinary action may fall in the following categories:

- **Detention** – A specified amount of time (up to two hours) at lunch, before school, or after school.
- **Saturday School** – The OMS Saturday school program (9:00 am – 12:00 pm) may be offered as an alternative to suspension. Students may not use the Saturday school program to avoid suspensions for drugs, alcohol, weapons, arson, bomb threats, and any infraction of a violent or unusually serious nature. Saturday school sessions are typically held once a month, with added opportunities when administration deems necessary.
- **Behavior Academy** – A targeted intervention that teaches replacement behaviors and focuses on positive life skills. Behavior Academy may take place during the school day (during lunch or during another class period), before, or after school.
- **Suspension** – This may include In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out of School Suspension (OSS).
  - ISS is Isolation of the student within the school. Students' work will be available during suspensions. If the assigned work is not complete upon return, the student will remain in-house suspension or be assigned lunch detention(s) until the work is completed.
  - OSS is the exclusion of a student from school for a specific period of time. These suspensions will be for a period not to exceed ten school attendance days. Students may not attend or participate in any school activities or events until the suspension has been completed. Students' work will be made available for suspensions. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the student and/or parent/guardian to get his/her assigned work and it will be due the day the student returns to school. If the assigned work is not complete upon return, the student will be placed in in-house suspension or assigned lunch detention(s) until the work is completed.

#### **Procedure:**

A student shall be fully informed of the charges brought against him or her including the rationale for the action and the condition of time and termination.

The Principal or the Principal's designee shall immediately make a reasonable effort, preferably by telephone, to notify the parent/guardian of action. If telephone contact cannot be made, a note sent home with the student will be considered "reasonable effort." Written notification of such contact, or attempted contact, shall be made in the student's cumulative file. The initial contact shall be followed by written communication to the parent/guardian, stating the charges, reasons, and conditions of the separation or suspension. A copy of this communication will be placed in the student's file.

The student will not be allowed to attend or participate in any school activities or events until his/her suspension has been completed.

A suspension of more than one school day but not more than 10 may be appealed in writing to the principal and/or superintendent.

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES**

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

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

- a) are initiated by the victim;
- b) are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least fifteen (15), by the victim;
- c) are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team");
- d) would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these.

The selected consequences and prior to suspending or expelling a student under sections 1310, 1311(1), 1311(2) or 1311a (except for possession of a firearm in a weapon free school zone)", the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- a) the student's age
- b) the student's disciplinary history
- c) whether the student has a disability
- d) the seriousness of the violation or behavior
- e) whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- f) whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- g) whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior



## **Expulsion**

The permanent exclusion of a student from school. Expulsion requires Board of Education action. Referral to Law Enforcement Agency.

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

The authority of the Board of Education to authorize suspension or expulsion and to make reasonable rules and regulations relative to anything whatsoever necessary for the proper establishment, maintenance, management and carrying on of the public school, including regulations relative to the conduct of pupils concerning their safety while in attendance at school or en route to and from school is granted in sections 340.613 and 340.614 of the SCHOOL CODE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN. Also, because the board believes that the students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe environment; students are to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the school administration.

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

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

## **Violations and Consequences**

### ***When and Where Conduct Rules Apply***

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

1. *On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;*
2. *Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;*
3. *Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or*
4. *Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.*

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

### PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

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

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

### NOTE:

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

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| Cell phones/Personal Electronic Devices | <p><b>Offense 1</b> – Student may pick up device at the end of the school day.</p> <p><b>Offense 2</b> – Parent/Guardian must pick up the device and meet with school administration.</p> <p><b>Offense 3</b> – Phone contract with the office: Students must drop their phone off at the beginning of each school day and pick it up at the end of each school day.</p> <p><b>Failure to Follow the Phone Contract</b> – Failure to turn in the device each day will result in additional consequences which may include detention, suspension and/or loss of privileges (i.e. after school events, field trips, all-school assemblies).</p> |
| Tardy Policy (Per Trimester)            | <p><b>Instance 1-3</b> Warning, restorative practices,</p> <p><b>Instance 4+</b> Detention</p>  |
| Missed Detentions (after one week)      | Saturday School(s), or Suspension, or Behavior Academy  |
| Skipping Classes                        | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 2 detentions or Saturday School, or Behavior Academy, parent contact,</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Suspension, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><i>*Missing more than 20 minutes of class will be counted as an absence, in addition to skipping.</i></p>   |

