



SYCAMORE

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Our students. Our future.

Sycamore Junior High School Student-Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Mission and Vision:

- Create a culture of academic excellence through inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for the whole child.
- Empower all learners to reach their full potential in a globally competitive world.

Administrative Team

Janelle Schunk, Principal

Tyler Meyer, Assistant Principal

Samantha Helms, Assistant Principal

Marc Stern, Dean of Students and Athletic Director

Be Respectful Be Responsible Be Safe Be a Problem Solver

5757 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45242 - 513.686.1760

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Sycamore Community Schools' students and parents with specific information concerning major policies, procedures, and regulations.

While every effort is made to present the information accurately, the information contained in this handbook is continually updated and the actual text of the policy, procedure or law should be consulted as the authoritative source of information. Questions regarding this handbook should be directed to the school principal.

We hope that you are looking forward to the many educational opportunities and numerous extracurricular activities that make Sycamore Junior High School a world-class learning environment. The faculty and staff are excited that you are here and look forward to helping you become more successful in your academic studies as well as your personal growth.

Your involvement in school is important! Sycamore Junior High School's reputation has been built on the conduct, participation, and achievement of individuals like you. Your success will be dependent upon a number of important factors: **daily attendance, paying attention in class, doing your homework, participating in extracurricular activities, giving 100% effort, and exhibiting cooperative behavior.** With your help, we can make our school community a dynamic place for everyone.

During your years at Sycamore Junior High School, you will make numerous decisions and may face personal or academic problems. Please seek the assistance of your teachers, counselors, and principals – our offices are open to you at any time to discuss personal struggles or career goals. We care about your success and are willing to listen!

This Student/Parent Handbook is a comprehensive collection of information about school rules and expectations, services and facilities, and policies that directly affect students. It is every student's responsibility to promote the best educational atmosphere possible by becoming familiar with the contents of the Student/Parent Handbook. The rules and regulations in this handbook will help to ensure that each student at Sycamore Junior High School has the opportunity to succeed.

It is our sincere hope that you will take advantage of the many opportunities available to you at Sycamore Junior High School so that you might fulfill your career dreams and goals. Let's work together to make this a wonderful school year!

OUR DISTRICT MISSION:

Create a culture of academic excellence through inclusive and innovative learning opportunities for the whole child.

OUR DISTRICT VISION

Empower all learners to reach their full potential in a globally competitive world.

OUR DISTRICT VALUES

- Academic Excellence
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Community
- Character
- Collaboration

DISTRICT DIRECTORY

District Office Administration

Superintendent	Chad Lewis	513-686-1700
Assistant Superintendent	Meghan Lawson	513-686-1700
Community Relations Director	Mallory Bonbright	513-686-1700
Assistant Superintendent	Brad Lovell	513-686-1703
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Becky Tompkins	513-686-1700
Director of Student Services	Stacey Spencer	513-686-1780
Director of Technology	Christian Long	513-686-1700
District Gifted Coordinator	Jamie Jackson	513-686-1700
ESOL Supervisor	Jill Schneider	513-686-1700
Coordinator of Pupil Support Services	Lisa Zelvy	513-686-1700
Coordinator of Special Education	PK-6 Misty Belfrom 7-12 Lori Rosen	513-686-1780
Treasurer	Jenni Logan	513-686-1700

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Board of Education

Paul Balent	513-686-1700
Sara Bitter	513-686-1700
Victor Harris	513-686-1700
Adrienne James	513-686-1700
Lynne Stieger	513-686-1700

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Child Nutrition Services

Director	Elizabeth Wellman	513-686-1796
Secretary	Chris Zinnecker	513-686-1796

5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**Registration**

Registrar	Patrice New	513-686-1700
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5959 Hagewa Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**Transportation**

Director	Michael Miller	513-686-1785
Supervisor	Tony Huber	513-686-1785
Dispatcher	Mary Ann Buchanan	513-686-1785
Secretary	Sue Vollman	513-686-1785

11455 Grooms Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**Sycamore Junior High**

Principal	Janelle Schunk	513-686-1760
Assistant Principal	Tyler Meyer	513-686-1760
Assistant Principal	Samantha Helms	513-686-1760
Dean of Students and Athletic Director	Marc Stern	513-686-1760
Administrative Assistant	Lesli Lally	513-686-1760
Treasurer	Janice Kirschner	513-686-1760
Registrar	Theresa Manning	513-686-1764
Nurse	Amy Bonham	513-686-1763
Attendance Line		513-686-1762

5757 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242**SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

Ben Brenner (A-G)

Kristin Suter (H-N)

Rachel Morris, (O-Z, ESOL students)

Kelsie McKinney, Cincinnati Children's Hospital school based therapist

Raphaella Teixeira, Cincinnati Children's Hospital school based therapist

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Students at Sycamore Junior High School must meet the eligibility standards as published by the Ohio High School Athletic Association and Sycamore Board of Education. Thus, a student must be passing subjects that earn a minimum of 5 credits per year toward graduation at the end of each quarter to continue athletic participation for the next quarter and maintain no less than a 1.0 grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale. A student must have also attained a minimum grade-point average of 1.0 on a 4.0 grading scale in the previous grading period. A student must have also attained a minimum grade-point average of 1.0 on a 4.0 grading scale in the previous grading period.

Special note: Physical education classes and proficiency classes are not used to determine athletic eligibility.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for successful school achievement. Therefore, students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Please refer to board policy [JED](#), [JED-R](#), and [JEDA](#). To this end, the following guidelines will be followed by all schools within the Sycamore Community Schools:

Legal Requirement

All children between ages six (6) and eighteen (18) are of compulsory school age and must attend school. **(Ohio Revised Code, Section 3321.01:)**

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure their child attends school, therefore, it is the obligation of the parent/guardian to report the child's absence or tardy each day the student is absent. **(Ohio Revised Code, Section 3321.03:)**

Procedure for Reporting Absences

1. On the day of the absence, a parent/guardian should email or call (jhattendance@sycamoreschools.org) **Attendance Line for All: 513.686.1707**) to report the absence before 9:10 a.m. No note is required if the parent calls or emails that the student is absent.
2. If notification was not made to the school on the date of absence, the student must report to the Attendance Office with a note or the Parent Communication Form including the following information:
 - a. Date(s) of absence
 - b. Reason
 - c. Phone number where parent/guardian may be reached
 - d. Signature of parent/guardian
3. Students who are absent due to a doctor's appointment **must** provide a note from the physician/medical provider upon return
4. If the student forgets to bring a note, the student absence will be recorded as an "unexcused" absence. If an appropriate note is presented within one school day the absence will be changed to an excused absence.
5. Students who are absent without notification to the school will be marked as "unverified." This can be modified if notification is provided to the school following the absence. Unverified absences are considered unexcused.
6. Students who provide a reason for absence that is permitted per board policy, will be marked as "excused."
7. Students who provide written documentation from a medical provider for medical appointments or procedures, personal illness, or hospitalization will be marked as "medically excused."
8. Students who provide a reason for absence that is not permitted per board policy will be marked as "unexcused."
9. Unverified absences will receive an automated notification via phone within 120 minutes of the start of the school day.

Excused Absences

A school logged parent/guardian phone call or written notification received by the attendance office (on each day of the student's absence), for any of the excused absences below, is sufficient to excuse the child's absence.

- Written documentation from the parent/guardian/non-doctor's note may be in the form of an e-mail or fax to the proper school authority or directly from a physician's/medical provider's office, if permitted by the

physician's/medical provider's office. Doctor's notes must specify a period of time for which excused absence is necessary.

- The parent/guardian (and not the school) maintains responsibility to make certain the telephone call and/or absence note was submitted to the proper school attendance authority in a timely fashion.
- If the parent/guardian fails to contact the school and school personnel have to initiate contact with the parent/guardian via a phone call and they DO NOT make direct contact with a parent/guardian, the absence will be considered unexcused until a parent/guardian makes direct contact with the attendance office to verify the student's absence.
- The school should be notified in advance by the parent/guardian for any **planned** absence that includes 3 or more consecutive days.

The school administration will make the final decision whether an absence/tardy is excused or unexcused.

Reasons for which students may be medically excused include, but are not limited to

1. personal illness of the student;
2. illness in the student's family necessitating the presence of the child;
3. quarantine for contagious disease or
4. emergency or other set of circumstances in which the judgment of the Superintendent constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school, which may include but not be limited to absences due to documented medical appointments.

Reasons for which students may be nonmedically excused include, but are not limited to:

1. needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the Superintendent (applies to students over 14 years of age only);
2. death in the family (applies to absences of up to 18 school hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence);
3. observation of religious holidays consistent with a student's truly held religious belief;
4. traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to 24 school hours);
5. college visitation;
6. absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status;
7. absences due to a student being homeless;

8. technical difficulties for individual students or households occurring at inopportune times such as during a teacher-led remote learning lesson or;
9. as determined by the Superintendent.

In general, unexcused absences/tardies include (but are not limited to):

- Missing the school bus.
- Experiencing transportation problems at home or on the way to school, including traffic.
- Remaining at home to complete school assignments.
- Missing school without legitimate illness.
- Oversleeping. Alarm clock (student's or parent's) failed to work.
- Working at a job during the school day
- Any form of recreation
- Personal business that can be done after school or on weekends.
- "Helping at home" or "Was needed at home."
- Personal, non-medical appointments during the instructional day

Attendance Accounting Definitions:

- A student is considered to be on time for school when they are in their classrooms at the time school begins. Our school day begins at 8:10.
- A student will be considered tardy to school if they arrive within 60 minutes of the school day beginning.
- Students arriving to school by school bus, even if the bus is delayed, will be considered on time for arrival regardless of arrival time.

