



# **ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK**

OUR MISSION: TO EMPOWER A  
COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS WHO  
WILL CHANGE THE WORLD

**2025-26**

**WORTHINGTON CITY SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Jennifer Best  
Kelli Davis  
Amber Epling-Skinner  
Stephanie Harless  
Nikki Hudson

**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Trent Bowers, Superintendent  
T.J. Cusick, Treasurer

Angie Adrean, Assistant Superintendent, Academics  
Kim Marani, Director of Special Education  
Emilie Greenwald, Director of Secondary Education  
Rob Messenheimer, Director of Elementary Education  
Toya Spencer, Director of School Community Engagement  
Kelly Wegley, Director of Professional Learning

Jeff Maddox, Assistant Superintendent, Operations and Human Resources  
Vicki Gnezda, Director of Communications  
Jeff Eble, Director of Business Services  
Jeff Collett, Director of Technology  
Timothy Gehring, Director of Facilities  
Tracy West, Transportation Supervisor  
Brian Hunt, Food Service Supervisor

**DISTRICT OFFICES:**  
**Worthington Schools Education Center**  
**200 East Wilson Bridge Road**  
**Worthington, Ohio 43085**  
**614-450-6000**



## LANGUAGE TRANSLATION

**ENGLISH:** To access information in this document in Spanish, Arabic, or Portuguese, please contact the staff listed below

**SPANISH:** Si requiere ayuda en Español, favor de mandar un texto a Sarah Pettigrew al teléfono 614-359-9050 o al email [spettigrew@wscloud.org](mailto:spettigrew@wscloud.org)

**PORTUGUESE:** Para receber assistência em português, por favor ligar para Marcia Gomes - enviar email [mgomes@wscloud.org](mailto:mgomes@wscloud.org)

**ARABIC:**

العربية:  
للحصول على مساعدة باللغة العربية، يُرجى التواصل مع مي حجازي عبر البريد الإلكتروني [mhijazi@wscloud.org](mailto:mhijazi@wscloud.org)

**OTHER:** For assistance in other languages, please contact your child's school and ask for the EL teacher.



## **OUR MISSION**

"To Empower a Community of Learners who will change the world."

## **OUR VISION**

- We will engage each student with diverse opportunities to maximize every student's potential
- We will provide a safe environment where every student can grow intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.
- We will provide consistent communication and promote dialogue with our community.
- We will be responsible and transparent with our community's resources.

An electronic version of the Worthington Elementary School handbook is available at:

[Elementary Handbook Web Format](#)

To view all of the Worthington Board of Education district by-laws and policies, visit:

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

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

ONLINE REGISTRATION AND FORM ACCESS	8
DISTRICT SCHOOL CALENDARS	8
GRADE ENTRY TIMELINE   2025-2026	9
SCHOOL HOURS	10
ATTENDANCE	10
Contacting the Parent/Guardian of an Absent Student	11
Excessive Absences	11
Religious Expression Days	12
Habitually Truant	12
Absence Intervention Team	12
Intervention Strategies	13
Reporting Requirements	13
Religious Holidays	15
Late Arrival/Tardy	16
Early Dismissal	16
Withdrawals	16
Open Enrollment Policy	16
Changes in Contact Information and Parenting Agreements	17
STUDENT HEALTH	17
Guidelines-When to Keep Your Child Home from School	17
Dispensing of Medications	18
Requests for Exemption from Recess/Activities	18
Immunization	18
Health Screening	19
Emergency Medical Authorization	19
Nut Free Schools	20
Student Insurance	20
(Lice) Pediculosis Procedure – Worthington Schools	20
STUDENT SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION	21
Safety	21
To and From School	21
Changes in Transportation	21
Bicycles at School	21
Dropping Off or Picking Up Children at School	22
Bus Service and Regulations	22
Regulations for Students Riding School Buses	22
STUDENT SAFETY	23
Safety Drills	23

Worthington Schools Volunteer Screening	24
School Visitations	24
Parents/Guardians Visiting Students at Lunch and during Recess	24
School Closing	25
Inclement Weather	25
STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY	25
USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	28
Student Usage of AI	29
CELL PHONES AND PORTABLE COMMUNICATION DEVICES	30
Cellular Phones and other Portable Communication Devices: Student Use of Cellular Phones	30
EMAIL POLICIES	30
General Information	30
Student Email Permissions	30
General Email Guidelines for Students	31
Student Emails to Staff	31
Monitoring and Filtering of Email	31
Expectation of Privacy	31
School and Parent/Guardian Monitoring of Student Online Usage	31
Parent Access to Student Email	32
GENERAL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES	32
Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA Worthington School District	32
Celebrating Student Birthdays	34
Changes in Information	35
Child Custody	35
Discipline	35
Food Services	37
Interrogation by Police or Outside Agencies	37
Lost and Found	38
Progress Reports	38
Special Education and Section 504	38
Child Find	39
Parent Mentor	39
Restroom Usage	39
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT	39
GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, EMERGENCY	39
REMOVAL OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION	39
STUDENT DISCIPLINE	51
Emergency Removal of Students	52

Suspension of Bus Riding/Transportation Privileges	53
Due Process Rights	53
A. Student subject to suspension:	54
B. Students subject to expulsion:	55
C. Students subject to emergency removal:	56
D. Students subject to permanent exclusion:	56
E. Students subject to suspension from bus riding/transportation privileges:	56
Expulsion for One Calendar Year	57
Search and Seizure	58
PROHIBITION OF SMOKING, USE OF TOBACCO AND ELECTRIC CIGARETTES	59
Tobacco Use by Students	60
No Smoking/Tobacco Use on District Property	61
Drug Prevention	63
ANTI-HARASSMENT GENERAL POLICY	63
General Policy Statement	63
Other Violations of the Anti-Harassment Policy	63
Definitions	64
Bullying	64
Harassment	65
BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE FORMS OF BEHAVIOR	75
EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY	79
APPENDIX A: Disciplinary Action Chart	80

## ONLINE REGISTRATION AND FORM ACCESS

Worthington Schools uses an online management system, Infinite Campus, to maintain accurate student records and to provide families with an easy way to view and update student information.

### Accessing your Infinite Campus Parent Account:

Please utilize the following guide to access Infinite Campus: [Infinite Campus Parent Access Guide](#)

### Completing Emergency Data Review and Yearly Updates:

Each school year, families are required to update student information, including emergency contacts. The guide above will direct you in how to access yearly updates.

### MyPaymentsPlus for Payment of Breakfast/Lunch:

Visit [www.MyPaymentsPlus.com](http://www.MyPaymentsPlus.com)

Click **“Register Now”** and follow the simple onscreen instructions to create an account.

Add your student by using their Student ID number (the I.D. number is found on Infinite Campus on the first screen after you log in).

There is also a ***MyPaymentsPlus*** app which is free to install for your iPhone or android.

## DISTRICT SCHOOL CALENDARS

[2025-26 School Year Calendar](#)



**GRADE ENTRY TIMELINE | 2025-2026**  
**WORTHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**  
**(GRADES K-5)**

**1<sup>ST</sup> TRIMESTER: AUGUST 13 – NOVEMBER 7**

August 11	Teacher Workday
August 12	Teacher Workday
August 13	First Day for Students Grades 1-5
August 13-14	Kindergarten Assessments
August 15	First Day for Kindergarten Students
September 1	Labor Day (No School)
September 24	Middle of 1st Trimester
October 13-16	Parent Teacher Conference Week
October 17	Parent Teacher Conference In-Lieu of Day (No School)
November 4	Teacher Workday Professional Learning (No School)
November 7	End of 1st Trimester

**2<sup>ND</sup> TRIMESTER: NOVEMBER 10 – FEBRUARY 20**

November 15	Progress Reports Available On-line (Grades K-5)
November 26	In-Lieu of PD/Teacher Collaboration Day (No School)
November 27-28	Thanksgiving Break
December 22-January 2	Winter Break (No School)
January 5	Classes Resume
January 7	Middle of 2nd Trimester
January 19	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No School)
February 2-6	Parent Teacher Conference Week
February 13	Parent Teacher Conference In-Lieu of Day (No School)
February 16	Presidents Day (No School)
February 20	End of 2nd Trimester

**3<sup>RD</sup> TRIMESTER: FEBRUARY 23 – MAY 21**

February 28	Progress Reports Available On-line (Grades K-5)
March 13	In-Lieu of PD/Teacher Collaboration Day (No School)
March 30-April 3	Spring Break (No School)
April 6	Classes Resume
April 10	Middle of 3rd Trimester
May 21	Last Day of Classes
May 22	Teacher Grading Day (No School)

## SCHOOL HOURS

Worthington's elementary schools are often referred to as "early start" and "late start" schools due to their staggered start times. These times are set and necessary for providing adequate transportation for our eleven elementary school attendance areas. Visit the school website for additional information.

Early Start	Late Start
<b>Bluffsvie, Brookside, Colonial Hills, Granby, Wilson Hill, Worthington Park</b>	<b>Evening Street, Liberty, Slate Hill, Worthington Estates, Worthington Hills</b>
Student Start Time: 7:40 a.m.	Student Start Time: 8:10 a.m.
Student Dismissal Time: 2:20 p.m.	Student Dismissal Time: 2:50 p.m.

Children who walk to school or who are dropped off by parents or guardians should not arrive before their school's designated student arrival time communicated by the building principal. Also, children must report home immediately after school before playing or coming back to the school playground. Children should walk home using a direct route, crossing streets where the crossing guards are stationed. Bus riders should go directly to their homes after exiting the bus. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before designated arrival times, after school dismissal times or following the completion of their bus route. Only children enrolled in the Care After School Program should be in the school building under the supervision of Care After School personnel after dismissal times, with the exception of those participating in supervised, scheduled after school activities or those accompanied by a parent/guardian.

## ATTENDANCE

The educational program offered by this District is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session or during the attendance sessions to which s/he has been assigned.

In accordance with statute, the Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student of compulsory school age or from an adult student who has been absent from school or from class for any reason, a statement of the cause for such absence. The Board of Education reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each single absence or prolonged absence.

The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

- A. personal illness (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required)
- B. appointment with a health care provider
- C. illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
- D. quarantine of the home
- E. death in the family
- F. necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- G. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday

- H. out-of-state travel (up to a maximum twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction) to participate in a District-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity Any classroom assignment missed due to the absence shall be completed by the student. If the student will be absent for twenty-four (24) or more consecutive hours when the student's school is open for instruction, a classroom teacher shall accompany the student during the travel period to provide the student with instructional assistance.
- I. such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
- J. medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751
- K. service as a precinct officer at a primary, special or general election in accordance with the program set forth in Policy 5725
- L. college visitation
- M. absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status
- N. absences due to a student being homeless

Attendance need not always be within the school facilities, but a student will be considered to be in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board.

The Board shall consider each student assigned to a program of other guided learning experiences to be in regular attendance for the program provided that s/he reports to such staff member s/he is assigned for guidance at the place in which s/he is conducting study, and regularly demonstrates progress toward the objectives of the course of study.

At the discretion of the Superintendent, a student may be excused for a longer period of time than ten (10) days if a child's parent or guardian has recently died or become totally or partially incapacitated and there is no older brother or sister living in the home who is out of school. (The Superintendent may request a certificate of a physician attesting to the physical condition of the parent or guardian.)

Attendance shall be taken at the commencement of the school day in buildings with non-period-based schedules. Attendance for students arriving late or leaving early must be tracked and recorded to the nearest full hour.

### **Contacting the Parent/Guardian of an Absent Student**

When a parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student has failed to initiate a telephone call or other communication notifying the school or building administration of the student's excused or unexcused absence within 120 minutes after the beginning of the school day, the attendance officer or designee for each school building shall make at least one (1) attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of any student who is recorded as absent without legitimate excuse within 120 minutes after the beginning of each school day by a method designated by the Superintendent in accordance with Ohio law (see AG 5200).

### **Excessive Absences**

When a student of compulsory school age is absent from school with combined non-medical excused absences and unexcused absences in excess of thirty-eight (38) or more hours in one (1) school month, or sixty-five (65) or more hours in a school year, that student is considered excessively absent from school. The District or school shall notify the child's parent or guardian of the child's absences, in writing, within seven (7) school days after the date of the absence that triggered the notice requirement. At the same time written notice is given, any appropriate intervention action listed herein may be taken.

The following “medical excuses” will not count toward a student’s excessive absence hours: (1) personal illness; (2) illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child; (3) quarantine of the home; (4) health care provider appointments (doctor, dentist, mental health provider, etc.); (5) medically-necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751; (6) death in the family; or (7) other set of circumstances the Superintendent deems on a case-by-case basis to be a good and sufficient cause for medical absence from school.

A medically excused absence occurs any time a student is out of school due to illness or medical visit (physician, dentist, mental health, etc.). A medical excuse for personal illness will be accepted in the form of doctor’s note.

### **Religious Expression Days**

The Principal will approve up to three (3) religious expression days per school year after receiving a written request from the student's parent or guardian. Religious expression days may be used to take holidays for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system or participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. Students who are absent on approved religious expression days will not face any academic penalties and will be provided with academic accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements that are missed.

To receive accommodations for religious expression days, parents or guardians must submit written requests to the Principal within fourteen (14) days after the start of the school year or fourteen (14) days after a student is enrolled in the District. The requests must specify the religious expression day(s) to be approved. The Principal will approve the days without inquiring into the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system.

### **Habitually Truant**

A student will be considered habitually truant if the student is of compulsory school age and absent without a legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, for forty-two (42) or more hours in one (1) school month, or for seventy-two (72) or more hours in one (1) school year.

Legitimate excuses for the absence of a student who is otherwise habitually truant include but are not limited to:

- A. the student was enrolled in another school district;
- B. the student was excused from attendance in accordance with R.C 3321.04; or
- C. the student has received an age and schooling certificate

### **Absence Intervention Team**

To the extent required by law as determined on an annual basis, within ten (10) days of a student becoming habitually truant, the Principal shall assign the student to an absence intervention team.

Within fourteen (14) school days after the assignment of a student to an absence intervention team, the team shall develop an intervention plan for that student in an effort to reduce or eliminate further absences. Each intervention plan shall vary based on the individual needs of the student, but the plan shall state that the attendance officer shall file a complaint not later than sixty-one (61) days after the date the plan was implemented, if the child has refused to participate in, or failed to make satisfactory progress on, the intervention plan. Within seven (7) school days after the development of the plan, reasonable efforts shall be made to provide the student's parent/guardian/custodian, with written notice of the plan.

As part of the absence intervention plan, the Principal may, in his/her discretion contact the appropriate juvenile court and ask to have a student informally enrolled in any alternative to adjudication described in R.C. 2151.27(G).

Each absence intervention team may vary based on the needs of each individual student but shall include a representative from the child's building, another representative from the child's building who knows the child, and the child's parent or parent's designee, or the child's guardian, custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian. The team also may include a school psychologist, counselor, social worker, or representative of a public or nonprofit agency designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences.

The members of the absence intervention team shall be selected within seven (7) school days of the student meeting the habitually truant threshold. Within the same period of seven (7) school days, the Principal shall make at least three (3) meaningful, good faith attempts to secure the participation of the student's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian on that team. A good faith attempt to secure the participation of the parent shall include, but not be limited to, contacting (or attempting to contact) the parent by telephone, email, or regular mail. If the student's parent responds to any of those attempts, but is unable to participate for any reason, the Principal shall inform the parent of the parent's right to appear by designee. If seven (7) school days elapse and the student's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian fails to respond to the attempts to secure participation, the attendance officer shall investigate whether the failure to respond triggers mandatory abuse or neglect reporting to the public children services agency. At the same time, the absence intervention team shall continue to develop an intervention plan for the child notwithstanding the absence of the child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian.

### **Intervention Strategies**

In order to address the attendance practices of a student who is habitually truant, the intervention team may, as part of an intervention plan, take any of the following intervention actions:

- A. provide counseling to the student
- B. request or require the student's parent to attend a parental involvement program
- C. request or require a parent to attend a truancy prevention mediation program
- D. notify the Registrar of Motor Vehicles of the student's absences
- E. take appropriate legal action
- F. assignment to an alternative school

In the event that a student becomes habitually truant within twenty-one (21) school days prior to the last day of instruction of a school year, the Principal may, in his/her discretion, assign a staff member to work with the child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian to develop an absence intervention plan during the summer.