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| Conduct That Materially or Substantially Interferes with the Educational Process   | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School or 1-3 days suspension, or Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>   |
| Public and Physical Displays of Affection (PDA)  | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School or 1-3 Days Suspension or Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p>  |
| Cheating, Plagiarism, Copying Somebody Else's Work/Allowing Somebody to Copy, Using Prohibited Resources, Failure to Cite a Source | <p><b>Level 1</b> 0 (0 (zero) on assignment, Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 0 (zero) on assignment, 1-3 days suspension, or Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 0 (zero) on assignment, Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact, Behavior Academy</p> |
| Continued Class Disruption and/or Disrespect   | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School or 1-3 Days Suspension or Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p>  |
| Insubordination on or off school property or at any school activity/open defiance of a specific direction                          | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Saturday School or 1-3 Days Suspension, or Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p>   |
| Office Referral by a Substitute Teacher  | A student sent to the office for any reason by a substitute teacher will be given Detention or Suspension, and may be required to complete Behavior Academy   |
| Fighting/Physical Altercation on School Property or Leaving School Property with the Intention of Fighting                         | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>        |

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| Conduct Which Jeopardizes the Safety of Yourself or Others                           | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days Suspension, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact</p>   |
| Arson or Attempted Arson, or Bomb Threat   | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| Damaging, Defacing or Destruction of Property, including chromebooks.                | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
| Theft  | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
| Extortion  | <p><b>Any Offense:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parent/guardian contact</li> <li>-Up to 10 days suspension</li> <li>-Police Referral</li> </ul>  |
| Computer Tampering/Unauthorized Access, Modification or Destruction of Private Files | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days suspension or Saturday School, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p>  |
| Verbal Attack or Assault   | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| Physical Attack or Assault   | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| Use of Profane or Obscene Written or Spoken Language or Gestures                     | <p><b>Level 1</b> Detention, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 1-3 days suspension or Saturday School, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, Behavior Academy, parent contact</p>  |

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| Use or Possession of Pornography | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Up to 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
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**Bullying/ Cyberbullying/ Harassment/Sexting**

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation. By law, students are not to be discriminated by basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation (perceived), gender identity/expression or disability but may also include (physical characteristics (i.e., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (i.e., from a rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.) or any other protected class.

**A. “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. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

**B. “Bullying”** is defined as any repeated gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act, including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone, or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device, that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
2. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district’s educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
3. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student’s physical or mental health; and /or
4. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.
5. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, electronic (cyberspace) or a combination of all four.

Some examples of bullying are:

Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings; extorting money; blocking or impeding student movement; unwelcome physical contact.

Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.

Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or

engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

**C. "Cyberbullying"** is defined as "any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils" by substantially interfering with educational opportunities, adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in a school's programs by placing the student in fear of harm or distress, having a substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health, or causing substantial disruption in the orderly operation of the school.

**D. "Harassment"** includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, or disability but may also include (sexual orientation, physical characteristics (i.e., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (i.e., from a rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

**E. "Intimidation/Menacing"** includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, 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, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment. Students are entitled to assurance of confidentiality for those who report an act of bullying, together with procedures to safeguard that confidentiality.

**F. "Sexual Harassment"** includes verbal comments, touching, and/or fondling, used as reference for a sexual nature. 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, safety, job, or performance of public duties.

Note: any administrator, teacher, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State Law M.C.L.A. 722.621 et. Seq.

**G. Sexting** includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally, in writing, through email, by submitting an incident report electronically, or through OK2Say at <https://www.michigan.gov/ok2say> , which can also be submitted by calling 855-565-2729.

Students are encouraged to report the receipt of inappropriate materials.

Any student making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment may also be subject to disciplinary consequences.