Excessive Absences

- A student is considered to be excessively absent from school with a nonmedical excuse or without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for thirty-eight or more hours in one school month, or sixty-five or more hours in a school year.
- A student who is considered to be excessively absent must have a medical note for absences beyond the absence threshold. Doctor's/medical provider's notes will be presented to the main/attendance office. Any student who has an extended period of illness will need to have a doctor's/medical provider's note on file explaining the chronic illness.
- When a student has been absent, with a nonmedical excuse or without legitimate excuse for thirty-eight or more hours in one school month, or sixty-five or more hours in a school year, a notification letter will be sent
- Families and students may be asked to engage in a problem solving meeting to address excessive absenteeism at any time

Procedures for Excessive Student Absences and Truancy

- Any child of compulsory school age who is absent without legitimate excuse for thirty or more consecutive hours, forty-two or more hours in one school month, or seventy-two or more hours in one school year is considered to be habitually truant
- A student determined to be habitually truant student, along with their guardian, must engage in a meeting to develop an Absence Intervention Plan.
- Students that do not demonstrate improvement in their attendance following the development of this plan will be referred to Hamilton County Juvenile Court

Tardy Policy for Grades 7-8:

1. **Contact #1:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **3 or more**, a meeting is set up by the administrative assistant in charge of attendance. An email is also sent to the parents of the child.
2. **Contact #2:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **4 or more**, a meeting is set up by the building attendance officers with the student.
5th tardy - Phone call home notifying parent/guardian of number of tardies accumulated
6th tardy - Phone call and after school detention, conference with parent/guardian
3. **Contact #3:** After a student has repeated unexcused tardies of **7 or more**, a consequence is issued to the student and a meeting scheduled with the family.
7th tardy - Friday School and contact made by the assistant principal.
8th tardy - Saturday School and contact made by the assistant principal
9th tardy - 2 Saturday Schools and contact made by the assistant principal
4. **Contact #4:** After a student has any unexcused tardies of 10 or more, the student/family will be referred for an attendance intervention meeting.
10th tardy - In School Detention. ***Referral for attendance intervention meeting**
11th tardy - 2 day In School Detention.
 - Monitor progress of students for a period of 60 days. Attendance intervention team will initiate another referral if progress is not being made. Second diversion meeting will be held and a home visit by the district social worker.

Extracurricular Activities Attendance

A student may not miss more than 10% of any school year to participate in activities, unless there has been an extended illness. Students absent from school for more than four periods in one day will not be permitted to participate in after school activities. Special circumstances may be appealed to the building administration.

Mandatory rules applying to students participating in extracurricular activities are as follows:

1. Participating Day of Practice, Meeting, or Performance
 - a. Students absent from school for more than four periods in one day will not be permitted to participate in after school activities.
 - b. Special circumstances however, may be appealed to the administration
2. Class Cutting / Truancy – When a student who is involved in any extracurricular activity cuts class or is truant, the activity sponsor will be notified by the administration. Proper disciplinary action will be in accordance with the specific rules of the organization/activity with a minimum of being denied participation from the next scheduled practice or meeting.

Early Dismissal

- A student must present a note from a parent/guardian to the Attendance Office requesting an early dismissal before the start of the first period,
- The note must include:
 - a. Date
 - b. Time and reason for dismissal
 - c. Phone number at which the parent/guardian may be reached for verification of the request

- If the student leaves school and returns the same day he/she must report to the Attendance Office upon returning.

Dismissal Due to Illness

- A student who becomes ill during school hours **must report to the school nurse.**
- Permission will be granted only after a parent/guardian has been contacted.
- **No student is to leave the building without authorization.**

Attendance Summary Chart

School/Attendance Office Contact Information	Start of school day (students must be in the classroom at this time)	Absence notification needed prior to		Late Arrival and-Early Dismissal Procedures	End of school day	Habitual Truancy	Excessive Absences
Sycamore High School 7:20 A.M. - 2:20 P.M. (513) 686-1707 HSattendance@sycamoreschools.org	7:20 AM	8:20 AM		Parent notification must be received in writing or via phone call prior to dismissal Parent must enter the building to sign student out if no written notification has been received prior to dismissal time.	2:20 PM	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours non-medically excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Sycamore Junior High School 8:10 A.M. - 3:15 P.M. (513) 686-1707 JHattendance@sycamoreschools.org	8:10 AM	9:10 AM		Parent notification must be received in writing or via phone call prior to dismissal Parent must enter the building to sign student out if no written notification has been received prior to dismissal time.	3:15 PM	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours non-medically excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year
Edwin H. Greene Intermediate School 7:50 A.M. - 2:50 P.M. (513) 686-1707 EHGattendance@sycamoreschools.org	7:50 AM	8:50 AM		Parent notification must be received in writing or via phone call prior to dismissal Parent must enter the building to sign student out if no written notification has been received prior to dismissal time.	2:50 PM Parents picking up children at dismissal will pick them up in the car line at the end of the day. Students must be picked up no later than 4:05 pm. If a parent/guardian has an emergency situation and can not pick up their child by that time, they must notify the office as such. School staff hours end at 4:10 p.m.	30 consecutive hours unexcused 42 hours unexcused in a month 72 hours unexcused in a year	38 hours non-medically excused or unexcused in a month 65 hours excused or unexcused in a year

BELL SCHEDULE

Daily Bell Schedule

Period	Time
1	8:10 am - 8:55 am
2	8:59 am - 9:44 am
3	9:48 am - 10:33 am
4	10:37 am - 11:22 am
5/Lunch	11:26 am - 1:00 pm A: 11:26 - 11:56 B: 11:58 - 12:28 C: 12:30 - 1:00
Aviator Bell	1:04 pm - 1:34 pm
6	1:38 pm - 2:23 pm
7	2:27 pm - 3:15 pm

BUILDING HOURS

7:50 am – 3:20 pm Monday through Friday

The school building is open to students at 7:50 am. Students are not to loiter in the building after school hours or past 3:20 pm **unless they are in the after school tutoring program, or with their school sponsored extracurricular sponsor / coach**. No students may be in the building after school hours, including weekends, unless they are supervised or attending a school event. Students entering the building during unauthorized times will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

BICYCLES/ROLLER SKATES/SKATEBOARDS

Students assume the risk of using bicycles, roller blades, skates, and skateboards on school property and/or at school events. Schools are not liable for accidents, property damage or theft related to the use of such items on school property or at school events. Students who ride their bikes to school should use the bike racks by the front entrance to the school. We urge all bike riders to lock their bikes. Bike riders should enter and exit the property by the sidewalk along Cooper Road. Bikes should never be ridden across the middle of the parking lot. Any infraction of these rules could result in the loss of bike riding privileges.

BOOKBAGS AND COATS

Bookbags are permitted in classrooms. Please leave all sports, athletic, and extracurricular materials in your locker. Lockers can be visited at the start of the day, end of the day and during designated times. Students experiencing difficulty with their lockers should seek help from the office.

BUILDING UNIFICATION PLAN

In the event an emergency evacuation of the building is deemed necessary by the building administration, all persons will evacuate and may be directed to an off-site location. If the evacuation will be for a prolonged period of time, require family reunification, or due to severe weather or other considerations, the school will transport students and faculty to the following locations:

All schools to Blue Ash Recreation Center (4433 Cooper Road)

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

Breakfast, lunch, snacks, and beverages are available to purchase for all students each school day. Students may also bring their lunch to school, glass containers are discouraged.

Breakfast is offered to students 15 minutes before the first warning bell rings daily. Students can report to either the cafeteria or concession stand outside the auditorium for a grab-n-go breakfast.

At some time during the 5th period, students will be excused for lunch. Dismissal for lunch and the time for resuming class work are indicated by the classroom teacher. The duration of the lunch period is thirty minutes. Students may bring their lunch or purchase the school lunch. Lunches brought from home may not contain soda or energy drinks.

Thanks to our point-of-sale system, students in Sycamore Community Schools can purchase school meals or a la carte items by simply entering their student identification number into a Personal Identification Number pad, which immediately and confidentially alerts the cafeteria cashier of the child's food allergies, eligibility for federally-funded free- or reduced-price meals, and the student's account balance. The cafeteria staff can also look up a student's identification number if the ID number is forgotten.

The point-of-sale system also makes district cafeterias more efficient as sales transactions are streamlined and Child Nutrition Supervisors or the Child Nutrition Office can provide parents with a report of meal transactions. Parents can also add funds to their child's meal account online using Mastercard or Visa through Parent Portal, thus eliminating any concerns associated with students handling paper money and eliminating the possibility of losing a check. For help in creating a Parent Portal account, contact the Technology Department at 513-686-1790.

Meal prices:

Breakfast:

\$1.80

Lunch:

\$3.05; \$3.55; \$4.05

Meal Charge Procedure

The Sycamore Child Nutrition department strives to provide all students with an opportunity to have a well-rounded meal to be prepared to learn. The district has adopted a meal charge procedure to ensure students have a healthy meal on days when they don't have cash or funds available in their child nutrition accounts. **Only meals** will be able to be charged on lunch accounts at the 7-8 level. No a la carte purchases such as snacks, ice cream, milk, etc. will be permitted when a student has a negative balance.

It is very important for families to send money with their students or place money on their meal account online to avoid meal debt on their Child Nutrition account.

Notifications of low balances will be sent out from the district by an automated email every week. Parents can set up email notifications via parent portal to help track their student's lunch balance. The Principal or Child Nutrition Department may recommend that a family apply for free and reduced-price meals or recommend a payment plan. Applications can be found [here](#). Payment arrangements can be made by contacting the Sycamore Child Nutrition department at (513) 686-1796.

For more information, please see board policy [EF/EFB](#).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, EMAIL ADDRESS, OR PHONE NUMBER

In order for school records to be current, and in the event it is necessary to contact parents for emergency purposes, parents must make any changes in a student's address and phone number, as well as parents' work telephone numbers or email addresses in Final Forms located on the district's home page at www.sycamoreschools.org. Proof of residence must be provided to the school when changing an address.

CHILD ABUSE

All Sycamore employees with reason to believe that a child under 18 years of age or a handicapped/disabled child under 21 years of age who has suffered, or faces a threat of suffering, abuse/neglect are required to report such information to appropriate authorities.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS

State law provides for student participation in the College Credit Plus (CCP) program for the purposes of promoting rigorous academic pursuits and exposing students to options beyond the high school classroom. Therefore, eligible 7th through 12th grade students may enroll at any public college/university and any participating nonpublic college/university on a full- or part-time basis and complete eligible nonsectarian, non remedial courses for transcribed high school and/or college credit.