The plan shall be implemented not later than seven (7) days prior to the first day of instruction of the next school year.

### **Reporting Requirements**

The attendance officer shall file a complaint in the juvenile court against a student on the sixty-first (61<sup>st</sup>) day after the implementation of an absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies, provided that all of the following apply:

- A. The student is habitually truant
- B. The school district or school has made meaningful attempts to re-engage the student through the absence intervention plan, other intervention strategies, and any offered alternatives to adjudication, if applicable.
- C. The student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan, as determined by the absence intervention team, or any offered intervention strategies or alternative to adjudication.

If the student, at any time during the implementation phase of the absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies, is absent without legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours or forty-two (42) or more hours in one school month, the attendance officer shall file a complaint in juvenile court against that student, unless the absence intervention team has determined that the student has made substantial progress on the absence intervention plan.

In the event that the sixty-first (61st) day after the implementation of the absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies falls on a day during the summer months, the attendance officer may extend the implementation of the plan and delay the filing of the complaint for an additional thirty (30) days from the first day of instruction of the next school year.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish an educational program for parents of truant students which is designed to encourage parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Any parent who does not complete the program is to be reported to law enforcement authorities for parental education neglect, a fourth class misdemeanor if found guilty.

Whenever any student of compulsory school age has sixty (60) consecutive hours in a single month or a total of ninety (90) hours of unexcused absence from school during the school year, s/he will be considered habitually absent under R.C. 3321.13(b)(2). The Board authorizes the Superintendent to inform the student and his/her parents, guardian, or custodian of the record of absences without a legitimate excuse as well as the District's intent to notify the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, if appropriate, and the Judge of the Juvenile Court of the student's unexcused absences and habitually absent status.

If a student who is habitually truant violates the order of a juvenile court regarding the student's prior adjudication as an unruly child for being a habitual truant, s/he may further be adjudicated as a delinquent child.

The District shall report to the Ohio Department of Education, as soon as practicable, and in a format and manner determined by the Department, any of the following occurrences:

- A. when a notice that a student has been absent with or without legitimate excuse for thirty-eight (38) or more hours in one (1) school month, or sixty-five (65) or more hours in a school year is submitted to a parent/guardian/or custodian;
- B. when a child of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, forty-two (42) or more hours in one school month, or seventy-two (72) or more hours in a school year;
- C. when a child of compulsory school age who has been adjudicated an unruly child for being a habitual truant violates the court order regarding that adjudication;
- D. when an absence intervention plan has been implemented for a child under this policy.

This policy was developed after consultation with the judge of the juvenile court of Franklin County/Counties, with the parents, guardians, or other persons having care of the students attending school in the District, and with appropriate State and local agencies.

*This policy was developed after consultation with the judge of the juvenile court of Franklin County, with the parents, guardians, or other persons having care of the students attending school in the district, and with appropriate State and local agencies.*

*R.C. 2151.011, 3313.668, 3317.034, 3321.01 et seq., 3321.13(B)(2), 3321.19, 3321.191*

*R.C. 3321.22, 3321.38, 3323.041*

*A.C. 3301-35-03, 3301-47-01, 3301-69-02*

*© Neola 2024*

## **Religious Holidays**

Worthington Schools is committed to promoting a learning environment that respects and values all students in order to create a culture of acceptance, and that celebrates and empowers differences. For many students in our schools the observance of religious or cultural traditions is an important part of their personal, family, and community life. These traditions help students understand and preserve their own value systems, cultures, customs and histories.

Worthington Board of Education Policy 5200 provides an excused absence for: “observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday.” Guardians should notify the school office that their student will be absent for religious leave. Communicating that leave in advance with your student’s teachers will aid teachers in accommodating your student.

In addition, Worthington recognizes the following holidays are of major significance to religious and cultural groups in our school district:

Good Friday  
Easter  
Christmas  
Eid Al-Adha  
Eid Al Fitr  
Diwali  
Rosh Hashanah  
Yom Kippur

School district employees will make best efforts to not schedule the following during these designated holidays:

- Major Exams
- Reviews for Major Exams
- Standardized Tests
- Other critical/major class components (will vary by course)
- Tryouts for teams, plays, etc...
- One-time or major events (homecoming, prom, graduation, senior nights, state of the schools, orientations, concerts, etc...)

In the event of an unavoidable scheduling conflict, teachers will work with students to make reasonable accommodations. Teachers should be sensitive to the scheduling of quizzes longer than ten minutes on these holidays and attempt to avoid assigning or collecting other major assignments on these days. Students will probably be with their families in observance of these holidays and may not have time available to do the required homework by the initial due date. Absence to observe these holidays should

be excused with the same make-up privileges offered to a student who has an excused absence for illness.

School district employees will make best efforts to schedule interscholastic athletic games in a manner that minimizes conflict with the designated holidays recognizing that this will not always be possible due to opponent schedules, tournament schedules, etc. Interscholastic practices are allowed, but students observing their religious holiday should be excused from participation without penalty.

School district employees may arrange for students to participate in one-time or major events on a designated holiday if the scheduling of these events is not controlled by our employees (e.g. academic competitions or conferences organized by third parties). Scheduling of such events must be approved by the building principal and Director of Elementary or Secondary Education.

### **Late Arrival/Tardy**

Children are considered tardy if they enter their homeroom classrooms after their school's start time. Parents are asked to report to the school office to sign in their child. **Minutes tardy may affect the required student attendance reporting described in the Attendance section (above.)**

### **Early Dismissal**

Written notice for students to leave early, such as for doctor or dental appointments, should be sent to the classroom teacher. If notice is during the day of appointment, please notify the office. Parents are asked to report to the school office to sign out their child. **Minutes missed for early dismissal may affect the required student attendance reporting described in the Attendance section (above.)** Parent, guardian, or documented contact picking up the student should bring a state-issued ID in order to sign out student.

### **Withdrawals**

Students must attend school in the school district in which their parent(s) reside. If you move out of the Worthington School District you must withdraw your child from school. Please inform your child's school that you are moving out of the District. When the child is enrolled in their new school district, the receiving school will request records from the Worthington school(s) your child attended.

If you move within the Worthington School District but out of your current school attendance area and wish to keep your child at their current school, you may request approval for open enrollment by completing an open enrollment form, available [on-line](#).

### **Open Enrollment Policy**

Requests by parents for their children to attend a Worthington school outside of their attendance area may be approved as long as the requested school's capacity and class size limits will not be exceeded and the educational program can be maintained. Parents must also agree to provide transportation for their child as needed.

Application requests for a transfer at the start of the next school year should be submitted online no later than March 31. Intra-district open enrollment forms are available on the Worthington City



Schools' website, [www.worthington.k12.oh.us](http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us). Parents should complete the form online. Parents will be notified in August no later than 10 days before the start of the school year whether or not their children will be able to attend the school of choice. The student's new school assignment is subject to annual review and may be canceled if space is no longer available at the school of choice.

**Reapplication for open enrollment must be done yearly at the elementary level.**

### **Changes in Contact Information and Parenting Agreements**

Anytime there is a change in telephone number, address, place of employment, marital status, custody schedule or anything else of which the school should be aware, please contact the school office immediately so our records can be updated. Phone numbers, email addresses and medical information should be updated by parents on [Infinite Campus](#).

## **STUDENT HEALTH**

### **Guidelines-When to Keep Your Child Home from School**

The protocol for management of communicable disease in Worthington City Schools is based upon the Ohio Department of Health's guidelines and recommendations. **Your child is too ill to go to school if any of the following symptoms are present:**

- Temperature of 100 F or above by mouth (Student must stay home until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. In most cases this means the student will miss the following school day. Please understand fevers can reoccur within a 24 hour time period and this policy is in the best interest of all students.)
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours (Student must stay home for 24 hours to ensure these symptoms are gone before returning to school.)
- Shortness of breath or increased wheezing during normal activity
- Has a cough that interrupts normal activity
- Pain from an earache, headache, sore throat or recent injury
- Has yellow or green drainage from nose or eye(s)
- Rash over body or localized to one area of the body (A student who shows signs of a communicable disease exhibiting as a rash may return to school once the rash is gone or a doctor's note is presented stating the student may return to school.)
- Fatigue that requires bed rest (common with flu-like symptoms)
- Signs of conjunctivitis such as red, crusty or swollen eyes (Student may return once symptoms have been treated and are gone or a doctor's note is presented stating the student may return to school.)

If your child is ill, please do not send them to school to be checked by the school nurse. Such exposure may be harmful to the child as well as to the children with whom they come in contact.

Please report all contagious diseases to the school office in order that the proper steps may be taken within the school to prevent the spread of disease.

If your child becomes ill, or is injured at school, you will be called and **expected to come to school to pick-up the child**. We will be guided by information on the "Health Services" portion of your student's Online Registration Summary. You are asked to supply that information on or before the start of school. **If there are ever any changes to this information during the school year, please notify the school office immediately and make those changes online.**

## Reporting an Absence

Parents/Guardians must notify the school on the day a student is absent unless the office has been notified in advance. Lacking parental notification of an absence, the school office personnel will notify the parent of the student's absence by telephone and/or email on the same day the student is absent.

## Dispensing of Medications

Students in elementary schools should not be in possession of medications or dispense medications unless a school approved medical plan is active and on file. If school personnel are asked to dispense any kind of medication to your child, prescription or non-prescription, our office must have the Dispensing of Medication Form, which has been approved by the Board of Education, filled out and on file in our office. All medication requests must be FDA approved medications. If a medication is not FDA approved, a physician signature will be required. The form requires the signatures of the prescribing physician and at least one parent or guardian. These [forms are available on the district's website](#) and in our school office. Please do not request that we make an exception to this procedure; we are bound by law to act in this manner.

Students may possess a drug prescribed to the student to prevent the onset of a seizure or to alleviate the symptoms of a seizure, provided that the student has prior written approval from the student's physician, and if the student is a minor, the written approval of the student's parent or guardian as outlined is a seizure care plan in conjunction with the school. Copies of the written approvals must be provided to the Principal and any school nurse assigned to the building.

## Requests for Exemption from Recess/Activities

Your child's physical and emotional health is an important phase of the education program. Children need exercise and fresh air in order to keep healthy and alert. Our supervised playground is a safe and healthy place where your child can participate in a variety of activities.

*Weather and health permitting, we expect all children to go outside for recess. In our schools, when the weather is dry or dry enough, and the temperature is 20 degrees or higher, real temperature, or wind-chill, we plan to take students outside for recess. It is critically important that parents/guardians send students appropriately dressed for the weather conditions and seasons.*

Children recovering from an illness (no longer in an infectious stage) will be permitted to remain inside at recess time upon written request from parents. If the request is for longer than three days, the school should have a statement from the doctor explaining why the child is well enough to be in school, but is unable to be outside for a short time. In general, it is much better that children become involved in outside activities rather than to stay in the classroom the entire day.

## Immunization

Proof of immunization must be on file in the nurse's office within fourteen (14) days of the student entering school. In addition to this requirement, students entering the district from a foreign country must also present evidence of a negative TB test or chest x-ray report within the last ninety (90) days and prior to entry to school. **Children will not be permitted to start school without proper proof of these immunizations.** It is advisable to make an appointment for your child to receive these vaccines to avoid exclusion. As soon as your child receives this vaccine, please provide proof of immunization from your physician to your school office so your child's school health record can be updated. More

information regarding immunization may be found on the district website:  
[www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/health-safety](http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/health-safety)

## **Health Screening**

Health Screening done or supervised by the school nurse include:

- Vision-Kindergarten, Grades 1, 3, 5, new students and staff referrals
- Hearing-Kindergarten, Grades 1, 3, 5, new students and staff referrals

Other grade levels may be screened at the discretion of the school nurse. You will be notified of any results outside the normal range. If you have any questions regarding these screenings or do not wish to have your child participate, please contact your school nurse.

## **Emergency Medical Authorization**

Annually, before the first day of October, the Board of Education will distribute to parents or guardians of all students the Emergency Medical Authorization Form. Thereafter, the Board shall, within thirty (30) days after the entry of any student for the first time into a public school in this State, provide the child's parent with a copy of the Emergency Medical Authorization Form.

When the Form is returned to the District with either Part I or Part II completed, the District shall keep the Form on file, and shall send the Form to any school to which the student is transferred. Upon request of the student's parent, the District may permit the parent to make changes in a previously filed Form, or to file a new Form.

In the event emergency medical treatment for a student is necessary, the District will adhere to the instructions on the authorization form. If a parent refuses to grant consent for emergency medical treatment, the parent must indicate in the proper place on the Form (i.e., Part II) the procedure the parent wishes school authorities to follow in the event of a medical emergency involving his/her child.

Even if a parent grants consent for emergency medical treatment, when a student becomes ill or is injured and requires emergency medical treatment while under school authority, or while engaged in an extra-curricular activity authorized by the appropriate school authorities, the building administrator(s) shall make reasonable attempts to contact the parent before treatment is given. The school representative shall present the student's Emergency Medical Authorization Form or a copy thereof to the hospital or practitioner rendering treatment.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form will be kept in a separate, easily accessible file in each school building during the school year.

Any time a student or a group of students is taken out of the District to participate in a school event, the staff in charge of the event must take the Emergency Medical Authorization Forms for those students. This includes, and is not limited to, students involved in music trips, athletic trips, field trips, and academic contests. This does not include student spectators at events.

Whenever it is necessary for staff members to use emergency procedures in order to care properly for a student, they are to follow the procedures described in the Superintendent's administrative guidelines. Staff members shall not abide by any "Do Not Resuscitate" (DNR) order that may exist for a student, unless ordered to do so by a court of law.

© Neola 2005

## **Nut Free Schools**

Recognizing that allergy reactions to nuts may be especially severe and even life threatening, during school hours, all schools will be nut and peanut free facilities. School provided meals will be nut and peanut free. To protect the health and safety of all of our students, we ask that parents/guardians be diligent in making sure that food sent with their child to school is nut and peanut free. This includes refraining from bringing any food item to school, including field trips and other school-sponsored events, that contains peanuts or tree nuts, or that, according to its label “may include peanuts or tree nuts.”

## **Student Insurance**

For the coming year, the Board of Education will make available a student insurance policy. For your convenience, claim forms are available at the school office when needed.

## **(Lice) Pediculosis Procedure – Worthington Schools**

Pediculosis, or head lice, is a nuisance condition but common among students and very treatable.

If your student is found to have head lice, please let the school know as soon as possible. Your school nurse can also help you with treatment options.

If a student is determined to have lice at school, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the student up for treatment options.

### *Head Lice Management*

Dealing with head lice can be a most frustrating experience for parents. To make matters worse, head lice have become increasingly resistant to many of the treatments available on the market. It has become very important for families to be vigilant about knowing the signs of infestation and the appropriate ways to manage the problem should you discover your child has head lice.

Additional resources that school nurses have found helpful can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/health-safety/pediculosis-head-lice>

# STUDENT SAFETY AND TRANSPORTATION

## Safety

The safety and well-being of every child who attends Worthington City Schools is a concern for all of us. Each child will need to become very familiar with school behavior guidelines for their own safety and well-being and that of others. Playground, building and classroom behavior expectations will be explained and discussed with the children during the first weeks of school and regularly throughout the school year. Every attempt will be made by the entire staff to ensure that these are understood and carried out.

## To and From School

The school personnel provide supervision of students on school property during school hours. Children should not arrive at school before designated arrival times and they are to leave the school grounds at dismissal time and/or bus pick-up times unless special provisions have been made by school personnel for a child at school beyond those times. When children are not on school property, as they come to and from school, they are the responsibility of parents. Please make clear to your children the school's (and your) expectations for them in their trip to and from school. Walkers are to stay on sidewalks or designated walking paths, to cross streets at designated crosswalks and are to follow behavior and safety rules established by the school.