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| <p>Threatening or Intimidating Acts, Hazing, or Bullying</p> <p>Forms of Racial, Ethnic, Religious, or Sexual Harassment</p> <p>Sexting</p>  | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral<br/> <b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral<br/> <b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
| <p>Distribution or Sale of Unlawful Drugs, Behavior Altering Substances, Look Alike Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, or Alcohol</p>  | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>   |
| <p>Possession or Use of Tobacco (including vape pens) on School Property or During the School Day</p>  | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral<br/> <b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral<br/> <b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
| <p>Use and/or Possession of Unauthorized Prescriptions, Unlawful Drugs, Behavior Altering Substances, Look Alike Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, Alcohol, or Any Over-the-Counter Drug Not Properly Registered with the Office, Cannabis products, including Dab Pens</p>   | <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral<br/> <b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| <p>Drug Assessment: Any student suspended for violating the Substance Abuse Policy is strongly urged to undergo a substance abuse assessment administered by a trained Professional. If the cost is not covered by the parent's insurance, the School Board will pay up to \$55.00 of this fee. The assessment should be scheduled before the student returns to school.</p> |  |
| <p>Possession of Explosives or Fireworks</p>   | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>   |

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| Possession of Stolen Property   | <p><b>Level 1</b> 1-3 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> 3-5 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, restitution, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p> |
| Possession of a Weapon  | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, police referral, recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| <p><b>Possession of a Weapon</b> - A weapon includes conventional objects like guns, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion. It will make no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession, without his/her knowing knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a student brought a weapon on district property, other than the one who possessed the weapon, that the student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action. State law may require that a student be expelled from school for a period of one (1) school year if he/she brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bombs, grenades, or rockets, missiles, mines or devices that can be converted into such an item.</li> <li>• Any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle.</li> <li>• Any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm.</li> </ul> |   |
| <p><b>Use Of An Object As a Weapon</b> - any object that is used to threaten, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for Civil Action. This violation may be subject to expulsion.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence</b> - Because the Board believes the 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.</p>   |   |
| Violation of State or Local Fire Codes  | <p><b>Level 3</b> 10 days OSS, parent contact, possible police referral, possible recommendation for expulsion</p>  |
| <p>Infractions for which consequences are carried over from one year to the next:</p>   |   |



Any activities, behaviors, or appearances deemed to be gang-related will be dealt with severely. Such misconduct is subject to suspension/expulsion from school.

All Forms of harassment (racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, etc...) are intolerable and subject to discipline. Harassment should be reported to a teacher or administrator.

Any actions that persistently disrupt the educational process and/or compromise a safe and orderly environment can be referred to the school board for possible expulsion.

The school reserves the right to set forth as part of this handbook those rules and regulations necessary and proper for carrying out the execution of the educational programs of the school which are not specifically stated herein as the need arises. When in the judgment of the administration, a student's behavior reaches such a proportion or is of a nature that tends to adversely influence others, or interferes with the educational process or infringes on the rights of others, this behavior is grounds for immediate removal and/or suspension.

## **Dress/General Appearance**

### **Dress/General Appearance**

The following are guidelines for the OPS dress code:

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

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

Certain classes have mandatory requirements pertaining to the wearing of protective equipment and clothing which are required by state standards e.g. protective glasses, hair-nets, goggles, etc. Non-compliance to safety rules and regulations, as above, should result in removal from class. Students with shoulder-length hair or longer will be required to wear hairnets or other school-approved restraining devices when working in class areas in which power equipment is being used or operated.

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

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

### **Electronic Equipment**

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

## **Emergency Closing / Delays**

If the school must be closed or delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will notify the families through School Messenger and local news media. Parents/guardians and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

## **Emergency Drills**

By Law OMS is required to conduct regular safety drills throughout the school year including fire (5), lock-down (3) and tornado (2).

Horseplay, yelling and shoving must be avoided. We treat these drills as actual emergencies. Remember this is for the student's own safety.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field trip activities and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location's rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline.

All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent/guardian with the authority to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher;
- Failure to complete appropriate coursework;
- Behavioral or safety concerns;
- Denial of permission from administration;
- Excessive absences (more than 5 in a trimester)

All academic field trips requiring a fee will be the responsibility of students. As a general rule, only parents/legal guardians will be allowed to chaperone OMS field trips; exceptions to this rule will be determined on a case by case basis by the principal.

## **Fundraising**

Students are asked not to bring church or club fund-raising candy, merchandise or pledge lists to school in order to sell or to sign up classmates or teachers. The problems of class disruptions and security of money and merchandise become too great.