For more information see Board Policy [IGCH-R](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Instant Communication System

Positive outreach and interaction are essential elements of a thriving school district. With that in mind, Sycamore Community Schools uses an instant communication system that enables district and school administrators to record a voice message, schedule the message delivery time, and deliver the message via a telephone call or email to parents.

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. If a parent/guardian would like to change or remove their contact number, please call the building or send an email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org with your request.

Social Media

Sycamore Community Schools uses social media to assist in communicating district information with parents, students, and community members. While the district will continue to communicate in traditional ways (website, newsletters, etc.), social media provides a platform for individuals to learn more about the district through exclusive content, videos, a showcase of events, two-way communication, and much more.

The integration of social media into the district's communication plan is the result of months of careful planning with input from staff, parents, students, and businesses and school districts that use social media. The district also developed social media guidelines to help individuals understand, from a wide range of perspectives, proper participation in social media. Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines, the district's Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy for Students, and the Student Code of Conduct. Questions regarding district social media platforms should be directed to the Community Relations Director at 513-686-1706.

District social media platforms are:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools/>

Instagram: @sycamore_schools

YouTube: @SycamoreCommunitySchools <https://www.youtube.com/@SycamoreCommunitySchools>

Individuals wishing to launch a social media platform on behalf of the district, a school, or a school/district organization/club/team should obtain permission from the district's Community Relations Director.

COMPUTERS AND NETWORK AT SCHOOL

A Sycamore-owned Chromebook is provided to each student in grades 5-12. This device allows for monitoring and additional filtering for acceptable use while providing students with a tool needed for learning at school and at home. A student may bring his/her own device, but will use a district-owned Chromebook for all testing. For additional information about technology use and access, including the One2One Device Usage Agreement, please access goav.es/techinfo. For more information, please see board policy [EDE](#) and [EDE-R](#).

CONFIDENTIALITY

The District proposes to designate the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records as "directory information"; it discloses that information without prior written consent, except that not even directory information will be released for a profit-making plan or activity. Such information includes:

1. student's name;
2. student's address;
3. student's date of birth;
4. participation in officially recognized activities and sports
5. student's achievement awards or honors
6. the student's weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
7. major field of study
8. dates of attendance ("from and to" dates of enrollment)
9. date of graduation

Names, addresses school email addresses and telephone listings of secondary students must be released to a recruiting officer of the armed forces unless a parent or student (age 18 or older) submits a written request not to release the information. The District notifies parents and students (age 18 or older) of their right to submit a written request not to release such information. For more information, please see board policy [KKA](#)

For more information, please see board policy [JO-R](#).

CULTURE - Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a multi-tiered school-wide, behavioral framework developed and implemented for the purpose of improving academic and social outcomes and increasing learning for all students. The District implements PBIS on a systemwide basis in an effort to promote positive interactions and solutions within the District. The District encourages family involvement as an integral part of its PBIS system.

DISCIPLINE

The Sycamore Student Code of Conduct identifies in greater detail the expected behavior of students while in our classrooms, on our campus, and attending our events. Positive acknowledgement of these expected behaviors is an essential component in the PBIS framework, and is embedded in our culture. However, when students are not able to demonstrate expected behaviors, we believe in a proactive and instructional approach. This may include re-teaching of the expected behaviors, considering the impact of the behavior on others and our culture, and considering opportunities to make amends. Additional consequences may be administered for inappropriate or unexpected behavior. Administrators may exercise discretion in determining appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Prior history, seriousness of the offense, and individual student circumstances will be taken into consideration by the administrator.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

The District recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes the right to distribute, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner, non-school-sponsored material. In order to protect First Amendment rights, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the educational objectives and responsibilities of the District, the following requirements apply to the distribution of non-school-sponsored material on school property and at school activities. For more information see board policy [KJA](#) and [IGDB](#).

Prior Approval Required

Individuals or groups not affiliated with the District, who desire to distribute materials to the members of the school community, must first receive approval of such materials through the Superintendent/designee.

Students and staff members who desire to distribute materials to members of the school community must first receive approval from the building principal and when in doubt the Superintendent.

Types of Material Restrictions

Materials must be approved if they fall under one of the following categories:

- publications of services, special events, public meetings or other items of interest to students or parents/guardians;
- distribution of promotional materials of a commercial nature to students or parents/guardians;
- paid advertisements on District property, including but not limited to billboard advertisements;
- paid advertisements on or in school-sponsored publications, yearbooks, announcements and other school communications and/or
- products and materials donated by commercial enterprises for use in the classroom, as long as they serve an educational purpose and do not unduly promote any commercial activity or products.

Manner and Mode of Distribution

The Superintendent/designee may approve the use of District time, personnel and resources in the distribution of materials if the materials are of an educational nature. The Superintendent will not, however, approve the use of District time, personnel or District resources for distribution if the materials are not of an educational nature and/or considered to be conducting business by soliciting participation, campaigning for membership or registering participants.

The building principals designate appropriate times, locations and means for which distribution of non-school-sponsored materials is appropriate. Determinations are made on a case-by-case basis.

Distribution with or without District involvement does not mean to imply sponsorship or support for that which the materials endorse. The District takes no responsibility for problems arising between the sponsoring individual or group and the student or staff member who accepts the materials.

Limitations on Content

Non-school literature is not distributed on District property if:

- the materials are obscene, vulgar or otherwise inappropriate for the age and maturity of the audience;
- the materials endorse actions endangering the health or safety of students;
- the distribution of such materials would violate the intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or other rights of another person;
- the materials contain defamatory statements about public figures or others;
- the materials advocate imminent lawless or disruptive action and are likely to incite or produce such action;
- the materials are hate literature or similar publications that scurrilously attack ethnic, religious or racial groups; contain content aimed at creating hostility and violence and the materials would materially and substantially interfere with school activities or the rights of others or
- there is reasonable cause to believe that distribution of the non-school literature would result in material and substantial interference with school activities or the rights of others.

Campaign Materials

Except at the PTO-sponsored candidate forum, no campaign materials or items (brochures, buttons, stickers, etc.) may be distributed at any school or school events (sporting events, PTO meetings or events, booster/advocate meetings, homecoming parade, etc.). Candidates or ballot issue campaign ads are not permitted to be placed in the student newspaper. The district website, newsletters and e-mail will not be used to distribute campaign literature. Further, campaign signs are prohibited from being placed on school property.

Failure to comply with this policy regarding distribution of non-school literature shall result in appropriate administrative action, including but not limited to confiscation of nonconforming materials and/or suspension of use of District facilities. Appropriate law enforcement officials may be called if a person refuses to comply with this policy or fails to leave the premises when asked.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES

The Board recognizes its share of the responsibility for the health, welfare and safety of the students who attend the District's schools. The Board is concerned about the problems of alcohol and drug abuse and recognizes that illegal or inappropriate use of alcohol, narcotic drugs, depressants or other controlled substances is wrong and harmful and constitutes a hazard to the positive development of all students.

The Board does not permit any student to possess, transmit, conceal, offer for sale, consume, show evidence of having consumed or used any alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, unprescribed drugs, look-alike drugs or any mind-altering substance while on school grounds or facilities; at school-sponsored events; in other situations under the authority of the District or in school-owned or school-approved vehicles. Included in this prohibition are any substances represented as a controlled substance, nonalcoholic beers, steroids, tobacco and tobacco products and drug paraphernalia.

The Board wishes to emphasize the following requirements:

A student is required to obey existing laws on school grounds and while involved in school activities. School authorities have the same responsibility as any other citizen to report violations of the law. The final disposition of any problem, however, is determined by the building principal with due consideration of the welfare of the student and of any other relevant factors involved.

Discipline is imposed independent of court action. Students are subject to immediate suspension or expulsion proceedings for possession or use of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages.

Parents and students are given a copy of the standards of conduct and the statement of disciplinary sanctions and are notified that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

If conditions warrant, the administration refers the student for prosecution and offers full cooperation in a criminal investigation.

A reduction in penalty may be considered if the student receives professional assistance. Professional assistance may include but not be limited to an alcohol/drug education program; assessment with follow-through based on the assessment findings, counseling, outpatient treatment or inpatient treatment.

The Superintendent establishes and the Board considers for approval detailed procedures for dealing with students who may have a drug or alcohol problem. These procedures are in compliance with all applicable laws and observed by all staff members. It is the desire of the Board for students with problems to feel secure enough to ask for help from their teachers or counselors without fear of reprisal. Confidentiality shall be maintained within the limits of the law. The long-range welfare of the student is paramount.

ELEVATOR USE

Students must present a doctor's note in order to use the elevator. The school reserves the right to deny a student access to the elevator if the student is not following the rules for using the elevator or if the student's safety is in jeopardy.

EMERGENCIES

District staff are prepared to take action should an emergency arise during the school day. Fire, tornado, intruder, and special security drills are conducted periodically to provide students the opportunity to practice and be prepared for such scenarios. In addition, bus drivers conduct evacuation drills with their students. Should an emergency cause school to be closed early, announcements will be made on local television stations and on the district website. In the event of an emergency, every attempt will be made to provide a safe and reassuring environment for all students. It is in the best interest of both parents and students for parents to refrain from driving to the school to pick up their child since it could be extremely disruptive to the emergency procedure being implemented.

EXTRACURRICULAR INFORMATION

Get involved! A complete listing of all the activities and clubs that students can join is located in the counseling office or in the reception area, or on the junior high website. All interested students are encouraged to participate in clubs, activities, and/or athletics. If a student needs financial aid to enable him/her to participate in any of these programs, the student should contact the club/activity sponsor or coach to obtain that support.

For school-sponsored functions, every effort is made to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If specific auxiliary aids and/or accommodations are needed, please notify the building principal's office at least two working days prior to the event.

FEDERAL GRANT INFORMATION

At the beginning of each year, the district notifies the parents of each student in any Title I building that they may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher. Additional information regarding [Federal Grant compliance](#) can be found on our website under Parent Resources.