We hope that you will help us in instructing your child on ways to remain safe while walking and bicycling to and from school.

- Be sure your child can recite their name, address, and telephone number so if there is an emergency someone can more easily locate you, if necessary.
- Please tell your child to NEVER talk to, accept rides with, or take presents from a stranger. You need not pursue the subject any further than you feel is necessary.
- Check the [Franklin County Sheriff Department](#) website for current information regarding sexual offenders in your area.

## Changes in Transportation

Should a change in transportation method be required, parents or guardians must notify the school of any such changes, allowing ample time prior to the end of the school day for school staff to notify teacher and student. If the change is for the day of change, please contact the office directly.

## Bicycles at School

All children are encouraged to walk to school if residing in the non-transport boundary. The use of bicycles for travel to and from school by students as an assumption of responsibility on the part of those students and their parent/guardian -- a responsibility in the care of property, in the observation of safety rules, and in the display of courtesy and consideration toward others. The school district will not be responsible for bicycles which are lost, stolen, or damaged. Students outside of transport areas should not ride their bike to or from school unless accompanied by their parent or guardian. For those students who plan to ride bicycles to school, the following guidelines are suggested:

- All students within non-transport boundaries are permitted to ride bicycles to school with parental/guardian consent. The parent/guardian and child need to decide when a child is ready to ride a bicycle to school.
- All bicycles are to be parked in bicycle racks.
- Bicycle riders are to obey all safety and traffic laws, e.g. stop signs.
- All bicycles should be locked while parked in the bicycle rack.
- Bicycle riders should wear helmets.

Safe bicycle practices are expected at all times.

### **Dropping Off or Picking Up Children at School**

Each of our elementary schools has a traffic pattern specific to their school and community. It is critical that all parents/guardians follow the school's plan for dropping off and picking up your child(ren) to ensure the safety of all students and families.

### **Bus Service and Regulations**

Bus service is provided for children who live over 1.5 miles from the school. Bus stops are established by the Transportation Department and are approved by the Worthington Board of Education. The phone number for the Transportation Department is (614)450-6600.

Students may only ride assigned buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the principal.

Drivers are responsible for and shall expect the orderly conduct of students. Students on the bus shall be under the authority of and are directly responsible to the driver. The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain transportation safety.

If students do not respond to the driver's request for orderly conduct, the driver shall report this to the principal. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken as determined by the school principal. The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. School principal and/or transportation may access school bus video and audio recordings.

Parents are responsible for the safety of students while going to and from pickup points, until students get on the bus at the bus stops and as soon as students get off the bus in the neighborhood.

Buses operate on a time schedule; this schedule does not permit buses to wait for tardy students.

### **Regulations for Students Riding School Buses**

1. The school bus driver shall be in charge of the bus at all times and shall be responsible for order.
2. Students riding school busses shall:
  - A. Arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to scheduled pickup time.
  - B. Board, leave, and ride the school bus in an orderly and non-disruptive manner;

- C. Sit facing forward in their seat from the time of boarding until disembarking;
- D. Refrain from engaging in any conversation or activity (including fighting) which could reasonably interfere with the safety of passengers or with the bus driver's safe operation of the bus;
- E. Refrain from conduct, conversation or forms of expression which could reasonably offend the ordinary sensibilities of others, including electronic recordings or picture taking;
- F. Do not vandalize or otherwise damage a school bus;
- G. Do not eat or drink while in a school bus;
- H. Do not transport animals, dangerous objects or materials;
- I. Do not throw objects either out of or within the bus and do not extend any part of their body out of a window;
- J. Make no noise while a school bus is approaching or crossing a railroad crossing or at any other point of danger as specified by the school bus driver;
- K. Cross all streets at least 10 feet in front of the school bus and remain visible to the driver at all times;
- L. Board or leave the bus only at assigned stops unless they have parental or administrative written authorization to do otherwise;
- M. Upon departing the bus in the afternoon students are to proceed to a designated place of safety where they must remain until the bus leaves the stop.

A violation of any of the foregoing rules or of any provision of the student's code of conduct shall constitute disorderly conduct and shall subject the student to suspension or termination of bus privileges, emergency removal, or other discipline, as determined by building principal.

## STUDENT SAFETY

### Safety Drills

Fire drills are held periodically to prepare children for an emergency, should one arise. If you are visiting the school during a fire drill, you will notice that the children will exit the building and will remain quietly at a designated location where they will be counted by their teachers. All persons – staff, volunteers, and visitors -- are required to leave the building during a fire drill.

Tornado emergency drills are also practiced seasonally. Students go to their shelter location quickly and assume a protected body posture. If a *tornado watch* is in effect at regular dismissal times, students *will be* dismissed as usual. If a *tornado warning* is in effect at regular dismissal times, students *will not* be dismissed unless accompanied by their parent or guardian.

All schools in the Worthington district also conduct safety drills to prepare staff and students for the unlikely event that an intruder, or other emergency situations occur that necessitate the evacuation or lockdown of the building. These drills are conducted with the support of local first responders, and in accordance with requirements of The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, in cooperation

with The Department of Homeland Security. All staff received specific training provided by the district to respond when necessary.

### **Worthington Schools Volunteer Screening**

Worthington City Schools welcomes your interest in volunteering in our schools. In order to provide security for our students, Worthington Schools requires that all volunteers who will be working directly with children, chaperoning field trips, etc. complete the volunteer background check and approval process by visiting [www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/become-a-school-volunteer](http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/become-a-school-volunteer)

### **School Visitations**

Parents are always welcome to visit our schools. The courtesy of a day's notice is requested prior to a visit. All buildings in the Worthington City School District use a visitor management system to document and screen school visitors.

The system will require all adult visitors to scan their driver's license or a state issued ID. This helps to not only confirm the visitor's identity but also compares information with a national database regarding sex offender status. A picture will also be taken - your name and picture will print out on a label that you will wear while in the building.

You have the option to enter your cell phone number to sign up for a Digital Pass. The Digital Pass will be stored on your cell phone wallet and this pass can be used for future visits eliminating the need to have your ID. This system will also be used to sign in/out students during the course of the school day.

**Upon arriving at school, please stop at the office to sign in and be issued a visitor badge.** This will enable us to know who is in the building at all times. When dropping off items, please bring them to the office and school personnel will happily deliver them to your child to lessen classroom disruptions.

### **Parents/Guardians Visiting Students at Lunch and during Recess**

Occasionally, parents/guardians plan to join their child for lunch. In addition to student safety and security, school administration is responsible for accounting for the safety of visiting adults, as well. We welcome parents to share lunch with their student, and ask that the adult follow these steps in order to properly prepare for their visit:

- Notify the office of your request to visit for lunch in advance
- Upon arrival at the building, stop at the office to sign in and pick up a visitor badge
- Upon completion of lunch, stop at the office to sign out and leave the visitor badge behind

Please note: Parents **are NOT permitted** to accompany their student to the playground during recess. In order to maximize the safety and security of all of our students, the only adults permitted on the playground during recess are our staff members assigned to supervision duty. Most of our school playgrounds do not contain barriers such as fences that limit access to students at play. This increases the need for vigilance on the part of our adult staff.



By maintaining only school staff on the playground, we limit student exposure to non-staff members that all students do not know, and maintain an environment in which the only adults your child has contact with are school staff. We appreciate your cooperation with this safety measure.

### **School Closing**

It may be necessary to close school or delay opening school some days because of weather conditions or for other reasons. If this should become necessary, it will be posted on the school website, announced by the local radio and television stations, and posted on the district social media accounts. You will also be contacted via phone, email and/or text message if you've updated your emergency contact information to include your number(s). Parents/guardians should provide in advance instructions on where students should go in the event it becomes necessary to close school after they arrive at school and you will not be home. Students in the Care After School Program (CAS) must have a form filled out and on file with the CAS personnel outlining what plan they are to follow if early dismissal is called.

### **Inclement Weather**

The decision to cancel or delay school will be made as early as possible, but the time will vary due to the weather conditions. It may be the night before in some cases or in the early morning before classes start, if conditions are changing. Our goal will be to make the decision to cancel or delay school **by 5:45 a.m.**

If school is canceled, all buildings will be closed for routine business during the day, BUT plan on evening school activities to be HELD as scheduled. If weather conditions don't improve in the morning, the district will make the decision to cancel evening activities by 1 p.m. on most days.

The district will communicate event cancellations through the principals and group leaders, the website and social media. Unless you hear otherwise, plan for the following:

- Athletic team practices and/or games will go on as scheduled\*
- Extra-curricular group activities and meetings will go on as scheduled
- Planned events like music concerts, drama performances and art shows will go on as scheduled
- Field trips will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Care Before & Care After School will be canceled.

More information on school closing procedures due to winter weather can be found at:  
[www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/school-closing-protocols](http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us/studentsparents/school-closing-protocols)

## **STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY**

Technology directly affects the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. Educators are expected to continually adapt their means and methods of instruction and the way they approach student learning to incorporate the latest technologies. The Board of Education provides Information & Technology Resources (as defined in Bylaw 0100) (collectively, 'District Information & Technology Resources') to support the educational and professional needs of its students and staff. With respect to students, District Information & Technology Resources afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board provides students with access to the Internet for educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students. The District's computer network and Internet system do not serve as a public access service or a public forum and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its stated educational purpose.

The Board regulates the use of District Information & Technology Resources in a manner consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, the District's educational mission, and articulated expectations of student conduct as delineated in the Student Code of Conduct. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct govern students' use of District Information & Technology Resources and students' personal communication devices when they are connected to District Information & Technology Resources, including online educational services/apps, regardless of whether such use takes place on or off school property (see Policy 5136).

Students are prohibited from using District Information & Technology Resources to engage in illegal conduct (e.g., libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, etc.) or conduct that violates this Policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct (e.g., making personal attacks or injurious comments, invading a person's privacy, etc.). Nothing herein, however, shall infringe on students' First Amendment rights. Because its Information & Technology Resources are not unlimited, the Board may institute restrictions aimed at preserving these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers.

Students have no right or expectation to privacy when using District Information & Technology Resources (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, messages/e-mails, and records of their online activity).

While the Board uses various technologies to limit students using its Information & Technology Resources to only use/access online educational services/apps and resources that have been pre-approved for the purpose of instruction, study, and research related to the curriculum, it is impossible to prevent students from accessing and/or coming in contact with online content that has not been pre-approved for use by students of certain ages. It is no longer possible for educators and community members to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the curriculum according to adopted guidelines and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them) when significant portions of students' education take place online or through the use of online educational services/apps.

Pursuant to Federal law, the Board implements technology protection measures that protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, and/or are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). At the discretion of the Board or the Superintendent, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The Board also utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor the online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate, and/or harmful to minors. The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using District Information & Technology Resources if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under CIPA. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be disciplined.

The Superintendent may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online educational services/apps containing appropriate material if access to such sites has been mistakenly, improperly, or inadvertently blocked by the technology protection measures. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protection actions of the technology protection measures.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to online content and/or services/apps that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to content that they and/or their parents

may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable, or controversial. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet.

Principals are responsible for providing training so that students under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Pursuant to Federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- A. safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- B. the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information;
- C. the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., 'hacking', 'harvesting', 'digital piracy', 'data mining', etc.), cyberbullying, and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online; and
- D. unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally-identifiable information regarding minors.

Staff members shall provide guidance and instruction to their students regarding the appropriate use of District Information & Technology Resources and online safety and security as specified above. Additionally, such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior including interacting with others on social media, including in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. Furthermore, staff members will monitor the online activities of students while they are at school.

Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server, and computer logs.

All students who use District Information & Technology Resources (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Students will be assigned a District-provided school email account that they are required to utilize for all school-related electronic communications, including those to staff members, peers, individuals, and/or organizations outside the District with whom they are communicating for school-related projects and assignments.

Students are responsible for good behavior when using District Information & Technology Resources – i.e., behavior comparable to that expected of students when they are in physical classrooms and school buildings and at school-sponsored events. Because communications on the Internet are often public in nature, general school rules for behavior and communication apply. The Board does not approve any use of its Information & Technology Resources that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Students may only use District Information & Technology Resources to access or use social media if it is done for educational purposes in accordance with their teacher's approved plan for such use.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence/Natural Language Processing Tools For School Work**

Students are required to rely on their own knowledge, skills, and resources when completing school work. In order to ensure the integrity of the educational process and to promote fair and equal opportunities for all students, except as outlined below, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools (collectively, “AI/NLP tools”) is strictly prohibited for the completion of school work. The use of AI/NLP tools, without the express permission/consent of a teacher,

undermines the learning and problem-solving skills that are essential to academic success and that the staff is tasked to develop in each student. Students are encouraged to develop their own knowledge, skills, and understanding of course material rather than relying solely on AI/NLP tools and they should ask their teachers when they have questions and/or need assistance. Unauthorized use of AI/NLP tools is considered a form of plagiarism and any student found using these tools without permission or in a prohibited manner will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Notwithstanding the preceding, students can use AI/NLP tools in the school setting if they receive prior permission/consent from their teacher, so long as they use the AI/NLP tools in an ethical and responsible manner. Teachers have the discretion to authorize students to use AI/NLP tools for the following uses:

- A. Research assistance: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students quickly and efficiently search for and find relevant information for their school projects and assignments.
- B. Data Analysis: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students to analyze, understand, and interpret large amounts of data, such as text documents or social media posts. This can be particularly useful for research projects or data analysis assignments – e.g., scientific experiments and marketing research.
- C. Language translation: AI/NLP tools can be used to translate texts or documents into different languages, which can be helpful for students who are learning a new language or for students who are studying texts written in a different language.
- D. Writing assistance: AI/NLP tools can provide grammar and spelling corrections, as well as suggest alternative word choices and sentence structure, to help students improve their writing skills.
- E. Accessibility: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students with disabilities access and understand written materials. For example, text-to-speech software can help students with specific learning disabilities or visual impairments to read texts and AI-powered translation tools can help students with hearing impairments understand spoken language.

As outlined above, under appropriate circumstances, AI/NLP tools can be effectively used as a supplement to and not a replacement for traditional learning methods. Consequently, with prior teacher permission/consent, students can use such resources to help them better understand and analyze information and/or access course materials. If a student has any questions about whether they are permitted to use AI/NLP tools for a specific class assignment, they should ask their teacher.

Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying guidelines may have their use privileges suspended or revoked and disciplinary action taken against them. Users are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for uses of District Information & Technology Resources that are not authorized by this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

The Board designates the Superintendent as the administrator(s) responsible for initiating, implementing, and enforcing this policy and its accompanying guidelines as they apply to students' use of District Information & Technology Resources.

© Neola 2023

## **USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

AI tools should be used responsibly by students and staff, balancing their benefits with the need for academic integrity, skill development, and staff and student data protection. In general, students may use AI tools for assignments unless their teacher explicitly prohibits it for a specific assignment. Teachers

retain discretion over AI usage in their classrooms, including expectations for citing AI contributions. Unauthorized use of AI is considered plagiarism and is subject to disciplinary action. Privacy and confidentiality remain central to using AI tools, with disciplinary consequences for violations.

## **Student Usage of AI**

### **1. Personal Responsibility and Integrity**

- a. Students have permission to use district-approved AI tools to support learning unless the teacher specifically instructs students not to. AI tools are meant to supplement student efforts and enhance student understanding; they are not substitutes for critical thinking or learning.
- b. Misusing AI tools, such as allowing them to complete assignments, will be treated as plagiarism and may result in disciplinary actions per the Student Code of Conduct.

### **2. Teacher Permission**

- Students have permission to use district-approved AI tools unless a teacher explicitly prohibits their use for a specific assignment or activity. If you are unsure about whether AI is allowed, students should check with their teacher for clarification.
- Students should use AI tools responsibly, ensuring they support understanding of the subject rather than simply completing the work for you.

### **3. Approved Uses of AI Tools (Unless Prohibited by the Teacher)**

Students may use AI tools to support their learning unless explicitly prohibited by their teacher.