## **Grading Policy**

**Late Work** – late work can be turned in up until the time of assessment. The grade will be reduced by 10%.

**Percentages** – Summative Assessments will make up 80% of the student's grade. The categories that make up the other 20% will be consistent within each department.

**Re-Takes** – Summative assessments can be retaken within 10 class days after the original has been returned. Retakes are available only outside of normal class time and only if the following criteria has been met:

- 70% of assignments within that unit have been turned in prior to the original test
- Study guide/qualifying assignment has been completed prior to the original test and/or retake.
- Students scoring below a 70% must come in for a study/re-teaching session. When they have completed this and any task that goes with it, they can retake the ELT's they were looking to fix.
- Students under a C are signed out by the teachers to retake when available, students above this must come to the teacher and request.
- Retake score will be the final grade.
- There are no retakes on final exams in Spanish or Algebra.

**Summative Assessments** – The lowest grade given on an attempted summative assessment will be 50%.

**Infinite Campus Parent Portal** – parent portal provides the tools you need as a parent/guardian/student to increase communication between the teacher and home providing further success for the student. Information transferred between the school and home is secure and enables the parent/guardian to check the student's progress daily. Assigned username and password will stay with the student throughout their high school career. Username and password will be issued for both parents/guardians and students. If you need assistance, please call the main office at 269-694-7500.

## Guidance Counselor

Students with a question concerning the school or personal in nature, should feel welcome to see the guidance counselor, school social worker, or student support specialist. Anything you talk about with the counselor will be kept in confidence. Appointments should be scheduled in advance if possible.

## Hallways

Hallways are a crowded place. For reasons of safety, cleanliness, comfort and convenience, students are not to use any profane or vulgar language, should never run, and should never yell, scream, hit lockers or otherwise make excessive noise while in the halls. Food and drink are not allowed in the halls, and school staff have the authority to confiscate any food or drink in the halls. Please take pride in our school and do your part to keep it clean. Please do not litter or mark graffiti anywhere.

Hall passes – Class time is essential. Students are not to be in hallways or restrooms during academic time unless they have a proper pass. No hall passes will be issued except in cases of emergency or for the purpose of instructional activities assigned by a teacher. Any student found without a hall pass signed by a teacher of the class from which the student is temporarily absent, in a location other than that specified on a pass, or off the most direct route to the class of destination, will be subject to disciplinary action. There is ample passing time between classes – be sure not to waste time, and report to class ON TIME.

## **High School Credit**

Middle School students have the opportunity to take Spanish. Students can earn up to two high school graduation credits toward their foreign language requirement. Spanish I and Spanish II will be offered as one year courses at the middle school. In order for students to receive high school credit the student must demonstrate mastery of the high school content requirements. Students will need a recommendation from their teacher and approval from administration to enroll in these classes.

## **Individuals with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent/guardian involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State Law. Contact the Special Education Department at 269-694-7900 to inquire about programs offered by the District.

## **ILLNESS**

All make-up work is to be completed and turned in within twice the length of time of the student's absence, but not to exceed five school days, unless other satisfactory arrangements can be made with the teacher(s) for whom make-up work must be completed. Absences of a week or more will be given an equal number of days to turn in work. All work missed due to absenteeism is expected to be made up.

## **COVID-19**

Parents and guardians must complete COVID-19 School Health Screening Agreement for each student in their household prior to the start of school.

Visitors will be limited, but will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms upon entry into the office if they will be in other parts of the building.

Before leaving for school or work, please make sure of the following:

**Does your child feel feverish or have a temperature over 100.4?**

**Has your child started to have any of the following, not due to some other health problem?**

**Cough**

**Runny nose and/or congestion**

**Tired and/or achy**

**Shortness of breath**

**Vomiting and/or diarrhea**

**New loss of taste or smell**

**Has your child had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?**

**Since they were last at school, has your child been diagnosis with COVID-19**

**If the answer is YES to any of these questions, please keep your child(ren) home from school.**

**Call the school as soon as possible to let them know the reason your child(ren) won't be there today.**

**Contact your healthcare provider right away.**

**If you don't have one or cannot be seen, go to [www.mi.gov/coronvirustest](http://www.mi.gov/coronvirustest) or call 2-1-1 to find a location to have your child(ren) tested for COVID-19.**

### **Make-Up Work**

In all cases of make-up work, it is the obligation of the student to obtain the assignments and make necessary arrangements to complete the work. Pre-assigned work such as projects or long-term assignments are due on their scheduled due date or as soon as possible.