FEES

Fees can be paid online using Mastercard or Visa through Parent Portal or by check payable to Sycamore Community Schools.

The **Academic Fee** is \$40.00 per student. Students entering the district after the end of the semester will be charged a fee of \$20.00 and no fee to those beginning after the start of the 4th quarter.

The **Performing Arts and Athletic Program fee** is \$75.00 per sport for participation in junior high and high school athletics and the following performing arts programs: Junior High Drama, Junior High Boy Choir, and Junior High Singing Company.

Students participating in the federal free and reduced price lunch program will receive a waiver of student academic and extracurricular fees.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can be a positive learning experience when well-planned and related to the course of study. Parent permission will be sought for field trips outside of Sycamore Junior High School. Students are responsible for

obtaining and completing make-up assignments from other classes missed due to a field trip. Students may be excluded from field trips if they are in poor academic or behavioral standing. Good behavior is expected on all field trips. For more information, please see board policy [IICA/IICA-R](#).

Any student who participates in a field trip (or is absent from class for an athletic contest) must notify his/her teachers in advance that he/she will be out of class. Participation in a field trip does not excuse a student from fulfilling his/her student responsibilities.

- If a paper or project is due on the day of the trip, the student must turn it into the appropriate teacher prior to leaving on the trip.
- If a test or quiz is missed, it must be made up as soon as possible at the teacher's convenience. This may be done after school on the same day after the student returns from the trip.
- A student is responsible for all work missed when on a trip. If a test, quiz, or project is scheduled for the day following the trip; the student will be required to complete the work with the class.

FUNDRAISERS

In order to be sensitive to our families, we limit our fundraisers to those necessary to provide support to school related and Sycamore Junior High extracurricular expenses. All fundraisers require administrative approval. PTO sponsors additional opportunities to raise money such as Kroger cards, Box Tops, and Pipkin's receipt program to benefit specific project needs during the year.

Bake Sales and other fundraising activities involving food and beverage items may not be held during the school lunch period. Any fundraising activities that involve selling food or beverages can ONLY sell smart snack compliant items if during the school day. School day refers to midnight the night before to 30 minutes after school releases. If you need more information on smart snack compliant items, contact the Child Nutrition and Wellness Director.

GRADING INFORMATION

Sycamore Junior High School uses the following grading system:

90 – 100	A = Excellent- outstanding	4.0
80 – 89	B = Good – above average.....	3.0
70 – 79	C = Average – satisfactory.....	2.0
60 – 69	D = Passing – below average.....	1.0
Below 60	F = Failing – insufficient to pass.....	0.0
	I = Incomplete work, unable to assign grade	0.0
	WF = Withdraw failing.....	0.0
	WP = Withdraw passing.....	0.0

GPA calculations are based on a weighted system using the scale below. AP and Accelerated Level courses are identified on the transcript with an asterisk. These courses are weighted by adding quality points to the final grade. Weighted courses add a .5 value to the final average for Accelerated courses and 1.0 for Advanced Placement courses.

Grade Value / Quality Points		
Standards/Regular/Honors	Accelerated	AP/CCP
A = 4.0	A = 4.5	A = 5.0
B = 3.0	B = 3.5	B = 4.0
C = 2.0	C = 2.5	C = 3.0
D = 1.0	D = 1.5	D = 2.0

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss grades with teachers, counselors, or administration if there are any questions or concerns.

Interim Reports

Interim reports will be distributed during class time for students carrying D's and F's. All other grades can be viewed on Canvas or Parent Portal.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed to students approximately one week following the end of each grading period. Although Canvas is used as our Learning Management System, Parent Portal will continue to be the location for graded assignments that result in cumulative, quarter, semester, and yearly grades.

HALL PASSES

Students are required to have a signed hall pass in order to be in the hallway during class time. Students should ask their teacher/staff member to sign a hall pass in order to leave the classroom for any reason.

HEALTH

Parents are required to complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form each year to let the school know who to contact and/or what to do in the case of a student illness or emergency and should be completed on Final Forms. In the event a child becomes ill at school, it is the parent's responsibility to get the child home or to a doctor. No contagious children will be placed on the school bus. Therefore, parents should choose an emergency contact who is readily available and lives within a short distance from school. Parents should also inform the alternate person that they might be called upon to pick a child up from school if the student is ill. The school's main office must be notified of any changes in emergency contact information.

If a parent/guardian is going out of town and student(s) are to be left in the care of someone else, parents must complete and return to school an Out of Town Vacation form, available at each school and on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org.

Medical information will be shared with pertinent staff members. If you have any questions, please call the school nurse.

For more information, please talk to your school nurse or review the Student Health Handbook, available at each school and online at www.sycamoreschools.org.

Allergies

Animal/Pets In The Classroom: Due to the large number of children and staff members at risk for illness or allergic reaction to animals, animals/pets with fur or feathers are not allowed in classrooms. The exception to this is:

- Zoo presentations. (It is felt that the professional can manage this situation, and that children with allergies can be maintained at a safe distance. Teachers will assess this on an individual basis.)

- Authorized service animals

Reptiles, amphibians, and fish may be used for educational purposes; however, students are to be discouraged from handling these. If contact is made, hand washing should be required.

Balloons

Rubber balloons that decorate parties, carnivals, proms, etc. can pose a serious health threat to latex-sensitive individuals. People with chronic health conditions (spina bifida, hydrocephalus treated with shunts, etc.) who have been frequently treated with latex products are especially predisposed to this severe and possibly life threatening allergy. Latex allergy is also reported in healthy individuals, especially those with common conditions such as asthma and eczema. Routes of exposure include contact with skin, wounds, mucous membranes, and inhalation of latex laden powder particles from items such as rubber gloves or balloons. For these reasons, latex balloons are not permitted in all school buildings. Mylar balloons are suggested as safe substitutes.

Food items from outside the building

Many students suffer from severe food allergies and eating, smelling, or touching certain allergens (i.e. peanuts, nuts, etc.) can be fatal to people who are sensitive. Because of issues such as these, any food items purchased for classroom parties etc. must be sealed by the manufacturer, have the manufacturers ingredient list, and approved by the teacher when planning for the event. Should you wish to bring homemade items for a celebration or activity, you must include the ingredient list and contact the teacher prior to the event

Food Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

For any student with a food allergy, special dietary need or religious preference regarding food you will need to fill out the Food Allergy Notification Form and submit it to the school nurse. Once filled out once, this form does not need to be filled out yearly, only as the form needs to be updated due to changes. It can be found on the school website under the Child Nutrition Services tab or in final forms. Once the nurse gets a copy of the Food Allergy Notification form, it will be sent to the Child Nutrition and Wellness Director and placed on the student's meal account. This notification will pop up everytime the student's account is pulled up at mealtime.

If a student has a severe life threatening allergy or disability and is requesting a substitution the form has to be signed by a medical authority. Substitution requests need to be clearly stated on the form and do not pertain to food intolerances or non life threatening allergies. An example for a student severely allergic to milk would be "substitute juice or water for fluid milk".

Please contact the Child Nutrition and Wellness director if you have further questions. 513-686-1796

Dispensing Medication at School

Sycamore Community Schools has a medication policy that is in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code. Medication should not be given at school unless it is absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of the student. If medication must be given at school, a Physician/Dentist Medication Orders form must be on file at school, signed by a parent/guardian and a physician, before prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication may be administered. Such orders are also needed for students to carry inhalers or Epi-Pens (epinephrine auto-injectors). This form is available on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. For more information, please talk to your school nurse or review the Student Health Handbook, available at each school and online at www.sycamoreschools.org.

Medication should not be given at school unless it is absolutely necessary for the health and well-being of the student.

- A Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form must be on file at school, signed by a parent/guardian and a physician, before prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication may be administered. It is also needed for students to carry inhalers or Epi-Pens (epinephrine autoinjectors). This form is available on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org.

The following must be included with the order form

- a. Name and address of the student.
- b. Name of the medication and dosage to be given.
- c. Reason for administering the medication.
- d. Times at which medication should be given.
- e. Dates the administration of medication is to begin and end.
- f. Adverse reactions that should be reported to the physicians.
- g. Special instructions (i.e. sterile conditions, storage, etc.)
- h. Acknowledgement that the prescriber has provided the student with training in the proper use of the Epi-Pen.

Note: Any changes in a medication order require a revised statement signed by the physician.

Note: If a student does not take a daily scheduled medication for more than 30 days, a new order is required.

- Medication must be in the original container.
- Students may not transport medication to school. (Exception: Inhalers or Epi-Pens, with a completed Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form, may be transported by a student. Parents are requested to provide a backup inhaler, and are required by law to provide a backup dose of Epi-Pen.
- A new Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form is required each year for ongoing medication. All medication must be picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the school year. If it is not picked-up, it is discarded.
- Only the school nurse, a substitute nurse, the principal, or a person designated by the principal, are authorized to administer medication at school. (Note: If an Epi-Pen is administered, emergency services will be called.)
- Parents/guardians are not permitted to administer medication to students on school property without a signed Physician/Dentist Medication Orders Form.

Nurse

A licensed nurse attends the health room at Sycamore Jr. High School. The health room is a place provided for the students who become ill or injured at school. If a student becomes ill during the day, he/she should acquire permission from the classroom or study hall teacher to go to the health room. **STUDENTS MUST HAVE A PASS TO COME TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE** unless it is an emergency.

HONOR ROLL

The junior high honor roll will be compiled by the counselors at the end of each grading period. The list will include the names of those students who have achieved an overall average of 3.4 or better in all courses. A letter grade of D or F in any subject automatically disqualifies a student from the honor roll. Any student who attains an overall average of 3.6 or better in all classes will be eligible to be included in the **Principal's Honor Roll**.

INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA CENTER (IMC)

A wide variety of material is available including books, magazines, and audiovisuals. Books are checked out for three weeks. Audiovisual items may be used in the IMC or taken to classrooms for presentations. All materials must be checked out before being taken from the IMC. Fines will be assessed on materials that are kept past the date due. If a library item is lost the patron will be charged the original price or the replacement price.