Approved uses may include but not limited to:

- **Research Assistance:** Finding relevant information or generating questions for research projects.
- **Data Analysis:** Identifying patterns or analyzing data.
- **Language Bridging:** Targeted translation of texts, simplifying language, or providing cultural context to support learning.
- **Writing Assistance:** Improving grammar, spelling, tone, and brainstorming—but not generating entire paragraphs or essays.
- **Accessibility Support:** Using features like text-to-speech, closed captioning, or translation to assist learning.

Always use AI tools responsibly to enhance your learning, not to replace your effort or critical thinking.

### **4. Documentation and Transparency**

- Be transparent when using AI tools. Identify AI-generated or supported content and explain how the tool contributed to your work.
- Follow your teacher's specific instructions for citing AI in assignments or projects.

## **CELL PHONES AND PORTABLE COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

### **Cellular Phones and Other Portable Communication Devices: Student Use of Cellular Phones**

In accordance with district practice and state law, student use of cellular phones, smartwatches and other electronic communication devices is not permitted during the school day. This is intended to minimize distractions and support a focused, respectful learning environment for all students.

Exceptions to this rule are limited and include the following:

- Medical Needs: Students may use a cellular phone or other electronic device to monitor or address a medical condition if the district receives a written statement from a licensed physician requiring such use.
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans: Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that specifically includes the use of a cellular phone or device as part of their support plan may use such devices as outlined in their plan.
- Emergency Situations: Use of cellular phones may be permitted as part of a building's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Outside of these specific circumstances, student cellular phone and smartwatch use is prohibited. Students are expected to keep devices silenced and out of sight during school hours, which includes before school and lunch unless explicitly authorized by a school administrator.

Failure to follow this may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the student code of conduct.

## **EMAIL POLICIES**

### **General Information**

Students are given a district 'wscloud' email that will be used for student communication only:

- Email can be a powerful communication tool for students to increase communication and collaboration.
- Students may receive email from their teachers to communicate reminders, course content, pose questions related to class work, etc.
- Students may send email to their teachers with questions or comments regarding class
- Students may send email to other Worthington students to collaborate on group projects and assist with school classes.

### **Student Email Permissions**

- The wscloud email system controls whom email messages can be sent to and whom they can be received from.
- HS students can email HS students, MS students can email MS students, and both can email all staff.
- HS and MS students cannot email elementary students.
- HS and MS students can email and receive emails to and from addresses outside of the wscloud domain.

- Elementary students can email other elementary students and staff only.
- Elementary students cannot email anyone outside the school domain or receive email from an outside address unless the address exists on a district maintained delivery restriction list.

### **General Email Guidelines for Students**

- School issued email is to be used for all school-related communication.
- Do not send harassing email messages or content.
- Do not send offensive email messages or content.
- Do not send email containing a virus or other malicious content.
- Do not send or read email at inappropriate times, such as during class instruction.
- Do not send email to share test answers or promote cheating in any way.
- Do not use the account of another person.

### **Student Emails to Staff**

- Students are encouraged to email staff concerning school-related content and questions.
- Teachers will not be expected to answer student email outside of their regular work day, although they certainly may do so. For example, an unanswered email to a teacher would not excuse a student from turning in an assignment.

### **Monitoring and Filtering of Email**

- Email that is sent is monitored and filtered.
- Rules/filters are set up to monitor student email for profanity, harassment, and other inappropriate content.
- Student email that is identified as inappropriate will be blocked from delivery.

### **Expectation of Privacy**

At any time and without prior notice, the school district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any and all usage of the network and the Internet, as well as any information sent or received in connection with this usage. Because files remain the property of the school district, no one should have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

### **School and Parent/Guardian Monitoring of Student Online Usage**

With technology being an integral part of learning, partnering with families to ensure proper online safety is important. Because we want our students to be safe in what they search for and content they see, the district maintains filtering capabilities to block websites as well as create alerts based on identified student searches. Families will have the opportunity to enhance their ability to monitor computer use outside of the school day through a safety resource called Securly.

District-owned Chromebooks will have similar content filtering whether they are at school or away. This means that Chromebooks will have a base level of filtering no matter what network they are on. While internet content is ever changing, our goal is to ensure a safe online experience. Parents will have access to a website and mobile app, through Securly, to adjust their student's district-provided Chromebook filtering levels when the device is away from the district network. You can determine the appropriate

categories and sites your student has access to and more details can be found on our [Parent Securly Information](#) resource.

During the school day, if a student attempts to access content that indicates a student may be considering self-harm or harming others, our building administrators will be notified and follow up with the student to follow-up and provide support, if needed. If an alert is received after school hours, school personnel may not see alerts in a timely manner and will follow up with the student on the next school day.

We encourage you to install the Securly Home App and to turn the alerts on. Enabling the app and turning alerts on will allow you to receive alerts outside normal school hours. More information can be found here: [How to Use the Securly Home App](#)

### **Parent Access to Student Email**

Parents may use the [Parent Account Recovery link](#). If the email the parent enters matches in our security system, the parent's user ID and password as well as their child's user ID and password are sent to the entered email address. In this way parents may access the student's Google account.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES**

### **Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA Worthington School District**

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Worthington Schools receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the [School] to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.



3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

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

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

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

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

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA)

in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

## **Celebrating Student Birthdays**

Recognizing and celebrating the birthday of our students and their unique place in the school community is important to us. The incidence of students with dangerous food allergies and medical conditions such as diabetes informs our food consumption policy in our elementary schools.

**Doing everything we can to ensure our students' health, safety, and well-being is our number one priority.**

We welcome parents working with school staff to provide a special recognition of their child's birthday. However, ***we will not participate in celebrating birthdays with food of any kind***, including cupcakes, packaged sweets or other food or beverage treats.

If buildings or classrooms are recognizing student birthdays, parents may share reasonable non-food alternatives for celebrating their child with classmates. Alternatives must not be disruptive to the learning environment. Non-food alternatives could include:

- Special pencils
- Stickers
- Erasers

- Word games or puzzles
- A “class” puzzle or game for students to use in celebration of your child
- A book that could be added to the classroom or school library in honor of your child’s birthday.

As a district, we are confident that all parents can assist us with celebrating each child in ways that do not adversely impact the health, safety, and well-being of the growing number of students for whom food allergens and other conditions are an issue.

Please contact your building principal with any questions you may have.

### **Changes in Information**

Anytime there is a change in telephone number, address, place of employment, marital status, or anything else of which the school should be aware, please contact the school office immediately so our records can be updated. Phone numbers, email addresses and medical information should be updated by the parents through Infinite Campus by parents/guardians.

### **Child Custody**

If you are a parent and have specific custody rights and specifications outlined in legal documents pertaining to your child(ren), you must send the building principal an official and current copy of the official divorce decree or child custody legal documents to be kept on file in the office. The school personnel can’t abide by custody specifications unless we are made fully aware of them, including changes to agreements. If custody documents require translation, translations should be authenticated before submitted to the school.

### **Discipline**

Self-discipline is the tendency to behave in ways that are mutually beneficial to oneself and others. The ultimate goal of our discipline philosophy is to develop self-discipline in each child. Self-discipline is nurtured every time a teacher or parent treats a child with civility, dignity, and respect, all within a framework of positive expectations. Each of our elementary schools has a PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) plan specific to their school’s needs.

School discipline plans focus on promoting children’s safety, developing their self-discipline and appropriate social skills, and creating an environment for learning. We have high expectations for our students’ behavior and we will do all we can to help them meet the expectations. Please read the *Code of Conduct for Students*, online and located at the end of this handbook which has been adopted by the Board of Education for all students in the Worthington School District. A complete copy of the district’s Code of Conduct, along with the sections on Due Process, Suspension and Expulsion is available for your review in our school office at any time, as well as on the Worthington School District’s website.

There are specific disciplinary procedures that apply to the cumulative total of suspension days beyond 10 for special education students. Specific procedures are also followed when there may be an expulsion of a special education student. The school district must follow these specific procedures for students identified as disabled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Details and further information related to these specific disciplinary procedures

as defined by federal and state laws may be obtained by contacting the school district Director of Special Education Services at 614-450-6020.

### **Student Dress Guidelines**

Safety of students is our first priority. With that in mind it is important that student dress does not conceal a student's identity. The final decision regarding the acceptability of all student dress rests with the school administration.

Our philosophy behind our student dress guidelines is to do no harm, provide students with equitable access to education, and to not reinforce gender stereotypes.

We believe that students should dress comfortably for school in a way that helps them be ready to learn in the school environment. Students need to manage their own personal "distractions" without regulating individual students' clothing/self-expression. Our goal is that dress guidelines do not create unintended barriers to school attendance and that they minimize conflict and inconsistent discipline. Our hope is that our teachers should be able to focus on teaching without the additional burden of dress code enforcement. When needed, disciplinary concerns regarding dress guidelines should be referred to the building administration.

#### **Our Goals:**

- A safe learning environment.
- Student choice.
- Ability to express identified gender.
- Religious attire is allowed.
- NO offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- NO images or language depicting or advocating violence or the use of alcohol or drugs.
- All are treated equitably regardless of gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, body type/size, religion, personal style.

For all students at all times certain body parts must be covered. Genitals, buttocks, and nipples must be covered with opaque material. Daily, students must wear:

- Shirt: must cover the majority of the midriff.
- Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings.
- Shoes: activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (for example for sports, recess, gym class).

#### **Students May NOT Wear:**

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity).
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Language or images that create a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class.
- Visible underwear. (Please note that inadvertently visible undergarment straps or waistbands are not considered a violation.)
- Sunglasses inside of the building.
- Bathing Suits.
- Hats/headwear that conceal the student's identity.

## Food Services

The Worthington Schools have recognized the need for helping to meet the nutritional needs of children and serve a well-balanced, nutritious lunch each school day. Lunch is available to all full day students at a cost of \$2.75/\$.40 for a reduced price lunch. Milk can be purchased by the children bringing lunches for \$.50 per carton. Breakfast is also available at all of our elementary schools at a cost of \$1.60 for full price breakfast/\$.30 for a reduced price breakfast. If your child wishes to purchase breakfast, be sure you have deposited money in your student's account. If your child receives free lunch, they receive breakfast and lunch at no cost.

Applications for free and reduced lunch prices must be completed at the beginning of each school year. Applications can be found on the [Worthington Schools Food Service website](#). Annual Menus can also be found on the Worthington website.

Worthington Schools uses a pre-pay/debit system that requires our families to put money in an account for their child to use for the purchase of lunch. Prepaid lunch money is collected in the classroom first thing in the morning and turned in to the cafeteria manager. Please observe the following to prepay your child's lunch:

1. Please take advantage of the options to prepay your student's meal accounts. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster and gives students more time to eat, relax, and play. It also gives you the peace of mind of not having to worry about looking for lunch money every day or worry that it might get lost, stolen or used for other things other than lunch. Families may pre-pay lunch accounts at the [Worthington Schools Food Service website](#) utilizing MyPaymentsPlus.
2. You can always bring money personally or send it with your student. Please place it in an envelope marked clearly with your student's name, their ID #, their teacher's name, the \$ amount and the check #. Turn in prepaid deposits to the cafeteria cashier(s) or school office. Write a check payable to the Worthington Board of Education for the amount of lunches you wish to purchase. (for example, \$13.75 for a five-day week; \$27.50 for ten days.) Please write the child's full name with PIN number on the check's memo line. If you choose to pay for more than one child by check, write each child's first and last name and how much each child should receive on the check memo line.

## Interrogation by Police or Outside Agencies

When law enforcement or other authorities arrive at the school and wish to interview a student or investigate an alleged violation of law, they must contact the building administrator indicating the nature of their investigation and their desire to question a student or students.

If the student (or a member of his/her family) is the subject of a child abuse/neglect investigation, or the student is being interviewed regarding alleged child abuse that took place on school property or involves an emergency, the building administrator shall attempt to contact the parent prior to questioning and will remain in the room during questioning unless compelling reasons for exclusion are provided by the agency.

If an agency investigating child abuse/neglect indicates that the parent is believed to be the perpetrator, the building administrator will not contact either parent prior to the interview. The building administrator will remain in the room during questioning unless compelling reasons for exclusion are provided by the agency.

Before the student(s) is (are) questioned as a witness to or suspect in an alleged violation of law, the building administrator shall attempt to contact the parent prior to questioning and shall remain in the room during the questioning unless compelling reasons for exclusion are provided by the agency.

### **Lost and Found**

Please clearly label your children's coats, hats, gloves, boots, and other articles of clothing and personal items for quick and easy identification. At the end of each trimester, those items which are unmarked and unclaimed will be donated. Please check with the school office or the lost and found box if your child has lost anything of value.

### **Progress Reports**

The parent-teacher conference is a very significant part of reporting progress. A study of the reporting form along with participation in the conference should give you a complete profile of your child's progress. Conferences are scheduled for the first and second reporting periods.

The progress report will be available to parents on-line three times a year. The report is based upon individual pupil progress. Directions for accessing your child's progress report can be found at the district website.

On our district website, there is an informational brochure titled "[A Parent's Guide to Elementary Progress Reports](#)" that can be accessed by putting that title into the search box. This document provides a full explanation of our elementary progress report process.

### **Special Education and Section 504**

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

The laws define a person with a disability as anyone who:

- A. has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one (1) or more major life activities
- B. has record of such an impairment; or
- C. is regarded as having such an impairment

The District has specific responsibilities under these two (2) laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

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

## **Child Find**

Worthington Schools is responsible for locating any child birth to 21 with a suspected disability who resides within the Worthington School District. The school district provides special education services to any child who qualifies as disabled according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ages 3 through 21 years of age. Suspected disabilities include: multiple disabilities, deaf-blind, hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech/language disability, orthopedic impairment, emotional disturbance, mental retardation, specific learning disability, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment and developmental delay (preschool only). If you know of a child who is suspected to have a disability, please call the Director of Special Education at (614)450-6020 or contact your building principal for more information.

## **Parent Mentor**

Worthington Schools has a parent mentor to assist parents of students who are referred for a special education evaluation or who are eligible for special education services. The Parent Mentor can support parents as they move through the processes associated with special education or can serve as a resource for information related to special education. If you would like more information regarding the services of the parent mentor, please call the parent mentor at (614)450-6020.

## **Restroom Usage**

Students are required to use the restroom aligned with male or female biological sex in a school building or facility used by the school for a school-sponsored activity.

# **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **GROUND FOR SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, EMERGENCY REMOVAL OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Appropriate conduct is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in such a way that the rights of others are not violated. Students of the Worthington School District will conform with school regulations and accept directions from authorized school personnel. The Worthington Board of Education will not tolerate violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by its students and will vigorously enforce related policies and the Ohio Revised Code.

It is important for students to comply with school rules and directions from authorized personnel, so that the educational process is not interrupted. A student who fails to comply with Student Code of Conduct (policy 5500), established school rules, or with any reasonable request made by school personnel when subject to the authority of the Board of Education will be subject to the approved student discipline regulations. The superintendent or their designee shall develop regulations which establish strategies to address student misbehavior. Strategies shall encompass efforts ranging from prevention to intervention. Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in verbal or written warning or reprimand, referral to school counselor, parental contact or conference, detention, in-school suspension, community service, emergency removal, referral to law enforcement agencies, suspension or expulsion.

At the start of each school year or upon enrollment, students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified on how to access the online handbook, which outlines the rules and regulations to which students are subject while school is in session, at school-sponsored activities or events whether on or off school premises, on school premises whether or not school is in session, in any vehicle whose use is controlled, organized, or arranged by the school, or at any time the student is subject to the authority of the Board of Education or school district personnel. In addition, a student may be subject to school disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for harassment, vandalism, physical abuse, or other harmful or disruptive behavior toward school personnel during non-school hours. The information in the handbook will include the types of conduct that will make students subject to suspension, expulsion, removal from school or other forms of disciplinary action. The Board directs the administration to make all students and parent(s)/guardians(s) aware of the Student Code of Conduct, which is designed to encourage positive appropriate behavior, and the fact that any violations of the Student Code of Conduct are subject to the consequences outlined therein. The Student Handbook is also available online via the district website at [www.worthington.k12.oh.us](http://www.worthington.k12.oh.us).