### **Limited English Proficiency**

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extracurricular programs offered by the District. Parents should contact the Middle School Guidance Office at 692-6199 to inquire about programs offered by the District.

### **Lockers**

- Each student is responsible for keeping his or her assigned locker clean.
- Under no circumstances is a student to disclose his/her lock combination to another student.
- Students are expected to use the lockers assigned to them and are not to exchange or share lockers with anyone else.
- The administration reserves the right to inspect all lockers under its control. Further, the administration deems it proper function of the school authorities to inspect all lockers in the school and prevent their use in illicit ways or for illegal purposes.
- The security and care of the lockers are the responsibility of the student. The school will provide reasonable supervision for the locker and its contents; however, the school will not be responsible in any degree, for lost or stolen articles. Do not leave money in your locker. The student must take the utmost care to ensure that the lock is locked properly when closed.
- The contents of the locker are the responsibility of the student assigned to that locker. Nothing illegal should be kept in the locker nor should it be used for illegal purposes. Violation of this rule subjects the student to disciplinary action.

- Backpacks, wheeled luggage, or purses are not allowed in classrooms. They are not allowed in halls except before and after the school day.
- Students will exercise the care and good judgment in the physical upkeep of their lockers
- Damaged lockers or those with broken locks should be reported to the Principal's Office Immediately.
- Students in physical education classes are encouraged to purchase a school-keyed combination lock, which may be obtained in the middle school main office.

### **Lost and Found**

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

### **Lunch Time**

OMS is a closed campus. Students remain on the school grounds during the lunch periods. It is recommended that students pre-pay for school lunches before school begins in the cafeteria. Any number of lunch credits may be purchased and they are debited daily from the student's account, as they are used.

### **Lunch Expectations**

While using the cafeteria, students are asked to observe the following general rules of good behavior and courtesy. When passing to and from the cafeteria area, students are not to run in the hall.

- Students are to report to the cafeteria on time and be seated. Students are dismissed by table and not allowed to leave the table without permission.
- Students are required to return trays, dishes, milk cartons, and any paper or food scraps to the clean-up area. No food should be taken from the cafeteria.
- Whether in the cafeteria or out-of-doors, students are expected to observe all regulations in the Otsego Middle School Code of Conduct.
- Leave the table and floor clean. Pick up the paper and debris from the floor and deposit it in the waste container.
- At the end of the lunch period, pass to your proper classroom.
- Remember that classes are in session. Be quiet in the halls when returning to classes.
- Students who make unnecessary noise, engage in horseplay, or do not obey the cafeteria supervisors may be subject to the following disciplinary measures:
  1. Assignment of seat for a specific period of time.
  2. Assignment to silent supervised lunch.
  3. Requested parent/guardian observation of student behavior in the cafeteria.
  4. Suspension from attending school.

### **Mandated Reporters**

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

## **Media Center**

### **Checking Out/Returning Items**

- Students may check out up to three books at a time.
- Students who have damaged books and have not paid for the damage will not be allowed to check out books.

### **Check Out Length**

- 3 weeks for books

### **Renewals**

- Books may be renewed up to two times.
- Items with holds cannot be renewed.

### **Holds**

- Students have three days to pick up available holds before the item goes back to the shelf.

### **Lost or Damaged Items**

- Students will be charged the replacement value of any item lost or damaged while in their possession.
- Books cannot be checked out until the item is paid in full.
- Items found after a student has paid for replacement will be refunded.

## **Medication**

Medication should be administered in the home if at all possible. If the school is asked to administer or store medicine for a student, the appropriate forms must be completed and returned to the Principal's office. These forms include the following:

- Written orders from a physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage and time interval the medication is to be taken.
- Written permission from the parent/guardian of the pupil requesting that the school district comply with the physician's order.
- Over the counter medication needs to remain in its original packaging and must be turned in at the office with a medication permission slip filled out completely.
- Students in violation will be dealt with according to the policy set forth in "Violations and Consequences". Medication must be brought to the school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.

## **Personal Items**

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

## **REPORT CARDS**

All report cards are mailed home at the end of each trimester.