LOCKERS

All school lockers are the property of the Sycamore Board of Education and, in accordance with the law, lockers/cubbies and the contents therein may be the subject of a random search at any time. The Sycamore Board of Education may direct the principal or a designee to conduct random searches as a proactive means to reduce behavior that is not in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, and/or the law. Please refer to board policy [JFG](#) and [JFG-R](#).

One student will be assigned to each locker by his/her seventh bell teacher in which to keep books, coats, and other personal property. **Lockers are to be kept locked at all times.** While the school makes every effort to solve locker problems, the school is neither responsible nor liable for books or other items of value missing or taken from lockers regardless of the circumstances. Each student is responsible for his/her own possessions, for their replacement, and/or payment. Students who have a locker problem should seek help in the office.

LOST AND FOUND

If students have lost an item or found an item, please take them to the main office.

MAKE-UP PRIVILEGES DUE TO ILLNESS

It is the responsibility of the student with an excused absence to complete make-up work. Students who are ill are allowed two days for every one day absent to turn in make-up work, however; assignments/tests due the day of absence are to be turned in or completed the day the student returns to school. Students are encouraged to utilize Canvas to access assignments.

In cases when illness or convalescence results in an extended period of absence (3 or more days), arrangements should be made through the Counseling Center to send assignments home or have them ready for parent pick up by calling **513-686-1760, ext.#2510**.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The Board is committed to an environment in which all individuals, including students, staff, job applicants, the general public and individuals with whom it does business, are treated with dignity and respect. The Board prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, sex, economic status, age, disability, military status or legally acquired genetic information.

The Board designates the following individual to serve as the District's compliance officer:

Name/Title: Brad Lovell, Assistant Superintendent

Address: Sycamore Community Schools, 5959 Hagewa Drive Cincinnati, OH 45242

Phone: (513) 686-1700

Email: lovellb@sycamoreschools.org

The compliance officer is responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975.

The compliance officer is responsible for addressing any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or retaliation in a prompt and equitable manner.

PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal is a portion of the Sycamore Community Schools website that allows parents to:

- have access to class assignments and notes
- view a student's most current grades online
- pay academic, athletic, and summer school fees online using MasterCard or Visa
- track school expenses
- add funds to a student's meal account electronically/view meal account transactions
- access parent resources/web links
- online forms

Parent Portal also meets the busy schedules of parents and families as the information on Parent Portal is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Parents can also have peace of mind during financial transactions as payments are credited to a student's account within 24 hours, credit card information is not saved, a password is required, and transmissions are secure!

For information on creating a Parent Portal account, visit the district website (www.sycamoreschools.org) or email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Schools have specific days not in session or classes are dismissed early for the purpose of holding parent-teacher conferences. See the school district calendar for these designated days. Conferences may also be scheduled by parents or teachers anytime throughout the school year.

Parents wishing to have a conference with a teacher should call, email, or send a note to the teacher requesting a conference.

Per a law called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student records and information may not be shared with anyone who is not a legal parent or guardian and therefore, these individuals must be excluded from parent-teacher conferences.

If a situation requires the inclusion of a non-parent (such as a tutor, or grandparent), a conference waiver form must be signed by the parent, guardian, or custodial parent. Step parents living with the child have the same FERPA rights as a non-custodial parent regarding access to records however, they have no decision-making authority unless procured through court order.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The PTO helps to organize and implement programs that serve students, the staff, the community, and the world. All parents and guardians are encouraged to join the PTO as statistics indicate that there is a strong correlation between parental involvement and student achievement. PTO meeting times and locations are available through the school's main office, on the district calendar, and online at www.sycamoreschools.org. All parents and guardians are welcome at PTO meetings.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The school cannot be responsible for the personal property of the students. There should be no reason for a student to carry large sums of money or other valuables. However, should such an occasion arise, the main office will be glad to put such valuables in safekeeping until the student leaves school that day

PHONES

There is a phone that students may use at the front desk. The phone may be used during lunch and after school. A pass is required to use the phone during school hours.

Only **emergency messages from parents will be delivered to students**. With so many students and teachers at the junior high, it is extremely time consuming and difficult to deliver messages. Please refrain from calling with a message unless it is an emergency.

PHOTOS AND MEDIA

The district knows and understands the desire of a proud parent to videotape or photograph memorable school events and share those photos with friends and family members. However, families are reminded that not everyone wants to be in pictures or videos. Sycamore Community Schools will respect the rights of those parents who have requested that their children not be included in publicity efforts, website posting, videos, and photographs for various reasons. Thus, the district respectfully requests that parents obtain approval from their school principal prior to posting photos and videos on the internet and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or YouTube.

The Community Relations Director is responsible for submitting district information or story ideas to the media and creating social media channels on behalf of the district. Individuals who wish to release a photo or news item to the media and those who want to start a social media channel for the district or a school should contact the Community Relations Director at 513-686-1706.

PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

Students and parents are encouraged to follow our Problem Solving Model. Within this framework students and parents are encouraged to address any questions or concerns with the adult staff most directly involved with their concern, (i.e. grading, detentions, etc.) to find a workable solution. Should a student still have concerns after working directly with a teacher/staff member, they are encouraged to seek out the assistance of their school counselor. Parents are encouraged to follow the same guidelines prior to contacting school administration.

Define the problem	Gather the facts; what you know and what you need to find out. Check your facts and sources for accuracy. Write a clear, objective description of the problem.
Determine who is involved	Initially include only those individuals who are at the point of concern and whose participation is necessary to solve the problem. For example, if your child is having a problem with a particular teacher, the problem at this point belongs only to you, your child, and that teacher.
Meet with those involved	Calmly share, listen to, and acknowledge all points of view.

Restate the problem together	Start by listing points of agreement. Move to the question that you need to address together.
Identify solutions and their consequences	Offer and consider all options. Be flexible. Discuss the potential outcome of each solution. Eliminate solutions unacceptable to either party. Choose the solution satisfactory to both parties.
Select a plan of action	Determine what needs to be done, by when, and in what time frame. Specify a means of assessment outcome.

Do both parties agree?
If YES, follow the plan. The problem is resolved.
If NO, contact the next level of authority.

Appealing to the next level of authority	An appeal may be necessary due to the complex nature of the problem, the need for additional resources, or due to disagreement over the most appropriate course of action. The appeal may be initiated by a phone call, a scheduled visit, or a letter to the person at the next level. (See levels of appeal)
Meeting to appeal	A problem-solving meeting may occur with all parties to come to a resolution. Both parties should provide the person at the next level with a review of the outcome of the first meeting, the reasons for the appeal, and their recommendations.
Receive feedback	Within 10 working days beyond the appeal, all parties should receive a response that includes a strategy for dealing with the concern and a rationale to support all recommendations.

If the parties do not agree, the appeal process may be repeated, if necessary, throughout all the consecutive levels of authority. For additional information please see Board Policy [KLB](#) for complaints about Curriculum & Materials or [KLD/KLD-R/JFCF-R](#) for complaints about District Personnel.

Note: Directors of Transportation, Maintenance, Guidance and Child Nutrition Services are not part of the appeal process and may be called directly to address specific concerns unrelated to the education program.

Levels of Appeal

Remember, problem resolution always begins with those closest to the problem...

Involve the

Teacher/Counselor

...to resolve issues related to classroom management, instruction, student or teacher conflict

If there is no
resolution,
appeal to the

Building Principal or Asst. Principal

To deal with issues to school goals, procedures and policies, staff performance, student services, extracurricular activities, community groups, and communications.

If there is no
resolution,
appeal to the

Assistant Superintendent

To resolve issues related to the performance of building principals; the instructional programs of the district, including curricular offerings, budget, and expenditures.

If there is no
resolution,
appeal to the

Superintendent

To review issues from other levels; policy amendments and additions; school calendar; community relations; district goal setting and other concerns of a district-wide nature.

If there is no
resolution,
appeal to the

Board of Education

To resolve issues that have passed through all other levels.

SAFETY DRILLS

During the school year, we practice the following “safety drills” in an effort to prepare our students for emergency situations on our campus:

- Fire drills** once a month
- Tornado drills** once a month
- Lockdown/Intruder Response** once a quarter

Students are expected to participate in the drills in a serious manner to decrease the risk of harm to themselves and others. Plans for emergency drills are posted in each classroom and other areas accessible to staff and students where required by law.

SCHOOL CLOSING AND DELAYS DUE TO EMERGENCIES

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice message at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. All changes to contact information should be made in Final Forms.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

School closings and delays are based on concern for the safety of students, parents and employees, and most school closings occur during winter months. During inclement weather, Sycamore Community Schools will typically operate as follows:

School is Closed for the Day:

- Before and after school programs will not operate
- All after-school activities will be canceled, unless otherwise notified.

School Opening is Delayed:

- All schools and buses will run on a 2 hour delay
- Dismissal times will remain the same for all grades, except Preschool and Head Start
- Morning Preschool classes will be canceled
- Afternoon Preschool classes will operate as usual
- Morning kindergarten will be canceled
- Afternoon kindergarten classes will begin at 12:50 p.m. and end at 3:45 p.m.
- Latchkey operates under a 90-minute delay

If schools are delayed or closed, the district will inform all media and place an announcement on the district website (www.sycamoreschools.org), the district Facebook page (www.facebook.com/sycamoreschools) and the district Twitter account ([@sycamoreschools](https://twitter.com/sycamoreschools)).

When schools are delayed or closed, the district will place a detailed announcement on the district website, www.sycamoreschools.org. In addition, Sycamore parents/guardians will receive a voice at the home phone and mobile phone that is associated with their contact information in our student database system. If a parent/guardian would like to change or remove their contact number, please call the building or send an email to helpdesk@sycamoreschools.org with your request.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Damage to school property must be paid for by students and/or their parents. Students will be assessed the replacement cost of the lost or damaged book or item.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Sycamore Junior High School in conjunction with the Montgomery Police Department has a School Resource Officer assigned to the junior high school on a daily basis.