This code of conduct is in effect while students are under the authority of school personnel or involved in any school activity (including Open Lunch and Field Trips). This includes but is not limited to school buses and property under the control of school authorities, and while at interscholastic competitions, extracurricular events, or other school activities or programs. In addition, this Code of Conduct includes 1) misconduct by a student that occurs off school district property but is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school district property; and 2) misconduct by a student that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or the property of an official or employee.

The Delaware Area Career Center is an extension of our school program; therefore, students who elect to attend the career center are subject to disciplinary action based upon the Student Code of Conduct of any Worthington High School and/or the Delaware Area Career Center. Consequently, conduct and/or involvement in any activity that may or does result in disciplinary action by one school may be grounds for similar disciplinary action by the other school.

If a student violates this policy or the code of conduct, school personnel, students or parents should report the student to the appropriate administrator. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the state of Ohio and local ordinances. Student attendance at after-school co-curricular events is a privilege. Any pupil may be removed from such events for engaging in disruptive conduct, for violation of the Student Code of Conduct or for conduct posing a danger to persons or property. Any student removed from co-curricular events may be barred from attendance at future events for the remainder of the school year.

1. **Absence and Truancy:** A student shall not be late or absent from school or any portion of a school day without proper authorization.

**1A. Tardiness**

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**1B. Class Cuts**

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**1C. Truancy**

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**



**2. Abuse of Computer Hardware, Software or other School Technology:** A student shall not abuse the school district's hardware or software including, but not limited to, the following: tampering with computers or computer programs (whether such programs are commercially prepared or belong to another student or faculty member); using equipment to make unauthorized or illegal duplicate copies of computer software; damaging or destroying computers, computer hardware or software; or using computer phone or computer mail network facilities of the school district for purposes unrelated to the instructional program of the District unless written permission from the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee has been obtained.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**3. Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs:** A student shall not possess, use, sell, offer to sell, conceal, transmit or show evidence of consumption of any alcoholic beverage, liquid containing illegal or a banned substance, electronic vapor devices, drug paraphernalia, or illegally used drug including steroids, counterfeit (look-alike) drugs, or controlled substances (*hereafter, "Prohibited Substances"*) or otherwise violate Board Policy (5330/5512/5530) "Drug and Alcohol Abuse by Students."

Note: Students are not permitted to use any CBD products and/or medical marijuana on school grounds or any activities sponsored by or under the jurisdiction of Worthington City Schools. The use or administration of CBD products and/or medical marijuana will not be permitted in health or academic plans for students i.e. 504/IEP/Health Office plans. Federal Law prohibits the administration/use of CBD products and/or medical marijuana.

"Possession" includes, but is not limited to, retention on the student's person or in a purse, wallet, locker, desk, or vehicle. It also includes being a passenger in a vehicle in which the student knows, or should reasonably have known, that any *Prohibited Substance* is present. Students acting together with students who are known to have possession of *Prohibited Substances* may be deemed to also have possession of such *Prohibited Substances* unless such students remove themselves immediately and/or report the offense at the earliest possible time. A student shall not wear or possess clothing, jewelry, personal possessions, publications, or other items or materials which depict or infer drugs or alcohol.

**3A. Use or Possession of – Alcoholic Beverages**

**1<sup>st</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 5 day out-of-school suspension (suspension may be reduced to 2 days with completion of Student Assistance Program). Loss of privileges for 15 school days after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges. [Police Report]

**2<sup>nd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 10 day out-of-school suspension (suspension may be reduced to 5 days with completion of Student Assistance Program). Loss of privileges for 30 school days after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges. [Police Report]

**3<sup>rd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 10 day out-of-school suspension with recommendation for expulsion. [Police Report]

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**Note: if a student disregards the loss of privilege consequence, the penalty is doubled.**

### **3B. Selling or Distributing – Alcoholic Beverages**

Level 3 Violation – 10 days out-of-school suspension with possible recommendation for expulsion. When the sale or distribution are especially egregious and pose a greater safety threat to students, administration reserves the right to determine a lengthier suspension or recommend expulsion based on the facts of the case. Police Report. Loss of privileges for 45 school days after the suspension or expulsion, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

### **3C. Failure to Remove and/or Report – Alcoholic Beverages**

Level 2 Violation – These are violations that are disruptive to the educational process or may cause harm to other persons or property. Students have an obligation to remove themselves immediately and/or report the offense at their earliest possible time when prohibited substances are in possession of students. Failure to remove and/or report **may** result in Level Two disciplinary consequences which may include ALC, ALS or OSS.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

### **3D. Use or Possession of – Drugs**

**1<sup>st</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 5 days out-of-school suspension (suspension may be reduced to 2 days with completion of Student Assistance Program). Loss of privileges for 15 school days after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges. [Police Report]

**2<sup>nd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 10 days out-of-school suspension (suspension may be reduced to 5 days with completion of Student Assistance Program). Loss of privileges for 30 school days after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges. [Police Report]

**3<sup>rd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 10 days out-of-school suspension with recommendation for expulsion. [Police Report]

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**Note: if a student disregards the loss of privilege consequence, the penalty is doubled.**

### **3E. Selling or Distributing – Drugs**

Level 3 Violation – 10 days out-of-school suspension with possible recommendation for expulsion. When the sale or distribution are especially egregious and pose a greater safety threat to students, administration reserves the right to determine a lengthier suspension or recommend expulsion based on the facts of the case. Loss of privileges for 45 school days after the suspension or expulsion, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges. [Police Report]

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

### **3F. Failure to Remove and/or Report – Drugs**

Level 2 Violation – These are violations that are disruptive to the educational process or may cause harm to other persons or property. Students have an obligation to remove themselves immediately and/or report the offense at their earliest possible time when prohibited substances are in possession of students. Failure to remove and/or report **may** result in Level Two disciplinary consequences which may include ALC, ALS or OSS.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**4. Use or Possession of Tobacco:** A student shall not use or possess tobacco or tobacco products in any form or otherwise violate Board policy 5512, “Tobacco Use By Students.” This also includes a prohibition on smoking, electronic vapor devices, oils of any kind, liquid containing illegal or a banned substance, or otherwise using tobacco or tobacco products (or lookalike products) on the school grounds or any activities sponsored by or under the jurisdiction of Worthington City Schools. Violations will result in Level 3 consequences and a loss of privileges for 5 school days for first offense, 10 days for second offense and 15 days for third offense after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges.

**1<sup>st</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 2 days out-of-school suspension (suspensions may be reduced to 1 day with completion of Insight Program). Both violations result in loss of privileges *for 5 school days* after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges.

**2<sup>nd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 2 days out-of-school suspension. (suspensions may be reduced to 1 day with completion of Insight Program). Loss of privileges *for 10 school days* after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges.

**3<sup>rd</sup> violation** (Level 3 Violation): 2 days out-of-school suspension (suspensions may be reduced to 1 day with completion of Insight Program). Loss of privileges *for 15 school days* after the suspension, including attendance at after-school co-curricular events and activities and driving privileges.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**5. Unauthorized Touching:** A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard cause physical injury or threaten to cause physical injury to any person.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**6. Cheating and Plagiarism (Academic Dishonesty):** A student shall not obtain by fraudulent, dishonest or deceptive means and use as their own (or provide to another student, teacher or parent) the work, work product, questions on or answers to examinations, or any like matters or violate the reasonable requirements of a teacher with respect to the conduct and taking of examinations or the completion of other course assignments. A student shall not use the written work of any other person, parts or passages of another person’s writings, the ideas of another person, or text or work generated by artificial intelligence, and hold them out as or represent them to be the product of their own mind.

Under the Ohio Administrative Code, most of the materials used to administer state tests are considered “secure test materials”. Secure test materials include test booklets, English and foreign language CD’s, completed answer documents and other materials that contain student information or responses. Students involved in cheating on their own tests in any manner, releasing any test question or other content of a test to any student or students, or assisting students to cheat in any way may be punishable by invalidation of test scores, suspension, expulsion, and/or prosecution.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**7. Conduct on Buses:** A student shall not violate Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5610.04 "Suspension Of Bus Riding/Transportation Privileges."

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**8. Damage to Private Property:** A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard cause or attempt to cause damage to private property.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**9. Damage to School Property:** A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard cause or attempt to cause damage to or deface school property including, but not limited to, buildings, grounds, equipment, materials, or computers or other technology. In accordance with state law, parent(s) may be liable for payment for the cost to repair or replace any such property damage caused by the acts of their children.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**10. Dangerous Weapons:** A student shall not possess, transport, transmit, conceal or attempt to possess, transport, transmit, or conceal a dangerous weapon, firearm, knife, explosive ordnance, stun gun, taser gun, other dangerous instrument, or "look-alike" counterfeit weapon, firearm, knife, ordnance, or dangerous instrument. "Look-alike" weapons, firearms, knives, ordnance, or instruments include, but are not limited to, any object a reasonable person might consider under the circumstances a dangerous weapon, firearm, knife, explosive ordnance or dangerous instrument.

The term "weapon" includes any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, incendiary devices, explosives, and other objects defined as dangerous ordinances under State law.

A firearm is defined as any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or silencer, or any destructive device. A destructive device includes, but is not limited to, any explosive, incendiary, poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter (1/4) ounce, mine, or other similar device.

A knife capable of causing serious bodily injury is defined as any weapon or cutting instrument consisting of a blade fastened to a handle; a razor blade; or any similar device (including sharp, metal martial arts weapons such as ninja throwing stars) that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.

**10A. Dangerous Weapons - Firearm**

**10B. Dangerous Weapons - Knife**

**10C. Dangerous Weapons - Weapons Other Than Firearm, Explosion, Incendiary or Poison**

**10D. Dangerous Weapons - Firearm Lookalike**

**10E. Dangerous Weapons - Unauthorized Use of Fire, Possession or Use of Combustibles and Propellants – explosive, incendiary, or poison gas:** A student shall not cause any flame, spark or other form of fire or propellant without the authorization to do so.

**10F. Dangerous Weapons - Unauthorized Use of Fire, Possession or Use of Combustibles and Propellants – pepper spray, mace, and others:** A student shall not cause any flame, spark or other form of fire or propellant without the authorization to do so.

**10G. Failure to Remove and/or Report**

Level 2 Violation – These are violations that are disruptive to the educational process or may cause harm to other persons or property. Students have an obligation to remove themselves immediately and/or report the offense at their earliest possible time when prohibited substances are in possession of students. Failure to remove and/or report **may** result in Level Two disciplinary consequences which include ALC, ALS or OSS.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

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

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**12. Disruption:** A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard act or urge other students or persons to act in such a way as to cause by use of violence, force, noise, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct, the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of the educational process of the school district including, but not limited to, curricular and extracurricular activities.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**13. Disruptive Demonstration:** A student shall not violate Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5520, “Disorder and Demonstration.”

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**14. Dress and Expression:** A student shall not violate 1) Board Policy 5511, “Student Dress and Grooming,” and 2) “Student Dress Code” in this handbook.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**15A. Electronic Devices - Devices:** No student shall use electronic devices for gaming, such as computer games, laptop computers, multimedia tablets, personal communication devices (PCD’s), except as provided, or use is expressly permitted, by the school or classroom teacher.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**15B. Electronic Devices – Laser:** No student shall possess or use any type of laser device including laser pointers while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored activity on or off school property. Students in violation of this policy are subject to confiscation of the laser device, suspension or expulsion from school, and possible referral to legal authorities. Anyone who discovers a student in possession of a laser device in violation of this policy shall report the violation to the principal.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**15C. Electronic Devices – Cell Phone:** Student use of cell phones is not permitted during the school day.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**15D. Electronic Devices – Sexting:** The possessing, taking, disseminating, transferring or sharing of nude, obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfers or otherwise (commonly called texting, emailing, sexting etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person possessing, taking, disseminating or sharing nude, obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs may be punished under this code of conduct and may be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**16A. Fighting:** A student shall not engage in physically or verbally abusive or provocative activities or conduct directed toward another person which leads or, under the circumstances could lead, to harm to such other person or bystander. Spectators are subject to disciplinary actions if they are viewed to instigate, prolong or heighten a situation.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**16B. Serious Bodily Injury:** An incident that results in serious bodily injury to oneself or others. Serious Bodily Injury is defined as “A bodily injury that involves substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or faculty (18 U.S.C. § 1365(3)(h)).

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**16C. Assault:** Acting with intent to cause fear in another person of immediate bodily harm or death, or intentionally bullying, inflicting or attempting to inflict bodily harm upon another person. Physical assault of a staff member, student, or other person associated with the District, regardless of whether it causes injury, will not be tolerated. Any intentional, harmful or potentially harmful physical contact or bullying initiated by a student against a staff member will be considered to be assault. Assault may result in criminal charges and may subject the student to expulsion.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**17A. Frightening or Intimidating Acts:** A student shall not engage in any act or conduct which, under the circumstances a reasonable person would believe, does or is intended to frighten, intimidate, bully, harass, or otherwise cause harm to the person toward whom the act or conduct is directed. Students are expected to be tolerant of individual differences. A student shall not knowingly or with reckless disregard engage in any act or conduct which causes another person to reasonably believe that such student will cause physical harm to the person or property of such other person.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**17B. False Alarm/Bomb Threat:** Any threat (verbal, written, or electronic) by a person to bomb or use other substances or devices for the purpose of exploding, burning, causing damage to a school building or school property, or to harm students or staff.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**18. Gambling:** A student shall not engage in any form of gambling.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**19. Hazing:** A student shall not subject any other students to abusive or ridiculous activities or harass any other student with unnecessary or disagreeable tasks. Students shall not plan, encourage or participate in any form of hazing. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any class, team, or organization or any act to continue or reinstate membership in or affiliation with any class, team, or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person, including coercing another to consume alcohol or a drug of abuse. No person shall recklessly participate in the hazing of another. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy. Violation may lead to disciplinary action and/or legal action as contained in ORC 2307.44

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**20. Insubordination:** A student shall not disregard or refuse to obey reasonable requests or directions given to the student by school personnel.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**21. Leaving School Premises:** A student shall not leave school premises before the hour of dismissal except where individual school policy otherwise provides or without first obtaining the consent of the principal, assistant principal, school nurse or their designee. In addition, a student shall not be in an **improper area** of the school away from proper supervision. Students off grounds illegally or in an improper area may be subject to search.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**22. Misrepresentation and Forgery (Non-Academic Dishonesty):** A student shall not, orally or in writing, use or sign the name of another person or falsify times, dates, grades, addresses or other data on school records, in correspondence, or in other written material directed to the school or school personnel. A student shall not give or assist in giving false or fictitious information to any police department, fire department and school official or other person acting in an official and lawful capacity.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**23A. Sexual Misconduct:** No student shall engage in any sexual conduct or sexual contact.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**23B. Unwelcome Sexual Contact:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment (i.e., pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures or jokes or pressure to engage in sexual activity).