Citizenship in the educational program and the development of character is important. Subject matter knowledge without character development may become a detriment to both society and the individual.

Citizenship rating reflects the student's conduct, personal habits, punctuality, reliability and industry. It is as important to have this information as it is to have the other marks on the report card. The mark in Citizenship is based upon the pupil's general attitude toward all situations arising in school.

A good citizenship grade indicates that the pupil senses the ideal of the school, exhibits a wholesome school spirit, works to the best of his/her ability, cooperates with other students and faculty and assumes responsibility especially when not under supervision. A low citizenship mark indicates a serious lack of these desirable qualities. Citizenship ratings are based on a four-point scale:

- O – Indicates OUTSTANDING citizenship
- S – Indicates SATISFACTORY citizenship
- N – Indicates NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT
- U – Indicates UNACCEPTABLE citizenship

### **Retention**

Successful completion of each class, age appropriate behaviors, a sense of responsibility, and regular attendance is necessary to ensure academic success. Therefore, in order to progress through the educational system, each student must demonstrate success in each of these areas. Any student failing two classes, or failing to demonstrate the skills necessary to be promoted to the next grade will be subject to review by a team of teachers and administrators. This team will make recommendations concerning retention. Students failing three classes may be retained. The administration reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy in the case of extenuating circumstances.

### **School Day**

Students may go to their lockers at 7:25 a.m. Breakfast is available 30 minutes before the beginning of first period. All students are encouraged to take advantage of the breakfast program. Middle School students are expected to come directly to the building when arriving on school grounds. The High School area is "off limits." All students are to remain on the Middle School grounds once they have arrived. Leaving the campus may result in an unexcused absence.

### **Search and Seizure**

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

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

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects

left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

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

### ***Students***

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

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

### ***Seizure of Property***

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

## **Student Records**

In compliance with federal regulations, the Otsego Public Schools have established the following guidelines concerning student records.

- The Principal's secretary is the Records Control Officer for OMS and is responsible for the processing and maintenance of all student records. This office is located at 540 Washington Street and she can be reached at 694-7500.
- Each student's records will be kept in a confidential file located at Otsego Middle School. The information in a student's record file will be available for review only by the parents or legal guardian of a student, an adult student (18 years of age or older), and those designated by Federal Law or District regulations.
- A parent/guardian or adult student has the right to either obtain a hearing with District officials or file a complaint with the U.S. Office of Education if not satisfied with the accuracy of the records or with the District's compliance with the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Acts.
- The District has established the following information about each student as "directory information" and will make it available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian or adult student notifies the Records Control Officer in writing within five days

from the date of this notification that he/she will not permit distribution of any or all of such information:

- Name
- Gender
- Grade
- Any other information the District considers would not be harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed.
- A copy of the Board of Education's policy and the accompanying District regulations are available at the Central Office, located at the Middle School. There will also be a person available to answer any questions.

### **Address or Telephone Changes**

Parents/guardians should inform the office if they have a change of address or a new telephone number. It is very important in cases of emergency to have the correct information.

### **Telephone Calls**

The office telephones are not to be used by students except in cases of emergency or illness.

### **Textbooks and Materials**

Each student is provided with the textbooks they will need for all classes. In some cases the books are located in the classroom for use there, but for most classes a textbook will be assigned to each student. Your teacher will assign you a numbered textbook, for which you must sign and assume responsibility for the condition and return of the same book at the end of the school year. Report any lost books to your teacher and the office. A charge will be made for lost or damaged books. The person responsible for checking in books will determine whether a book is damaged beyond normal wear and tear; that person's decision is final.

In addition, lost or damaged library books are the responsibility of the student who signs the book out. Neglect of library procedures may result in the loss of a student's library privileges.

### **Transportation**

The district provides bus transportation to and from school for students. Families are notified by post cards before the school year begins with pick up, drop off and bus number information. While the students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the building administrative team.

Parents/guardians will be informed of any and all inappropriate student behavior on a bus. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss bus safety and appropriate behavior with their children before the beginning of the school year and regularly during the year.

Students are provided with the expectations and guidelines of appropriate bus behavior. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for engaging in misconduct.

Video cameras may be active on buses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

For questions regarding school transportation issues, please contact our Transportation Director, Carrie Barnhart at 694-7940.