SEARCH

The right to inspect students' school lockers or articles carried upon their persons and to interrogate an individual student is inherent in the authority granted school boards. All searches are conducted sparingly and only when such search is reasonably likely to produce tangible results to preserve discipline and good order and the safety and security of persons and their property. The Board permits building administrators/designees to search any unattended bag for safety and identification purposes. Student lockers are the property of the district, and since random searches have a positive impact on reducing drugs and other criminal activity, it is the policy of the Board to permit the building administrator to search any locker and its contents as the administrator believes necessary. Students are advised that the Sycamore Schools Board policy provides for the random, unannounced search of student lockers and for the use of canines in detecting the presence of drugs. Building administrators/designees are permitted to search the person and personal property (purse, backpack, gym bag, etc.) of a student where there is reason to believe that evidence will be obtained indicating the student's violation of either the law or school rules.

STUDENT SURVEYS

The Board recognizes the importance of maintaining student records and preserving their confidentiality. Student records containing personally identifiable information are kept confidential at collection, storage, disclosure and destruction stages. Boards that receive funds under any applicable program must provide reasonable notice to parents at the beginning of each school year that their children may be involved in Board-approved third party surveys. For more information please see Board Policy [JOA](#).

STUDENT VISITORS

Due to classroom size constraints and continued national concerns in regards to school safety / emergency procedures, students are not allowed to have other students attend classes or visit at lunch during the school day. Prospective students need to arrange for a tour through the Registrar or Assistant Principal.

SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT

The Board recognizes the value of electronic surveillance systems in monitoring activity on school property and in school vehicles in protecting the health, welfare and safety of its students and staff. Carefully weighing the rights of privacy of students and staff against the District's duty to maintain order and discipline, the Board authorizes the use of electronic surveillance systems. Cameras are used on school property and vape detectors are used in the high school. For more information please see board policy [ECA-R](#).

SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Counseling	Counselors are available to coordinate the counseling program and work with teachers, small groups of children, or individual children to provide a variety of
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	support experiences. The school counselor is not trained for long-term counseling concerns.
ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages)	The goal of the Sycamore Community Schools ESOL Program is for students to become proficient in all areas of English language acquisition so that students may participate fully in all mainstream classes in which the target language is English. ESOL teachers provide support services to help students reach English proficiency in areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Instructional services for ESOL students in Sycamore Community Schools are based on the philosophy of inclusion and participation to the maximum extent possible.
Gifted Services	Gifted Education/Intervention Specialists provide services inside and outside of the regular classroom. Students who are gifted are identified annually by qualified professionals using a variety of assessments. Qualified teaching staff provides gifted services to students with opportunities aligned to their gifted identification area. Parents are notified if their child qualifies for gifted service.
Intervention	Intervention teachers provide specific skill and behavioral interventions. Students will receive individual and/or small-group instruction based on the results of various assessments. Academic and behavioral supports will be provided based on areas of need. Support instruction may occur in the regular education setting or in a small group by a specialist.
McKinney-Vento	Students meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless when they lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence. Students who are sharing the housing of another person (doubled up) due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason meet the definition of homeless. This includes students living in motels, hotels, RV parks or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations, as well as those living in emergency or transitional shelters or abandoned in hospitals.
Parent Mentor	The Parent Mentor helps support families in understanding the special education process by providing the information and resources needed to become effective partners for the education of their child/children with special needs. The Parent Mentor's role is to listen to questions and concerns expressed by parents and provide helpful information. The Parent Mentor focus is working with families and school personnel to collaboratively solve as a team to help maximize and support the learning process for the student.
Special Education	Special education is instruction that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student eligible to receive special education services. Special education is provided at no cost to parents and includes related services a student requires to access her/his educational program. Eligibility is determined through an evaluation process as per Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of children with Disabilities.
School Social Worker	Sycamore's School Social Worker is an integral link between school, home, and community in helping students achieve academic success. They work directly with school administrations as well as students and families. They are a member of an interdisciplinary team to help students succeed. Our School Social Workers also facilitates access to community resources for students and families, and advocates for student success.

TRANSPORTATION

CAR RIDERS/WALKERS

We encourage students to ride the bus or walk home whenever possible due to the congestion that results from a large number of afternoon pickups by cars. Parents are asked to remain in the pickup line until the car in front of them moves out of the lot. No student is permitted to cross through the lot for pickup.

BUS CONDUCT

Riding to or from school on buses is provided by the Board of Education. In order to maintain the safety of all people on board a school bus, it is imperative that students maintain good behavior and follow all bus driver rules. The failure of the pupil to follow these rules and regulations may result in administrative discipline and/or forfeiting the privilege of transportation by school bus.

Students will:

1. be careful in approaching bus stops, walk on the left facing oncoming traffic, be sure that the road is clear both ways before crossing the highway and wait in a location clear of traffic;
2. arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive in order to permit the bus to follow the time schedule;
3. wait in an area clear of traffic and refrain from exhibiting behavior at the bus stop that threatens life, limb or property of any individual;
4. sit in assigned seats (drivers have the right to assign a student to a seat);
5. go directly to their assigned seat without disturbing or crowding other students and remain seated while the vehicle is moving;
6. observe classroom conduct, or the bus conduct established by administrators and transportation personnel and obey the driver promptly and respectfully;
7. keep the vehicle clean and free of trip hazards
8. refrain from eating and drinking on the bus except as required for medical reasons or as permitted by the District for non-routine trips when supervised by an appropriate chaperone, school administrator or school personnel;
9. refrain from using profane language and from loud talking or laughing (unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and might result in a serious accident);
10. remain seated keeping aisles and exits clear, keep head, arms and hands inside the vehicle at all times and not throw or pass objects on, from or into the vehicle;
11. be courteous to fellow students and to the driver;

12. treat equipment as one would treat valuable furniture in one's home (damage to the school vehicle is strictly forbidden);
13. refrain from using nicotine products on the vehicle or possessing alcohol or drugs on the vehicle except as prescription medications may be required for a student and
14. carry on the vehicle only items that can be held in their laps or can otherwise be stored on the vehicle in accordance with State law.

Students must remain seated until the vehicle stops, then promptly unload and wait in their designated place of safety until the vehicle leaves. Students who must cross the street to reach the residence side of the street must wait for the signal from the driver and cross in front of the vehicle after also checking for traffic themselves.

Please see board policy [EEACC](#) and [EEACC-R](#) for more information.

VISITORS

All individuals who are not part of a normal school day (regular students, staff, or faculty) shall report directly to the school office and state the reason for their visit each time he/she enters the school. For the safety of students and staff, Sycamore Community Schools is utilizing the visitor management system. All visitors must obtain a visitor's badge which must be worn at all times while in the school building. Parents who wish to visit a classroom must contact the teacher in advance to establish a time to visit the classroom. Once an appointment is made, parents must sign in at the school's main office and obtain a visitor badge. Parents may also eat lunch with their child at any time by either bringing their own lunch or selecting items from the lunch line. Parents bringing in lunch must sign in at the main office and are asked not to share with other students for lunch due to dietary restrictions, allergies. No person may disrupt, disturb or interfere with the teaching of any class of students or any other activity conducted in a school building or upon the campus or grounds at any time. For more information please see Board Policy [KGB](#).

VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECKS

In an ongoing effort to ensure a safe and secure environment for all students, Sycamore has instituted a volunteer background check process. This process requires a criminal background check for any volunteer that is accompanying a school group on an overnight field trip or is working with students in an environment out of sight and sound of a district employee. Examples of individuals who do not need a criminal background check include, but are not limited to, playground volunteers (as long as there is a regular teacher or aide on the playground), an individual volunteering in the regular classroom, or any volunteer under staff supervision. Background checks will be conducted only on those individuals authorized by the building principal and will be completed at the District Offices. Volunteers may be required to pay for their background check.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be permitted at the discretion of the principal.

All classroom volunteers are under the direction of the teacher and are asked to honor their commitment with punctuality and attendance. Each volunteer area will have specific guidelines and contingency plans in the event someone is unable to fulfill their responsibility on a particular day. Volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of the educational setting related to student academic and behavioral issues and must not divulge information of this nature to any individual or group with the exception of the teacher in charge or other appropriate personnel. Discussing individual staff members or programs in a critical manner is inappropriate.

When volunteering in the classroom, media center, or on a field trip, it is inappropriate to bring younger children. The volunteer's attention must be totally directed to the task at hand. When performing duties and questions or concerns arise, volunteers should consult with the person in charge at an appropriate time. Volunteers should be a positive example and role model for the children by being aware of verbal and nonverbal communication. Cell phones should be turned off or put on vibrate.

SYCAMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

While Sycamore embraces the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support framework for encouraging desired behavior, student accountability is imperative in teaching our children to be responsible citizens. The Sycamore Student Code of Conduct identifies in greater detail the expected behavior of students while in our classrooms, on our campus, and attending our events. Positive acknowledgement of these expected behaviors is an essential component in the PBIS framework, and is embedded in our culture. However, when students are not able to demonstrate expected behaviors, we believe in a restorative approach. This may include re-teaching of the expected behaviors, considering the impact of the behavior on others and our culture, and considering opportunities to make amends. Additionally, consequences may be administered for inappropriate or unexpected behavior. Administrators may exercise discretion in determining appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior. Prior history, seriousness of the offense, and individual student circumstances will be taken into consideration by the administrator.

The violation on the part of a student of any one or more of the following rules of conduct may result in disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, suspension, emergency removal and/or expulsion. This Code and its provisions shall be applicable on school property, including buses and at any school sponsored activity. Students with disabilities may be subjected to disciplinary action for violations of the Student Code of Conduct consistent with applicable Federal and State statutes. (orc. 3313.661 and 3312.662) regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee, or the property of such official or employee.