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**24. Sexual Harassment:** No student shall engage in any sexual harassment. Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment under this policy may take a variety of forms. Examples of the kinds of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations; unwanted physical and/or sexual contact; threats; unwelcome verbal expressions of a sexual nature, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; the unwelcome use of sexually degrading language, profanity, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls; sexually suggestive objects, pictures, graffiti, videos, posters, audio recordings or literature; unwelcome and inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, or obscene gestures; leering or staring at someone in a sexual way, such as staring at a person's breasts, buttocks, or groin; verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Please refer to the Worthington School District's website for complete policies on Sexual Harassment (policy 1662, 5517) or the "Anti-Harassment" portion of this handbook.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**



**25. Theft:** A student shall not take nor receive or attempt to take or receive into their possession property of the school district or property of another student, teacher, visitor or employee of the school district without privilege to do so.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**26A. Unauthorized Sale:** A student shall not sell or attempt to sell any object or substance that has not been properly authorized by the Superintendent, principal or their designee for sale to any person on school premises.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**26B. Unauthorized Distribution:** A student shall not distribute or attempt to distribute any object or substance that has not been properly authorized by the Superintendent, principal or their designee for sale or distribution to any person on school premises.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

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

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**28. Use of Profane, Vulgar or Abusive Language or Gestures:** A student shall not use profane, vulgar, abusive, obscene, or other words or gestures which, under the circumstances, are offensive to the sensibilities of ordinary people in the school district community or which disrupt normal school activities. Such prohibitions include, but are not limited to, use of computers or other technology or communications.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**29A. Violation of Law:** A student shall not violate any law or ordinance.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**29B. Failure to Remove and/or Report**

Level 2 Violation – These are violations that are disruptive to the educational process or may cause harm to other persons or property. Students have an obligation to remove themselves immediately and/or report the offense at their earliest possible time when someone is involved in illegal acts. Failure to remove and/or report **may** result in Level Two or Three disciplinary consequences which include ALC, ALS or OSS.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**30. Other Conduct:** In recognition that any list of prohibited conduct cannot, with specificity, encompass every conceivable action which may properly be subject to discipline, the Superintendent, Superintendent's designee, or a building principal shall have the authority to suspend or expel a student for conduct not specifically set forth herein and which substantially and materially disrupts or interferes with the good order, discipline, operation, academic or educational process taking place in the school or which substantially and materially is or poses a threat to the safety of persons or property.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**31. Repeated Violations or Other Circumstances:** These guidelines do not restrict school personnel from using judgment in interpreting and implementing consequences. The administration reserves the right to assign and establish procedures in areas where precedent has not been set. There are instances or times under which any of the violations indicated herein, when considered in the context of the circumstances surrounding their occurrence and/or the student's past behavior record, can lead to a recommendation for suspension or expulsion.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**32. Driving:** A student shall not drive or park on school premises in violation of Board Policy and Regulation 5515, "Use of Motor Vehicles," or when their privileges to drive or park on school premises have been revoked. See Parking Permit Application and "Driving and Parking Regulations" in the Student Handbook.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**33. Pornographic Material:** A student shall not possess, transmit, distribute, or conceal sexually explicit material.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**34. Unauthorized Recording:** Even when general permission to use cell phones or personal communication devices has been granted, students are specifically prohibited from using a cell phone or any other electronic device to make or capture photographs, videos, or audio recordings of other students or District employees without the express permission of all persons captured in the photograph, video, or audio recording.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

**35. Violent Conduct:** A student who commits an act that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult and that results in serious physical harm to persons or serious physical harm to property while the student is at school, on any property owned or controlled by the Board, or at any interscholastic event, extracurricular event, or any other school property or activity, wherever located, may be expelled from school for a period up to one calendar year.

**See Disciplinary Action Chart (Appendix E)**

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

The Board of Education acknowledges that conduct is closely related to learning - an effective instructional program requires an orderly school environment and the effectiveness of the educational program is, in part, reflected in the behavior of students.

The Board believes that the best discipline is self-imposed and that students should learn to assume responsibility for their own behavior and the consequences of their actions. The Board has zero tolerance of violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by its students.

The Board shall require each student of this District to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code adopted by the Board and to submit to such disciplinary measures as are appropriately assigned for infraction of those rules. Such rules shall require that students:

- A. conform to reasonable standards of socially-acceptable behavior;
- B. respect the person and property of others;
- C. preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged;
- D. respect the rights of others;
- E. obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

The Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code designates sanctions for the infractions of rules, excluding corporal punishment, which shall:

- A. relate in kind and degree to the infraction;
- B. help the student learn to take responsibility for their actions;
- C. be directed, where possible, to reduce the effects of any harm which may have been caused by the student's misconduct.

Students may be prohibited by authorized school personnel from participating in all or part of co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activities without further notice, hearing or appeal rights. A student who has been disorderly on a school bus may be suspended from transportation services consistent with Board policy and the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code.

The Superintendent shall publish to all students and their parents the rules of this District regarding student conduct and the sanctions which may be imposed for breach of those rules.

The Superintendent shall inform the Board periodically of the methods of discipline imposed by this District and the incidence of student misconduct in such degree of specificity as shall be required by the Board. The Superintendent, principals, and other administrators shall have the authority to assign discipline to students, subject to the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code and, where required by law, to the student's due process right to notice, hearing, and appeal.

Teachers, school bus drivers, and other employees of this Board having authority over students may take such action as may be necessary to control the disorderly conduct of students in all situations and in all places where such students are within the jurisdiction of this Board and when such conduct interferes with the educational program of the schools or threatens the health and safety of others.

Discipline on Board vehicles shall be the responsibility of the driver on regular bus runs. When Board vehicles are used for field trips and other Board activities, the teacher, coach, advisor, or other Board employee shall be responsible for student discipline. If a student becomes a serious discipline problem on a vehicle, the Superintendent and/or their designee may suspend the transportation privileges of the student providing such suspension conforms with due process. The procedures for suspension are set forth in the Student Code of Conduct/[Student Discipline Code](#) and [Board Policy 5611](#) – Due Process Rights.

*R.C. 3313.20, 3313.66, 3313.661, 3315.07, 3327.041*

*A.C. 3301-35-03(G), 3301-83-08*

*© Neola 2000 / 2020*

### **Emergency Removal of Students**

If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process taking place either in a classroom or elsewhere on school premises, then the Superintendent, Principal or assistant Principal may remove the student from curricular activities or from the school premises. A teacher may remove the student from curricular activities under the teacher's supervision, but not from the premises. If a teacher makes an emergency removal, the teacher will notify a building administrator of the circumstances surrounding the removal in writing, as soon as practicable. Because such removal is not subject to the normal suspension and expulsion procedures, no prior notice or hearing is required for any removal under this policy.

A due process hearing will be held on the next school day after the removal is ordered. Written notice of the hearing and the reason for the removal and any intended disciplinary action will be given to the student as soon as practical prior to the hearing. If the student is subject to out-of-school suspension, the student will have the opportunity to appear at an informal hearing before the Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent or designee and has the right to challenge the reasons for the intended suspension or otherwise explain his/her actions. Within one (1) school day of the decision to suspend, written notification will be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s) or custodian of the student. This notice will include the reasons for the suspension, the right of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) to appeal to the Board or its designee and the student's right to be represented in all appeal proceedings. If it is probable that the student may be subject to expulsion, the hearing will take place on the next school day after the date of the initial removal and will be held in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Policy 5611 - Due Process Rights. The person who ordered or requested the removal will be present at the hearing.

A student in any of grades pre-kindergarten through 3 may be removed only for the remainder of the school day, and shall be permitted to return to any curricular and extra-curricular activities on the next school day (following the day in which the student was removed or excluded). When a student in any of grades pre-kindergarten through 3 is removed and returned to his/her curricular and extra-curricular activities the next school day, the Principal is not required to hold a hearing (or provide written notice of same).

The Principal shall not initiate suspension or expulsion proceedings against a student in any grades pre-kindergarten through 3 who was removed unless the student has committed one (1) of the following acts:

- A. The student brings a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury to a school building or on to any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, to an interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or to any other school program or activity that is not located in a school or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board. Similarly, the Principal can initiate suspension or expulsion proceedings if the student possesses a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury at school or on any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, at

interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or at any other school program or activity that is not located in a school or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board.

- B. The student commits an act at school, on other school property, at an interscholastic competition, extra-curricular event, or any other school program or activity and the act: 1) would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult; and 2) results in serious physical harm to person(s) as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(5), or to property as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(6).
- C. The student makes a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat.
- D. The student engages in behavior of such a nature that suspension or expulsion is necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, the student's fellow classmates, the classroom staff and teachers, or other school employees.

If the Superintendent or Principal reinstates a student prior to the hearing for emergency removal, the teacher may request and will be given written reasons for the reinstatement. The teacher cannot refuse to reinstate the student.

In an emergency removal, a student can be kept from class until the matter of the misconduct is disposed of either by reinstatement, suspension or expulsion.

*R.C. Chapter 2506, 3313.66, 3313.661, 3313.662, 3313.668*  
© Neola 2019

### **Suspension of Bus Riding/Transportation Privileges**

Students on a bus or other authorized Board of Education transportation vehicles are under the authority of and directly responsible to the bus/vehicle driver. The driver has the authority to enforce the established regulations for bus/vehicle conduct. Disorderly conduct or refusal to submit to the authority of the driver will be sufficient reason for refusing transportation service to any student.

A student may be suspended from school bus/vehicle riding privileges for all or part of a school year for any violation of established regulations for bus conduct and/or for conduct occurring on the bus/vehicle in violation of the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code.

Before a suspension from bus/vehicle riding privileges is imposed, the Superintendent or other designated District personnel will provide a student with notice of an intended suspension and an opportunity to appear before the Superintendent or other designated District personnel. Disciplinary suspension periods will be commensurate with the infraction(s) committed as determined by the Superintendent or designated District personnel.

Any additional guidelines regarding conduct on school buses/vehicles, as well as general information about the school transportation program, will be made available to all parents and students and posted in a central location.

*R.C. 3319.41, 3327.01, 3327.014*  
*A.C. 3301-83-08*  
© Neola 2000

### **Due Process Rights**

The Board of Education recognizes that students have limited constitutional rights when it comes to their education.

Accordingly, the Board establishes the following procedures which District administrators shall use when dealing with students:

**A. Student subject to suspension:**

When a student is being considered for an out-of-school suspension by the Superintendent, Principal, or other administrator:

1. The student will be informed in writing of the potential suspension and the reasons for the proposed action.
2. The student will be provided an opportunity for an informal hearing to challenge the reason for the intended suspension and to explain his/her actions.
3. An attempt will be made to notify parents or guardians by telephone if a suspension is issued.
4. Within one (1) school day of the suspension the Superintendent, Principal, or other administrator will notify the parents, guardians, or custodians of the student. The notice will include the reasons for the suspension and the right of the student, parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal to the Board or its designee; the right to be represented at the appeal; and the right to request the hearing be held in executive session if before the Board. The notice shall also specify that if the student, parent, guardian, or custodian intends to appeal the suspension to the Board or its designee, such notice of appeal shall be filed, in writing, with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the notice to suspend. If the offense is one for which the District may seek permanent exclusion, then the notice will contain that information.
5. Notice of this suspension will also be sent to the:
  - a. Superintendent;
  - b. student's school record (not for inclusion in the permanent record).
6. If a student leaves school property without permission immediately upon violation (or suspected violation) of a provision of the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code or prior to an administrator conducting an informal hearing as specified above, and the student fails to return to school on the following school day, the Principal, assistant Principal, Superintendent, or any other administrator, may send the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) notice of the suspension, and offer to provide the student and/or his/her parents an informal hearing upon request to discuss the reasons for the suspension and to allow the student to challenge the reasons and to explain his/her actions, any time prior to the end of the suspension period.

**Appeal of Suspension to the Board or its designee**

The student who is eighteen (18) or older or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the suspension to the Board or its designee. They may be represented in all such appeal proceedings.

A verbatim record will be kept of the hearing which may be held in executive session at the request of the student, parent, or guardian, if held before the Board.

The procedure to pursue such appeal will be provided in regulations approved by the Superintendent. Notice of appeal must be filed, in writing, with the Treasurer or the Superintendent within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the notice to suspend.

While a hearing before the Board may occur in executive session, the Board must act in public.

### **Appeal to the Court**

Under Ohio law, appeal of the Board's or its designee's decision may be made to the Court of Common Pleas.

## **B. Students subject to expulsion:**

When a student is being considered for expulsion by the Superintendent:

1. The Superintendent will give the student and parent, guardian, or custodian written notice of the intended expulsion, including reasons for the intended expulsion.
2. The student and parent or representative have the opportunity to appear before the Superintendent or designee to challenge the proposed action or to otherwise explain the student's actions. The written notice will state the time and place to appear, which must not be earlier than three (3) school days nor later than five (5) school days after the notice is given, unless the Superintendent grants an extension upon request of the student or parent.
3. Within one (1) school day of the expulsion, the Superintendent will notify the parents, guardians, or custodians of the student and Treasurer of the Board. The notice will include the reasons for the expulsion and the right of the student, parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal to the Board or its designee; the right to be represented at the appeal; and the right to request the hearing be held in executive session if before the Board. The notice shall also specify that if the student, parent, guardian, or custodian intends to appeal the expulsion to the Board or its designee, such notice of appeal shall be filed, in writing, with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the notice of expulsion. If the offense is one for which the District may seek permanent exclusion, then the notice will contain that information.

### **Appeal of Expulsion to the Board**

A student who is eighteen (18) or older or a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the expulsion by the Superintendent to the Board or its designee. They may be represented in all such appeal proceedings and will be granted a hearing before the Board or its designee.

A verbatim record will be kept of the hearing which may be held in executive session at the request of the student, parent, or guardian, if it is held before the Board.

The procedure to pursue such appeal will be in accordance with regulations approved by the Superintendent. Notice of appeal must be filed, in writing, within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the Superintendent's decision to expel with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent.

While a hearing before the Board may occur in executive session, the Board must act in public.

### **Appeal to the Court**

Under State law, the decision of the Board or its designee may be further appealed to the Court of Common Pleas.

#### **C. Students subject to emergency removal:**

Students whose conduct warrants emergency removal shall be dealt with in accordance with the rights and procedures outlined in Policy 5610.03 - Emergency Removal.

#### **D. Students subject to permanent exclusion:**

Students whose conduct is that for which permanent exclusion is warranted shall be dealt with in accordance with the rights and procedures outlined in Policy 5610.01 - Permanent Exclusion of Nondisabled Students.

#### **E. Students subject to suspension from bus riding/transportation privileges:**

Student whose conduct warrant suspension from bus riding and/or transportation services shall be dealt with in accordance with the rights and procedures outlined in Policy 5610.04 - Suspension of Bus Riding/Transportation Privileges.

In determining whether disciplinary action set forth in this policy is to be implemented, District Administrators shall use a preponderance of evidence standard. Further, any individual charged with making a disciplinary determination under this policy shall retain all documents, electronically stored information ("ESI"), and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315 - Information Management (i.e. "Litigation Hold")) created and/or received as part of an investigation.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal (e.g., FERPA, ADA) and/or State law (e.g., R.C. 3319.321) – e.g., student records and confidential medical records.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, and Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

In addition, this statement of due process rights is to be placed in all student handbooks in a manner that will facilitate understanding by students and their parents.

These procedures shall not apply to in-school disciplinary alternatives including in-school suspensions. An in-school suspension is one served entirely in a supervised learning environment within a school setting. Nor shall these disciplinary alternative procedures apply to students who are prohibited by authorized school personnel from all or part of their participation in co-curricular, interscholastic, and/or noninterscholastic extra-curricular activities.

*R.C. 3313.20, 3313.66, 3313.661*

© Neola 2020



## **Expulsion for One Calendar Year**

### **Firearm or Knife**

A student who brings a firearm or knife, as defined in Board Policy 5772 and 5610, to school or on to property owned or controlled by the Board while school is in session; to school sponsored activities or events whether on or off school premises; on school premises whether or not school is in session; in any vehicle whose use is controlled or organized or arranged by the school; or at any time when the student is subject to the authority of the Board or school personnel shall be expelled from school for one calendar year. Any such expulsion shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident occurred. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may reduce, on a case-by-case basis, the one year required expulsion period in circumstances subject to the provisions of federal and state law related to the education of disabled students or when the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, in their sole discretion, determines that the interest of the expelled student is served and the interest of other students, school employees, and other members of the school community are not disproportionately disserved by such a reduction. This provision does not in any way prevent school officials from pursuing the permanent exclusion of a student pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 3313.662. Any expulsion pursuant to this provision **shall extend, as necessary, into the school year** following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place.

A student who possesses a firearm or knife, as defined in Board Policy 5772 and 5610, at a school or on any other property owned or controlled by the Board, while school is in session; at school-sponsored activities; on school premises; off school premises at any school-sponsored activity or event; in any vehicle whose use is controlled or organized by the school; or at any time when the student is subject to the authority of the Board or school personnel, may be expelled from school for a period up to one calendar year. Any such expulsion may extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident occurred. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may reduce, on a case-by-case basis, the one-year required expulsion period in circumstances subject to the provisions of federal and state law related to the education of disabled students or when the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, in their sole discretion, determines that the interest of the expelled student is served and the interest of other students, school employees, and other members of the school community are not disproportionately disserved by such a reduction. This provision does not in any way prevent school officials from pursuing the permanent exclusion of a student pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 3313.662. Any expulsion pursuant to this provision shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place.