## **Visitors**

- All visitors are to check into the office upon arrival at school and pick up a visitor's pass to be worn while in the building.
- Permission to visit the classrooms must be approved by the principal.

## **Weather Policy**

The following procedure will generally be followed as we receive official weather information: If school is in session during a Severe Weather or Tornado Watch or during a Severe Weather or Tornado Warning, the school will remain in session until the regular closing time. When a Tornado Warning is in effect for the immediate area, school will not be dismissed until the Tornado Warning is lifted. After school activities will abide by existing Wolverine Conference rules regarding severe weather.

### **Questions – Please Call or Email**

Please give us a call or send an email (either an administrator or a teacher) if you are concerned with what is happening at school. We would rather discuss a concern before it becomes a serious problem. If things you hear about the school do not sound right, usually there is an explanation. If there isn't, we should know about it.

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

### ***Preamble***

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

## **District Resources**

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

Computers (Desktops and Laptops)  
Handheld Devices (Palms)  
Software  
Communication Lines and Devices  
Graphing Calculators  
Printers  
CD-ROM Devices  
Scanners  
Digital Cameras  
Data Projectors  
E-mail  
Classroom Performance Systems  
Document Cameras  
Classroom Sound Systems

## **Internet Safety Measures**

### **Internet Filtering – Federal**

The Superintendent shall be responsible for directing appropriate District technology staff to bring all computers used by students and staff into full compliance with all federal requirements regarding Internet filtering software to assure that District discounts for Internet access and internal connection under the federal E-rate program are not jeopardized.

Student Internet activities will be monitored by the District to ensure that students are not accessing inappropriate sites. The District's Network Operations Center shall have an internet filtering device that blocks access to content that is obscene, pornographic, inappropriate for students, or harmful to minors.

### **Acceptable Uses/Net Etiquette**

Among "acceptable use" items listed might include (but not limited to):

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

- d. Always using the network as a resource to further one's own education and that of others
- e. Being mindful of network security, and immediately reporting any bugs, errors, or security problems to the system administrator

### **Unacceptable Uses**

Among "unacceptable use" items listed might be (but not limited to):

- Transmitting or downloading any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulations. Including, but not limited to material that is copyrighted, threatening, harmful, sexist, racist, sexually explicit, obscene or protected by trade secrets
- Accessing non-educational multi-use (chat rooms) talk sessions or "recreational" games
- Engaging in any unauthorized commercial activity, product advertisement or political lobbying
- Use of the school's equipment by businesses or non-school sponsored community activities. Applications for such use should be submitted by request and shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the system administrators or advisory committee.
- Use of technology to distort the truth, to lie, or to misrepresent someone else
- Use of any technology intentionally to harm or harass anyone
- Vandalism – defined as any attempt to harm, destroy, or disrupt the operation of the network, hardware, software, or the data of any other use on the system or any other system including, but not limited to, the uploading, creation, or knowing transmission of computer viruses.
- Use of Social Networking Sites (i.e. Myspace, Facebook, and others)
- Tunneling or use of proxy sites to bypass the district's internet filter.
- Posting of unauthorized pictures/videos of faculty/staff members/students on social networking sites (i.e. Myspace, Facebook, and others).
- Use of streaming music sites.

### **Disclaimer**

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

If students choose to bring their own devices (i.e. SmartPhones, iPods, iPod Touches, etc.) for use during school (if approved by a teacher/Administrator), the district is not responsible for providing technical support to those devices.

### **Safety Warning**

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

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

### **Consequences for Violation of Policy**

Any user violating or demonstrating the intent to violate any of the guidelines set forth in the acceptable use policy may face disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the policy violation or number of past violations, the district may take one or more of the following disciplinary actions (possible consequences may be, but are not limited to, the following):

1. Restriction or loss of use of technology resources
  - If technology is an essential component of education or job function it should be revoked only as a final option.
2. Disciplinary action imposed by the Administration up to and including expulsion from the district.
3. Restitution
  - Replacement cost
  - Reimbursement of cost for repair
  - Reimbursement of technician time
4. Law enforcement notification
  - Responsibility for unauthorized charges, expenses and fees
  - Mandatory training / in-service before further use is allowed
5. Legal action