Alcohol, Drugs, or Narcotics, THC and CBD products: A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, conceal, use, smell of, or consume any alcoholic beverage, drug (prescription and over-the-counter), inhalant, or narcotic except as prescribed by a duly licensed medical practitioner and registered with the school nurse or principal, nor shall a student possess, transmit, conceal, or use any counterfeit drug, rolling papers or other drug paraphernalia, or narcotic. A student shall not allude to possessing or providing, attempt to sell, distribute, trade, or provide alcohol, drugs, narcotics, THC/CBD products to another student. Students are not permitted to present, reference or simulate the use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, THC and CBD products using lookalike, imitation, or simulated products. A student is not permitted to possess or use electronic devices or accessories utilized for storage, possession or consumption of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, THC, or CBD products including but not limited to vape devices, chargers, pods, vaporizers, tanks, coils, oils, and cartridges.

Assault: A student shall not assault or cause physical injury or mental anguish or behave in such a way that could cause physical injury or mental anguish to school personnel, other students or visitors. Hazing in any form is forbidden.

Academic Dishonesty: A student shall not possess, sell, transmit, or receive any test information or other information that is meant for individual completion or preparation. Nor shall a student plagiarize or present another person's work as his/her own. This may result in grade reduction.

Cell Phones:

Cell phones are not permitted to be used or carried by students during the school day unless instructed to do so for classroom usage by a certified staff member. Please refer to board policy [JFCK](#) and the student code of conduct. Consequences for violating this policy may include, but are not limited to:

1st Offense	Warning issued to the student, cell phone confiscated and turned in to the front office. Parents/Guardians will be notified.
2nd Offense	Parent/Guardian responsible for picking up the phone.
3rd Offense	Detention and parent/guardian responsible for picking up the phone.
4th Offense	Saturday school and phone will be held by administration for one week. Parent/guardian responsible for picking up the phone after one calendar week.
5th and Subsequent	Repeated violations are considered insubordination and will result in more serious consequences. Parent/Guardian responsible for picking up the phone.

Classroom Disruption: A student shall not engage in any activity that interrupts, interferes, or prohibits the learning of themselves or others in an instructional setting.

Creating a Hazardous/Unsafe Situation: A student may not engage in any activity that knowingly or unknowingly may cause a hazardous situation for students, staff, or the community while on school property or at school sponsored events.

Damage or Destruction of Property: A student while under the jurisdiction of the school shall not deface, damage or destroy, or attempt to deface, damage or destroy, school or private property. Disciplinary action may include restitution.

Disrespect/Provocation: Students are expected to be courteous, considerate, and solve problems peacefully with all students and staff. Student shall refrain from the use of profane or obscene language, motions, signs, electronic or written messages, and derogatory comments based on appearance, race, religion, gender and/or sexuality. Students are expected to be honest and truthful. Students are expected to honor the reasonable requests of their peers and adults.

Disruption of School: A student shall not engage in any activity that requires the daily operations of the school to be significantly disrupted or halted. Including but not limited to; disruptions resulting in student's being removed from their intended building locations, administrators coordinating large scale responses to reported student code of conduct violations, and disruptions requiring law enforcement response.

Dress Code: Appropriate attire should ensure the health, welfare and safety of all members of the student body and promotes a positive image of our students and the schools. Any form of dress or grooming that attracts undue attention, disrupts the learning environment, or violates the previous statement is unacceptable. Dress and grooming standards require cleanliness in the interest of health, sanitary conditions and safety requirements. When a student is participating in school activities, his/her dress and grooming must not disrupt his/her performance or that of other students or constitute a health threat to himself/herself or other students. Dress and grooming will be such as not to disrupt the teaching-learning process nor infringe upon the rights of others.

Electronic Equipment: Students are not permitted to use electronic devices that cause disruption to the educational process or school functions.

Extortion: A student shall not borrow or attempt to take money or a thing of value from another person by using intimidation or threat, real or implied.

Falsifying Information/Lying In An Investigation: A student shall not knowingly report or provide details in an investigation that are false, embellished, or inaccurate for the purpose of misleading the administration in an investigation, as retaliation towards peers or staff, to or to protect themselves or others in an investigation.

Fighting, Physical Altercation, Horseplay: A student may not engage in a physical exchange with another student that may, or does, cause physical discomfort or harm with other students.

Forgery: A student shall not write the name of another person or alter the date, time, grade, or other data on any school form or on correspondence directed to the school.

Gambling: A student shall not engage in any act of gambling including but not limited to in person or online gambling activities.

Gangs: A student may not wear, carry, or display gang paraphernalia, or exhibit behavior or gestures which symbolize gang membership, or cause and/or participate in activities which intimidate or negatively affect other students.

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, and Dating Violence: Definitions of hazing, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, are found in the Bullying and Hazing Policy.

Insubordination: A student shall not fail to comply with the directive of authorized school personnel during any period of time when the student is under the authority of the school.

Public Display of Affection: Students will refrain from any form of physical contact between couples that may make others in close proximity uncomfortable or serves as a distraction for themselves as well as onlookers.

Public Indecency: A student shall not uncover or expose parts of the body which are regarded as private.

Skipping/Out of Assigned Area: Students are expected to be in their designated or assigned space within the school building at all times. Students out of their assigned area are only permitted to do so with specific permission from school officials. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds without explicit permission and by signing out and following the outlined procedures for leaving school grounds.

Theft: A student shall not remove, have in his/her possession, or take property belonging either to the school or another individual.

Threats/Intimidation: A student shall not act in a way, through written, electronic, or physical communication the desire, intent, or possibility of causing harm to another student. Harm is defined as physical, mental, social or emotional damage to a person, property, social standing, opportunities, or any extension of the person that has importance.

Tobacco/Nicotine or Tobacco Simulating Products: A student shall not use or possess tobacco or nicotine/tobacco-simulating products in any form including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, clove cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaporizer pens, chewing tobacco, snuff and any other tobacco. A student is not permitted to possess or use electronic devices or accessories typically utilized for nicotine including but not limited to vape devices, chargers, pods, vaporizers, tanks, oils, coils, and cartridges. Students are not permitted to allude to or insinuate the use of tobacco/nicotine or tobacco simulating products.

Trespassing/Loitering: A student shall not enter a school building or school grounds or school sponsored event where the student is not authorized to attend. Students are not permitted on school property before or after operating hours without specific purpose or permission from a school official to attend or participate in is a supervised school approved activity.

Truancy: A student shall not be absent from school or from a class except for the reasons provided by Ohio Revised Code and confirmation by the parent or guardian. Excessive unexcused absences may result in referral to a student attendance intervention meeting and/or truancy charges being filed with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court.

Unauthorized/Inappropriate use of Electronic Devices: In accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy for technology, unauthorized, illegal use of computers, software, access to computer networks, telecommunications and related technologies; or being involved in willful acts that cause physical, financial, or other harm, or disruption of information technology in any manner by the student is prohibited. Students are not permitted to use personal devices on school grounds to engage in illegal, unwelcomed, or illicit contact with others. Students may not use the district network to engage in illegal, unwelcomed, or illicit contact with others. Using extensions, apps or software that bypass district filters or programs is not permitted. The Acceptable Use Policy is expected to be followed 24/7, whether the device and/or account is on or off Sycamore's campus. The following guidelines and procedures shall be complied with by staff, students or community members who are specifically authorized to use the District's computers or online services.

1. Use appropriate language. Do not use profanity, obscenity or other language, that may be offensive to other users. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
2. Do not reveal your personal home address or phone number or those of other students or colleagues.
3. Note that electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private. Technology coordinators have access to all messages relating to or in support of illegal activities and such activities may be reported to the authorities.
4. Use of the computer and/or network is not for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
5. The network should not be used in such a way that it disrupts the use of the network by others.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be property of the District.
7. Rules and regulations of online etiquette are subject to change by the administration.

8. The user in whose name an online service account is issued is responsible for its proper use at all times. Users shall keep personal account numbers and passwords private. They shall use this system only under the account numbers issued by the District.
9. The system shall be used only for purposes related to education or administration. Commercial and/or political use of the system is strictly prohibited. The administration reserves the right to monitor any computer activity and online communications for improper use.
10. Users shall not use the system to encourage the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco nor shall they promote unethical practices or any activity prohibited by law or Board policy.
11. Users shall not view, download or transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive or sexually explicit or that could be construed as harassment, intimidation, bullying or disparagement of others based on their race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, economic status, military status, political beliefs or any other personal or physical characteristics.
12. Copyrighted material may not be placed on the system without the author's permission.
13. Vandalism results in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes uploading/downloading any inappropriate material, creating computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment or materials or the data of any other user.
14. Users shall not read other users' mail or files; they shall not attempt to interfere with other users' ability to send or receive electronic mail, nor shall they attempt to read, delete, copy, modify or forge other users' mail.
15. Users are expected to keep messages brief and use appropriate language.
16. Users shall report any security problem or misuse of the network to the teacher, their immediate supervisor or building administrator.

For more information please see Board Policy [EDE](#)

Weapons or Explosives: A student shall not possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any weapon or object capable of causing injury to another person, including but not limited to chains, guns, knives, ice picks, brass knuckles, objects that propel projectiles, lighters, matches, firecrackers, smoke bombs, fireworks and chemicals or other look alike objects which could be construed as causing harm.

The definition of a firearm is any weapon (including a starter gun) which is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer or any destructive device (as defined in 18 U.S.C.A. Section 921), that includes any explosive, incendiary or poisonous gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or device similar to any of the devices described above. A knife is defined as a cutting instrument having a sharp blade that is capable of causing serious bodily injury.

Other: A student shall not engage in any other activity which the pupil knows or may disrupt the academic process or a curricular or extracurricular activity.

Adopted by the Sycamore Board of Education: 8/76, 5/83, 4/85, 7/88, 8/91, 5/93, 7/97, 6/98, 5/03, 6/13, 9/17, 2/23

HAZING AND BULLYING (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

The Board does not tolerate hazing, harassment, intimidation or bullying of any student on District property or at any school-sponsored event, regardless of whether the event occurs on or off District property (including on school buses and other school-related vehicles). Students who engage in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from school. The Board's commitment to addressing such prohibited behavior involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a school atmosphere in which hazing, harassment, intimidation, dating violence and/or bullying will not be tolerated by students, staff or administration.

Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.