### **Violent Conduct**

A student who commits an act that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult and that results in serious physical harm to persons as defined in Division (a)(5) of section 2901.01 of the Ohio Revised Code or serious physical harm to property as defined in division (a)(6) of section 2901.01 of the Ohio Revised Code while the student is at school, on any property owned or controlled by the Board, or at any interscholastic event, extracurricular event, or any other school property or activity, wherever located, may be expelled from school for a period up to one calendar year. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may reduce, on a case-by-case basis the one year expulsion period in circumstances subject to the provisions of federal and state law related to the education of disabled students or when the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee, in their sole discretion, determines that the interest of the expelled student is served and the interest of other students, school employees, and other members of the school community are not disproportionately disserved by such a reduction. This provision does not in any way prevent school officials from pursuing the permanent exclusion of a student pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662. Any expulsion pursuant to this provision

shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place.

### **Bomb Threat**

A student who makes a bomb threat with respect to any school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat, may be expelled from school for a period of up to one calendar year. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee may reduce, on a case-by-case basis the one year expulsion period in circumstances subject to the provisions of federal and state law related to the education of disabled students or when the Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee in their sole discretion, determines that the interest of the expelled student is served and the interest of other students, school employees, and other members of the school community are not disproportionately disserved by such a reduction. This provision does not in any way prevent school officials from pursuing the permanent exclusion of a student pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.662. Any expulsion pursuant to this provision shall extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place.

### **Imminent and Severe Endangerment to Health and Safety of Students or Employee**

The Superintendent may expel a student for up to 180 school days for actions that the Superintendent determines pose imminent and severe endangerment to the health and safety of other students or school employees regardless of whether the actions qualify for permanent exclusion. The term "imminent and severe endangerment" means any of the following actions taken by a student:

1. Bringing a firearm or a knife capable of causing severe bodily harm to a school operated by the Board or other property owned or controlled by the Board, or to any interscholastic competition, extra-curricular event, or any other program or activity sponsored by the School District or in which the District is participating;
2. Committing an act that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult and that results in serious physical harm to persons as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(5) or to property as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(6) while the student is at a school operated by the Board, on property owned or operated by the Board, or at any other program or activity that is sponsored by the District or in which the District is participating;
3. Making a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat; or
4. Making an articulated or verbalized threat, including a hit list, threatening manifesto, or social media post, that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the pupil poses a serious threat.

Expulsion may result in the loss of credit for courses being taken at school, at the Delaware Area Career Center, or at any college or university, whether under an Educational Option, College Credit Plus enrollment, or at the student's own expense.

### **Search and Seizure**

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search the person or property, including vehicles, of a student, with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction and the student's age. Search and seizure is pursuant to board policy [5771](#).

This authorization to search shall also apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board.

## **PROHIBITION OF SMOKING, USE OF TOBACCO AND ELECTRIC CIGARETTES**

The Board of Education is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with a tobacco, nicotine, vapor/aerosol, and smoke-free environment. The negative health effects of tobacco use for both users and nonusers, including the effects of secondhand smoke and vapor/aerosol exposure, are well established. Further, providing a non-smoking and tobacco-free environment is consistent with the responsibilities of teachers and staff to be positive role models for our students.

For purposes of this policy, 'use of tobacco' means to chew or maintain any substance containing tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, in the mouth to derive the effects of tobacco, as well as all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, any other matter or substances that contain tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine), in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes and/or the smoking of electronic, 'vapor,' or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, and any other smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance.

The term "tobacco" includes any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine) that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; any electronic smoking device and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; an e-cigarette (including, but not limited to, "JUUL", "NJOY," "BREEZE," "Puff Bar," etc.), e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, or e-hookah; but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence.

The Board prohibits the use of tobacco, nicotine, or tobacco substitute products at all times (twenty-four hours a day, seven (7) days a week) within any enclosed facility owned, leased, or contracted for by the Board, and in the areas directly or indirectly under the control of the Board immediately adjacent to locations of ingress or egress to such facilities. This prohibition extends to any Board-owned and/or operated vehicles used to transport students and to all other Board-owned and/or operated vehicles. Such prohibition also applies to school grounds, athletic facilities, and any school-related event, on or off Board premises.

The Superintendent shall require the posting of signs as required by R.C. 3794.06 and as specified by the Ohio Department of Health.

### **Advertising/Promotion**

In accordance with Policy 9700.01, tobacco advertising is prohibited on school grounds, in all school-sponsored publications, and at all school-sponsored events.

Tobacco promotional items that promote the use of tobacco products, including clothing, bags, lighters, and other personal articles, are not permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored events.

### **Enforcement**

Violations of this policy may result in removal from school property or the school activity in accordance with Policy 9150 – School Visitors.

Policy: 7434

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

Policy: 1615

Adopted November 25, 2019

Last Revised May 22, 2023

Policy: 3215

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

Policy: 5512

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

Policy: 4215

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

LEGAL REFS.: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act; 20 USC 1221 et seq. Goals  
2000: Educate America Act; 20 USC 6081 through 6084  
ORC 3313.20; 3313.47  
3791.031  
3794.01; 3794.02; 3794.04; 3794.06  
OAC 3301-35-02; 3301-35-05

## **Tobacco Use by Students**

The Board of Education is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with an indoor tobacco, nicotine, vapor/aerosol, and smoke-free environment. The negative health effects of tobacco use for both the users and nonusers, including the effects of secondhand smoke and vapor/aerosol exposure, are well established. Further, providing a non-smoking and tobacco-free environment is consistent with the responsibilities of teachers and staff to be positive role models for our students.

For purposes of this policy, 'use of tobacco' means to chew or maintain any substance containing tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, in the mouth to derive the effects of tobacco, as well as all uses of tobacco or tobacco substitutes, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substances that contain tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine), in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes, and/or the smoking of electronic, 'vapor,' or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, or other smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance.

The term "tobacco" includes any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine) that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; any electronic smoking device and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; an e-cigarette (including, but not limited to, "JUUL", "NJOY", "BREEZE," "Puff Bar," etc.), e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, or e-hookah; but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence.

The Board prohibits the possession, consumption, purchase or attempt to purchase, and/or use of tobacco or tobacco substitute products by students at all times (twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week) on Board premises, in Board-owned vehicles, within any indoor facility owned, leased, or contracted for by the Board and/or used to provide education or library services to children, and at all Board-sponsored events.

This prohibition extends to any Board-owned and/or operated vehicles used to transport students and to all other Board-owned and/or operated vehicles. Such prohibition also applies to school grounds, athletic facilities, and any school-related event, on or off Board premises.

## **Advertising/Promotion**

In accordance with Policy 9700.01, tobacco advertising is prohibited on school grounds, in all school-sponsored publications, and at all school-sponsored events.

Tobacco promotional items that promote the use of tobacco products, including clothing, bags, lighters, and other personal articles, are not permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored events.

## **Educational Programming**

Tobacco-use prevention education shall be coordinated with the other components of the school health program. Staff responsible for teaching tobacco-use prevention education shall have adequate pre-service training and participate in ongoing professional development activities to effectively deliver education programming. Preparation and professional development activities shall provide basic knowledge about the effects of tobacco use and effects of peer pressure on tobacco use combined with effective instructional techniques and strategies and program-specific activities. Education will include instruction on the harmful effects of and legal restrictions against tobacco, nicotine, and electronic smoking devices, as part of the health education curriculum, including My Life My Quit Youth Cessation Program.

## **Enforcement**

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code and in accordance with policies of the Board.

Policy: 5512

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

LEGAL REFS.: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act; 20 USC 1221 et seq. Goals

2000: Educate America Act; 20 USC 6081 through 6084

ORC 2927.02

3313.47; 3313.66; 3313.661; 3313.751; 3794.01; 3794.02;

3794.04; 3794.06

OAC 3301-35-02; 3301-35-03; 3301-35-04

20 USC § 6082

CROSS REFS.: 5611, Student Due Process Rights

5500, Student Conduct/Zero Tolerance

5610, Student Suspension

5610, Student Expulsion

Student Handbooks

## **No Smoking/Tobacco Use on District Property**

The Board of Education is committed to providing students, staff, and visitors with a tobacco, nicotine, vapor/aerosol, and smoke-free environment. The negative health effects of tobacco use for both users and nonusers, including the effects of secondhand smoke and vapor/aerosol exposure, are well established. Further, providing a non-smoking and tobacco-free environment is consistent with the responsibilities of teachers and staff to be positive role models for our students.

For purposes of this policy, 'use of tobacco' means to chew or maintain any substance containing tobacco, including smokeless tobacco, in the mouth to derive the effects of tobacco, as well as all uses of tobacco, or

tobacco substitutes, including cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, nicotine (including synthetic nicotine), in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes, and/or smoking of electronic, 'vapor,' or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, and any other smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substances.

The term “tobacco” includes any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine) that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; any electronic smoking device and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; an e-cigarette (including, but not limited to, “JUUL”, “NJOY,” “BREEZE,” “Puff Bar,” etc.), e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, or e-hookah; but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence.

The Board prohibits the use of tobacco or tobacco substitute products by employees at all times (twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week) within any enclosed facility owned, leased, or contracted for by the Board, and in areas directly or indirectly under the control of the Board immediately adjacent to locations of ingress or egress to such facilities. This prohibition extends to any Board-owned and/or operated vehicles used to transport students and to all other Board-owned and/or operated vehicles. Such prohibition also applies to school grounds, athletic facilities, and any school-related event, on or off Board premises.

The Superintendent shall require the posting of signs as required by R.C. 3794.06 and as specified by the Ohio Department of Health.

### **Advertising/Promotion**

In accordance with Policy 9700.01, tobacco advertising is prohibited on school grounds, in all school-sponsored publications, and at all school-sponsored events.

Tobacco promotional items that promote the use of tobacco products, including clothing, bags, lighters, and other personal articles are not permitted on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored events.

### **Enforcement**

Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement and/or in accordance with policies of the Board.

Policy:7434

Adopted: December 18, 2017

Last Revised: May 22, 2023

LEGAL REFS.: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act; 20 USC 1221 et seq. Goals 2000:  
Educate America Act; USC 6081 through 6084  
ORC 3313.20; 3313.47  
3791.031; 3794.01; 3794.02; 3794.04; 3794.06  
OAC 3301-35-02; 3301-35-05

### **Drug Prevention**

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community.

For purposes of this policy, "drugs" shall mean:

- A. all dangerous controlled substances as so designated and prohibited by Ohio statute;
- B. all chemicals which release toxic vapors;
- C. all alcoholic beverages;
- D. any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy; anabolic steroids;
- E. any substance containing betel nut (areca nut);
- F. any substance that is a "look-alike" to any of the above.

The Board prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia as the term is defined by law, or the misuse of a product containing a substance that can provide an intoxicating or mood-altering effect on school grounds, on school vehicles, or at any school-sponsored event.

It further establishes a drug-free zone within 1000 feet of any facility used by the District for educational purposes.

Policy po5530

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT GENERAL POLICY**

### **General Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all School District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the School District community as well as Third Parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Other Violations of the Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Board will also take immediate steps to impose disciplinary action on individuals engaging in any of the following prohibited acts:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation.
- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of unlawful harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of unlawful harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating harassment charges comprises part of one's supervisory duties.

## Definitions

Words used in this policy shall have those meanings defined herein; words not defined herein shall be construed according to their plain and ordinary meanings.

**Complainant** is the individual who alleges, or is alleged, to have been subjected to unlawful harassment, regardless of whether the person files a formal complaint or is pursuing an informal resolution to the alleged harassment.

**Respondent** is the individual who has been alleged to have engaged in unlawful harassment, regardless of whether the Reporting Party files a formal complaint or is seeking an informal resolution to the alleged harassment.

**School District community** means students and Board employees (i.e., administrators, and professional and classified staff), as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.

**Third Parties** include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on School District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the School District community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

**Day(s):** Unless expressly stated otherwise, the term “day” or “days” as used in this policy means business day(s) (i.e., a day(s) that the Board office is open for normal operating hours, Monday – Friday, excluding State-recognized holidays).

## Bullying

Bullying rises to the level of unlawful harassment when one (1) or more persons systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees and that bullying is based upon one (1) or more Protected Classes, that is, characteristics that are protected by Federal civil rights laws. It is defined as any unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school or work performance or participation; and may involve:

- A. teasing;
- B. threats;
- C. intimidation;
- D. stalking;
- E. cyberstalking;
- F. cyberbullying;
- G. physical violence;
- H. theft;



- I. sexual, religious, or racial harassment;
- J. public humiliation; or
- K. destruction of property.

### **Harassment**

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- A. places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or an employee's work performance; or
- C. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

### **Sexual Harassment**

For purposes of this policy and consistent with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, "sexual harassment" is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or status in a class, educational program, or activity.
- B. Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of any gender against a person of the same or another gender.

Sexual Harassment covered by Policy 2266 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex Education Programs or Activities is not included in this policy. Allegations of such conduct shall be addressed solely by Policy 2266.

Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment under this policy may take a variety of forms. Examples of the kinds of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations.
- B. Unwanted physical and/or sexual contact.
- C. Threats or insinuations that a person's employment, wages, academic grade, promotion, classroom work or assignments, academic status, participation in athletics or extra-curricular programs, activities, or events, or other conditions of employment or education may be

adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.

- D. Unwelcome verbal expressions of a sexual nature, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; the unwelcome use of sexually degrading language, profanity, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls.
- E. Sexually suggestive objects, pictures, graffiti, videos, posters, audio recordings or literature, placed in the work or educational environment, that may reasonably embarrass or offend individuals.
- F. Unwelcome and inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, or obscene gestures.
- G. Asking about, or telling about, sexual fantasies, sexual preferences, or sexual activities.
- H. Speculations about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.
- I. Giving unwelcome personal gifts such as lingerie that suggests the desire for a romantic relationship.
- J. Leering or staring at someone in a sexual way, such as staring at a person's breasts, buttocks, or groin.
- K. A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another.
- L. Inappropriate boundary invasions by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life.
- M. Verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes unlawful sexual harassment. Sex-based or gender-based conduct must be sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects, limits, or denies an individual's employment or education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive employment or educational environment, or such that it is intended to, or has the effect of, denying or limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activities.

### **Race/Color Harassment**

Prohibited racial harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's race or color and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs, nicknames implying stereotypes, epithets, and/or negative references relative to racial customs.

### **Religious (Creed) Harassment**

Prohibited religious harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's religion or creed and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with

the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's religious tradition, clothing, or surnames, and/or involves religious slurs.

### **National Origin/Ancestry Harassment**

Prohibited national origin/ancestry harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's national origin or ancestry and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin or ancestry, such as negative comments regarding customs, manner of speaking, language, surnames, or ethnic slurs.

### **Disability Harassment**

Prohibited disability harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's disability and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's disability, such as negative comments about speech patterns, movement, physical impairments or defects/appearances, or the like.

### **Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers**

The following individual(s) shall serve as the District's Anti-Harassment Compliance Officer(s) (hereinafter, "the Compliance Officer(s)").

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually on the School District's web site.

The Compliance Officer(s) are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding harassment.

The Compliance Officer(s) will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful harassment, to assist students, other members of the District community, and third parties who seek support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the individual in those instances where concerns have not resulted in the filing of a formal complaint and where all parties are in agreement to participate in an informal process.

Compliance Officers shall accept reports of unlawful harassment directly from any member of the School District community or a Third Party or receive reports that are initially filed with an administrator, supervisor, or other District-level official. Upon receipt of a report of alleged harassment, the Compliance Officer(s) will contact the Complainant and begin either an informal or formal complaint process (depending on the request of the Complainant or the nature of the alleged harassment), or the Compliance Officer(s) will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. The Compliance Officer(s) will provide a copy of this policy to the Complainant and Respondent. In the case of a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer(s) will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or will oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All Board employees must report incidents of harassment that are reported to them to the Compliance Officer within two (2) days of learning of the incident.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful harassment is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to the Compliance Officer(s) within two (2) days. Additionally, any Board employee who observes an act of unlawful harassment is expected to intervene to stop the harassment, unless circumstances make such an intervention dangerous, in which case the staff member should immediately notify other Board employees and/or local law enforcement officials, as necessary, to stop the harassment. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer(s) or designee must contact the Complainant, if age eighteen (18) or older, or Complainant's parents/guardians if the Complainant is under the age eighteen (18), within two (2) days to advise of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged wrongdoing.