Throughout this policy the term bullying is used in place of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This behavior is prohibited on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended. Discipline procedures will not infringe on any student's rights under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. When the behavior is sexual harassment, the Title IX sexual harassment grievance process will be followed, if applicable, prior to imposing any discipline that cannot be imposed without resolution of the Title IX process.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

The District includes, within the health curriculum, age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 to 12. This instruction includes recognizing warning signs of dating violence and the characteristics of healthy relationships.

Prohibited activities of any type, including those activities engaged in via computer and/or electronic communications devices or electronic means are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times. The District educates minors about appropriate online behavior including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

No administrator, teacher or other employee of the District shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing and/or bullying activities. No students, including leaders of student organizations, are permitted to plan, encourage or engage in any hazing and/or bullying.

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying and/or dating violence. If any of the prohibited behaviors are planned or discovered involved students are informed by the discovering District employee of

the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all such activities immediately. All hazing, bullying and/or dating violence incidents are reported immediately to the principal/designee and appropriate discipline is administered. When employees have actual knowledge that the behavior is sexual harassment, they must contact the Title IX Coordinator.

The Superintendent/designee must provide the Board President with a semiannual written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District's website, to the extent permitted by law.

The administration provides training on the District's hazing and bullying policy to District employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students and by November 30 annually reports to the Ohio Department of Education compliance with this requirement through the consolidated school mandate report. If the District reports noncompliance the Superintendent/designee must provide a written explanation to the Board within 30 days explaining this noncompliance and a written plan of action for accurately and efficiently addressing the problem.

Additional training is provided to elementary employees in violence and substance abuse prevention and positive youth development

District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State and Federal law.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because they file a grievance or assist or participate in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual.

Please see board policy [JFCF-R](#) for school personnel responsibilities and complaint procedures.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (TITLE IX)

The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that it operates, including admission and employment. The District is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the regulations promulgated through the U.S. Department of Education not to discriminate in such a manner. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education, or both. Please refer to board policy [ACAA](#) and [ACAA/R](#).

The Board designates the following individual to serve as the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Name/Title: Meghan Lawson, Assistant Superintendent
Address: Sycamore Community Schools, 5959 Hagewa Drive Cincinnati, OH 45242
Phone: (513) 513-686-1700
Email: lawsonme@sycamoreschools.org

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, at any time, including during non-business hours. Such a report may be made in person, by mail, by telephone or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.

For purposes of this policy and the grievance process, “sexual harassment” means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual’s participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District’s education program or activity or
3. “Sexual assault” as defined in 20 USC 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), “dating violence” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(10), “domestic violence” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(8) or “stalking” as defined in 34 USC 12291(a)(30).

When the harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex does not meet the definition of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator directs the individual to the applicable sex discrimination process for investigation.

Retaliation Prohibited

The District prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation proceeding or hearing, if applicable. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or this part, constitutes retaliation.

Confidentiality

The District must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any individual who has been alleged to be the victim or perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, and any witness, except as may be permitted by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of the Title IX regulations, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

Notice Requirements

The District provides notice to applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees and the union(s) with the name or title, office address, email address and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator and notice of the District grievance procedures and process, including how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment and how the District will respond. The District also posts the Title IX Coordinator’s contact information and Title IX policies and procedures in a prominent location on the District website and in all handbooks made available by the District.

Training Requirements

The District ensures that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, receives training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals and informal resolution processes, when applicable, and how to serve impartially including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest and bias. The District also ensures that decision-makers and investigators receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant as set forth in the formal procedures that follow, and training on any technology to be used at a live hearing, if applicable. Investigators also receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. All materials used to train individuals who receive training under this section must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment and are made publicly available on the District's website.

Conflict of Interest and Bias

The District ensures that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

Determination of Responsibility

The individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment is presumed not responsible for alleged conduct. A determination regarding responsibility will be made by the decision-maker at the conclusion of the investigation in accordance with the process outlined in the accompanying procedure. No disciplinary sanctions will be imposed unless and until a final determination of responsibility is reached.

DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES

Learning communities that are successful are those in which students and staff respect each other and share a common purpose toward excellence. An orderly and properly behaved student body is an essential component in order for everyone to be successful. Clear expectations for behavior and consequences for poor choices help to maintain the environment and our mission of excellence. While Sycamore embraces the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support framework for encouraging desired behavior, student accountability is imperative in teaching our children to be responsible citizens. Students who violate the Code of Conduct will be held accountable through disciplinary responses that promote behavioral change while also educating the child. Based on the severity of the offense, the final determination of a disciplinary consequence is at the discretion of the Administration. This code of conduct applies to all Sycamore Junior High School events, facilities, campus locations, and any other venue or activity that is sponsored by Sycamore Community Schools.

Consequences Utilized By Administrators (Not Limited To):

Continuum of Consequences

- CONTACT HOME
- WARNING
- AFTER SCHOOL D.T.
- EXTENDED DAY
- FRIDAY SCHOOL
- LUNCH D.T.
- TEACHER D.T.
- TEACHER LUNCH D.T.
- REDIRECTION
- PERSONAL REFLECTION
- ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
- MEDIATION
- EXTRA PRACTICE OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

- SATURDAY SCHOOL
- ACTS OF RESTITUTION
- LOSS OF OPPORTUNITIES
- LOSS OF PRIVILEGES
- CONFERENCING
- INCREASED ADULT SUPERVISION
- LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT
- GRADE MODIFICATION

- OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION
- CHANGE IN SCHEDULE
- IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ALTERNATE LEARNING CENTER)
- LAW ENFORCEMENT INTERVENTION
- RECOMMEDATION FOR EXPULSION

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

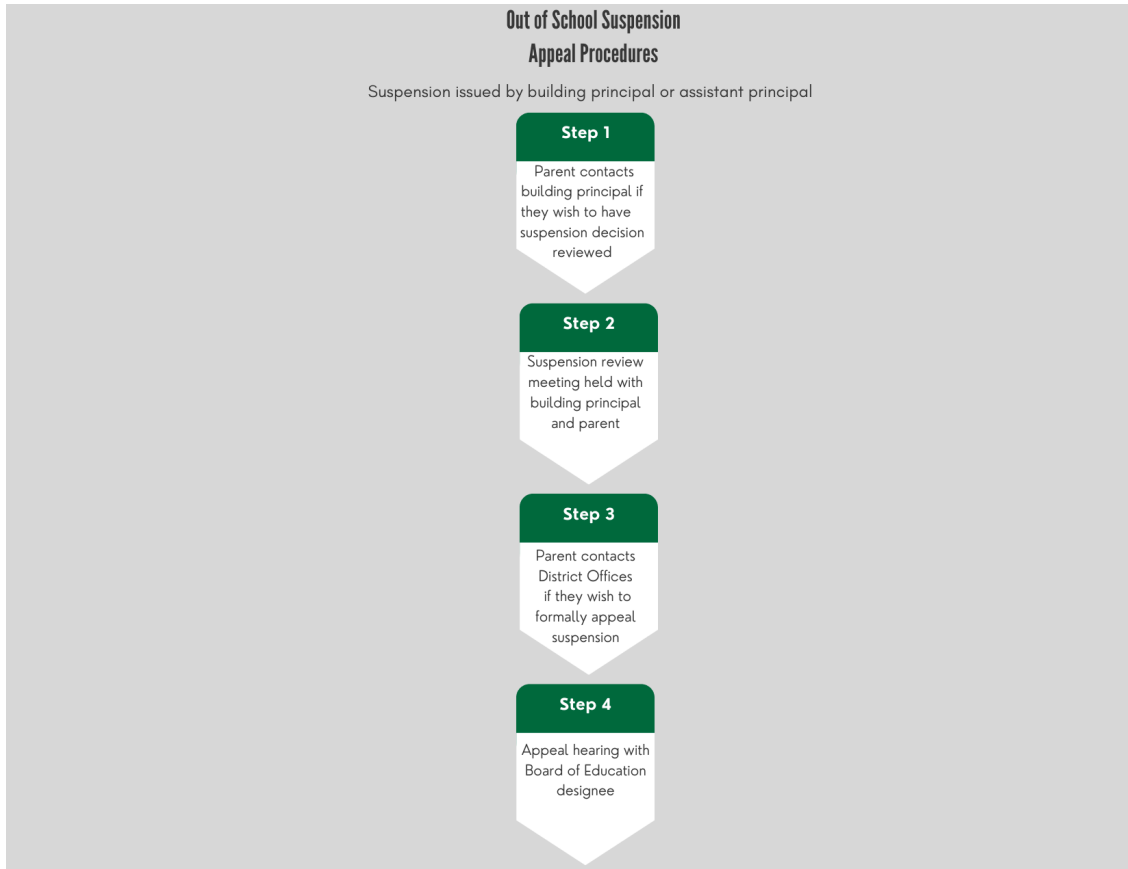
Out of School Suspension

A student may be suspended from school for up to 10 days. A suspended student is not allowed on school grounds or permitted to attend or participate in any school activities. In accordance with Ohio law any student that misses class for a suspension is allowed full make up privileges for assignments missed. Appeals to suspensions should be done first through contacting the building principal and making an appointment. If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, the Superintendent, principal, assistant principal or personnel employed to direct, supervise or coach a student activity program may remove the student from the premises. For additional information please see Board Policy [JGD](#).

Expulsion

Only the superintendent may expel a student from school. The length of an expulsion may be for any length of time, up to and including eighty (80) consecutive school days. A student who may have committed a serious offense or have chronic repeated offenses may be recommended for expulsion. An expulsion hearing will then be set up at the Sycamore Community Schools District office in accordance with student due process procedures.

Out of School Suspension Appeal Procedures



Expulsion Appeal Procedures

Suspension for 10 days, with recommendation for expulsion, issued by building principal or assistant principal

Step 1

Expulsion hearing with District Office administration, building principal, and parents within 10 days of issue

Step 2

Recommendation made to superintendent on how to proceed

Step 3

Superintendent makes final decision based in recommendations

Step 4

Parent contacts District Offices if they wish to appeal

Step 5

Appeal hearing with Board of Education designee