### **Reports and Complaints of Harassing Conduct**

Students and all other members of the School District community along with Third Parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a report shall file it with the Compliance Officer within two (2) days of receiving the report of harassment.

Members of the School District community and Third Parties, which includes students, or third parties who believe they have been unlawfully harassed are entitled to utilize the Board's complaint process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the Complainant's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints of harassment under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of alleged bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 - Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior, the Principal believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile work environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal shall report the act of bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment to the Compliance Officers who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. If the alleged harassment involves Sexual Harassment as defined by Policy 2266, the matter will be handled in accordance with the grievance process and procedures outlined in Policy 2266. While the Compliance Officer investigates the allegation, or the matter is being addressed pursuant to Policy 2266, the Principal shall suspend the Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the Compliance Officer's written report or the determination of responsibility pursuant to Policy 2266. The Compliance Officer shall keep the Principal informed of the status of the Policy 5517 investigation and provide the Principal with a copy of the resulting written report. Likewise, the Title IX Coordinator will provide the Principal with the determination of responsibility that results from the Policy 2266 grievance process.

### **Investigation and Complaint Procedure**

Except for Sexual Harassment that is covered by Policy 2266 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities, any student who believes that they have been subjected to unlawful harassment may seek resolution of the complaint through the procedures described below. The formal complaint process involves an investigation of the Complainant's claims of harassment or retaliation and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the charges are substantiated.

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment or retaliation, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. Once the formal complaint process is begun, the investigation will be completed in a timely manner (ordinarily, within fifteen (15) business days of the complaint being received).

The procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### **Informal Complaint Procedure**

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is promptly to stop inappropriate behavior and to facilitate resolution through an informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who believes s/he has been unlawfully harassed or retaliated against. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint. The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the Complainant and the Respondent mutually agree to participate in it.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed may initiate their complaint through this informal complaint process, but are not required to do so. The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the parties (alleged target of harassment and alleged harasser(s)) agree to participate in the informal process.

The Complainant may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

All complainants involving a District employee, any other adult member of the School District community, or a Third Party and a student will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a Complainant feels comfortable and safe in doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the Respondent that the alleged harassing conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The Complainant should address the allegedly harassing conduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The Compliance Officers are available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the Complainant if requested to do so. A Complainant who is uncomfortable or unwilling to directly approach the Respondent about the alleged inappropriate conduct may file an informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful harassment, such as sexual harassment, the Compliance Officer may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A Complainant may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: 1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; 2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or 3) directly to one of the Compliance Officers.

All informal complaints must be reported to one of the Compliance Officers who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The Board's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students who believe they are being unlawfully harassed with a range of options designed to bring about a resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the Complainant, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the Complainant about how to communicate the unwelcome nature of the behavior to the Respondent.
- B. Distributing a copy of this anti-harassment policy as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the Respondent works or attends.
- C. If both parties agree, the Compliance Officer may arrange and facilitate a meeting or mediation between the Complainant and the Respondent to work out a mutual resolution.

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the Compliance Officer/designee is directed to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the informal complaint. If the Complainant is dissatisfied with the informal complaint process, the Complainant may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, either party may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

### **Formal Complaint Procedure**

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one of the parties has requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or the Complainant, from the outset, elects to file a formal complaint, or the CO determines the allegations are not appropriate for resolution through the informal process, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

The Complainant may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing, with a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or another District official who works at another school or at the district level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a formal complaint within thirty (30) days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. If a Complainant informs a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, Superintendent, or other District official, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of harassment, that employee must report such information to the Compliance Officer within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process, the Compliance Officer should keep the parties reasonably informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent known: the identity of the Respondent; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based (i.e., when, where, and what occurred); a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the Compliance Officer shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further harassment or retaliation, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or schedule for the Complainant and/or the Respondent. In making such a determination, the Compliance Officer should consult the Complainant to assess whether the individual agrees with the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the Compliance Officer may still take whatever actions deemed appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent.

Within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer/designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the Complainant has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation. The Principal will not conduct an investigation unless directed to do so by the Compliance Officer.

Simultaneously, the Compliance Officer will inform the Respondent that a formal complaint has been received. The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and provided with a copy of any relevant policies and/or administrative guidelines, including the Board's Anti-Harassment policy. The Respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the Compliance Officer/designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of harassment/retaliation within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other information presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness that is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer or the designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent that summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful harassment as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful harassment. The Compliance Officer's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In determining if discriminatory harassment or retaliation occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used. The Compliance Officer may consult with the Board's legal counsel before finalizing the report to the Superintendent.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within ten (10) school days of receiving the report of the Compliance Officer/designee, the Superintendent must either issue a written decision regarding whether the complaint of harassment has been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and the Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10) school days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent shall issue a written decision as described above.

The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful harassment/retaliation regardless of whether the student alleging the unlawful harassment/retaliation pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

The parties may be represented, at their own cost, at any of the above-described meetings/hearings.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, the filing of charges with local law enforcement, or the filing of a civil action in court. Use of this internal complaint process is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

The District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the Complainant, the Respondent, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy and related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to

the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. Additionally, the Respondent must be provided the Complainant's identity.

During the course of a formal investigation, the Compliance Officer/designee will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of a harassment investigation is expected not to disclose any information that is learned or provided during the course of the investigation.

### **Sanctions and Monitoring**

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful harassment/retaliation by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent further such harassment. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases where unlawful harassment is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the School District community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a complaint alleging unlawful harassment/retaliation or participates as a witness in an investigation is prohibited. Neither the Board nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any Federal or State civil rights law, or because that individual made a report, formal complaint testified, assisted or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws and/or this policy, or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws and/or this policy.

Retaliation against a person from making a report of discrimination, filing a formal complaint, or participating in an investigation or meeting is a serious violation of this policy that can result in imposition of disciplinary sanction/consequences and/or other appropriate remedies.

Formal complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the internal complaint process set forth above.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy.

### **Allegations Constituting Criminal Conduct: Child Abuse/Sexual Misconduct**

State law requires any school teacher or school employee who knows or suspects that a child with a disability under the age of twenty-one (21) or that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has suffered or faces a threat of suffering a physical or mental wound, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of a child to immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to the county children's services agency. If, during the course of a harassment investigation, the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe or suspect that the alleged conduct reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the Complainant, a report of such knowledge must be made in accordance with State law and Board Policy.



State law defines certain contact between a teacher and a student as "sexual battery." If the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe that the Complainant has been the victim of criminal conduct as defined in Ohio's Criminal Code, such knowledge should be immediately reported to local law enforcement.

Any reports made to a county children's services agency or to local law enforcement shall not terminate the Compliance Officer or a designee's obligation and responsibility to continue to investigate a complaint of harassment. While the Compliance Officer or a designee may work cooperatively with outside agencies to conduct concurrent investigations, in no event shall the harassment investigation be inhibited by the involvement of outside agencies without good cause after consultation with the Superintendent.

### **Allegations Involving Conduct Unbecoming the Teaching Profession/Suspension**

The Superintendent will report to the Ohio Department of Education, on forms provided for that purpose, matters of misconduct on the part of licensed professional staff members convicted of sexual battery, and will, in accordance with Policy 8141, suspend such employee from all duties that concern or involve the care, custody, or control of a child during the pendency of any criminal action for which that person has been arrested, summoned and/or indicted in that regard.

### **Education and Training**

In support of this Anti-Harassment Policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful discriminatory practices. The Superintendent shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as all information, provided regarding the Board's policy and harassment in general, will be age and content appropriate.

### **Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials**

The Compliance Officer(s) is responsible for overseeing retention of all records that must be maintained pursuant to this policy. All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy shall retain all documents, electronically stored information ("ESI"), and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created and/or received as part of an investigation, which may include but not be limited to:

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/grievances/statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- B. any narratives that memorialize oral reports/allegations/complaints/grievances/statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- C. any documentation that memorializes the actions taken by District personnel or individuals contracted or appointed by the Board to fulfill its responsibilities related to the investigation and/or the District's response to the alleged violation of this policy;
- D. written witness statements;
- E. narratives, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness interviews/statements;
- F. e-mails, texts, or social media posts that directly relate to or constitute evidence pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy (i.e., not after-the-fact commentary about or media coverage of the incident);

- G. notes or summaries prepared contemporaneously by the investigator in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.), but not including transitory notes whose content is otherwise memorialized in other documents;
- H. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and other documentation that memorializes oral disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of this policy;
- I. dated written determinations/reports (including summaries of relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence) and other documentation that memorializes oral notifications to the parties concerning the outcome of the investigation, including any consequences imposed as a result of a violation of this policy;
- J. documentation of any supportive measures offered and/or provided to the Complainant and/or the Respondent, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates the no contact orders were issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt of the no contact orders;
- K. documentation of all actions taken, both individual and systemic, to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;
- L. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student Code of Conduct and/or Employee Handbooks);
- M. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal (e.g., FERPA, ADA) and/or State law (e.g., R.C. 3319.321) – e.g., student records and confidential medical records.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, and Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

*R.C. 4112.02*

*20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA)*

*20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.*

*29 U.S.C. 621 et seq., Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967*

*29 U.S.C. 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended*

*29 U.S.C. 6101, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975*

*42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.*

*42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.*

*42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended*

*42 U.S.C. 1983*

*National School Boards Association Inquiry and Analysis - May, 2008*

*© Neola 2021*

## **BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE FORMS OF BEHAVIOR**

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

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

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education's Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

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

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

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

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means cyberbullying through electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Any student or student's parent/guardian who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Building Principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the Building Principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The Building Principal or appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact,

a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the Principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517 - Anti-Harassment.

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

Deliberately making false reports about harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or other aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Deliberately making false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

The District shall implement intervention strategies (AG 5517.01) to protect a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying and from retaliation following such a report.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the Building Director or appropriate administrator shall notify the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by a specific student are verified, the Building Director or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the custodial parent/guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

### **Formal Complaints**

Students and/or their parents/guardians shall file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Principal for review, investigation, and action.

### **Informal Complaints**

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the Building Director for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

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

When an individual making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

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

### **Reporting Requirement**

At least semi-annually, the Superintendent shall provide to the President of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District web site (if one exists). The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

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

### **Immunity**

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R.C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

### *Notification*

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. At least once each school year a written statement describing the policy and consequences for violations of the policy shall be sent to each student's custodial parent or guardian.

The statement may be sent with regular student report cards or may be delivered electronically.

The policy and an explanation of the seriousness of bullying by electronic means shall be made available to students in the District and to their custodial parents or guardians.

State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedures.

### **Education and Training**

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of aggressive behavior, including bullying and violence within a dating relationship. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines about aggressive behavior and bullying in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Annually, the District shall provide all students enrolled in the District with age-appropriate instruction regarding the Board's policy, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations of the policy.

Students in grades seven (7) through twelve (12) shall receive age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education, including instruction in recognizing dating violence warning signs and characteristics of healthy relationships. Parents, who submit a written request to the Building Director to examine the dating violence prevention instruction materials used in the school, will be afforded an opportunity to review the materials within a reasonable period of time.

The District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students. Time spent by school staff in these training programs shall apply toward mandated continuing education requirements.

In accordance with Board Policy 8462, the Superintendent shall include a review of this policy on bullying and other forms of harassment in the required training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed. The complaint procedure established by the Superintendent shall be followed.

© Neola 2013

Legal

R.C. 3313.666, 3313.667

State Board of Education Model Policy (2007)

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

This district provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. The Worthington School District is committed to having an environment free from all discrimination, including harassment, intimidation, or bullying on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, ancestry, or genetic information. The district prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the school environment, including all academic, extracurricular, and school-sponsored activities. A student who violates this prohibition will be subject to the potential penalties set forth in the Code of Conduct Discipline section of this handbook.

A staff member, any student, or student's parent or legal custodian who believes that a student has been subjected to harassment, intimidation, or bullying on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, ancestry, or genetic information may contact the School District's Compliance Officer(s):

Angie Adrean, Assistant Superintendent - 614-450-6016

Rob Messenheimer, Director of Elementary Education - 614-450-6018

For more information about the district's prohibition against bullying, harassment, and discrimination, please see Board Policies 2260, 5517, 5517.01, 5517.02, and 5517.03.

Furthermore, Worthington School District complies with federal laws that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal assistance. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 prohibits discrimination on the basis of age. Worthington Schools also complies with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1994 and grants parents/guardians the right to examine student's official school records. Inquiries regarding unlawful discrimination may be directed to the building principal or the district compliance officer.

## APPENDIX A: Disciplinary Action Chart

Level I Violation	Level II Violation	Level III Violation
<i>Violation that has the potential to negatively impact a safe learning environment.</i>	<i>Violation that may cause harm or potential harm to person or property.</i>	<i>Possible violation of law. Violation that may cause harm or potential harm to person or property.</i>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> violation: warning</b> <i>[teacher call home]</i> <b>2<sup>nd</sup> violation: detention</b> <i>[teacher call home]</i> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> violation: 2 detentions</b> <i>[teacher call home]</i> <b>For these types of violations, at least three contacts to parents will have been made by teachers to change this behavior.</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> violation: progressive discipline</b> <b>5<sup>th</sup> violation: progressive discipline</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> violation through 5<sup>th</sup> violation: range from 1 detention to 10 days</b> <b>Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> violation: range from 1 detention to 10 days OSS up to possible recommendation for expulsion and possible police notification</b>
	1B. Class Cuts 1C. Truancy	3A. Use or Possession - Alcohol 3B. Selling or Distributing - Alcohol 3D. Use or Possession - Drugs 3E. Selling or Distributing - Drugs
	2. Computer, Abuse of Hardware, Software or Other School Technology <i>(Penalties may also include suspension or loss of usage privileges)</i>	4. Use or Possession of Tobacco
		5. Unauthorized Touching
1A. Tardiness	3C/3F/10G/29B Failure to Remove and/or Report	10A. Dangerous Weapons - Firearm 10B. Dangerous Weapons - Knife 10C. Dangerous Weapons – Other than Firearm 10D. Dangerous Weapons – Firearm Lookalike 10E. Dangerous Weapon – Explosive 10F. Dangerous Weapon - Spray/Mace
14. Dress and Expression <i>(Penalties may also include a request for change of clothes)</i>	6. Cheating and Plagiarism <i>(Academic Dishonesty)</i>	11. Harassment, Bullying and Intimidation or Other Degrading, Disgraceful, Discriminating and/or Racist Acts
15A. Electronic Devices <i>(Penalties may also include confiscation)</i>	7. Conduct on Buses <i>(May also include suspension of transportation privileges)</i>	15B. Electronic Devices - Laser 15D. Electronic Devices - Sexting
<b>All Level I violations counts reset each quarter.</b>  <b>Academic Intervention resets at the semester.</b>	8. Damage to Private Property	16A. Fighting 16B. Serious Bodily Injury 16C. Assault
	9. Damage to School Property	17A. Frightening or Intimidating Acts 17B. False Alarm / Bomb Threat
	12. Disruption	
	13. Disruptive Demonstration	19. Hazing
	15C. Electronic Devices – Cell Phone	20. Insubordination
	18. Gambling	23A. Sexual Misconduct 23B. Unwelcome Sexual Conduct
	21. Leaving School Premises and/or Improper Area	
	22. Misrepresentation and Forgery <i>(Non-academic Dishonesty)</i>	24. Sexual Harassment
	26A. Unauthorized Sale 26B. Unauthorized Distribution	25. Theft
	28. Profane, Vulgar or Abusive Language or Gestures	27. Trespassing
	32. Driving	29A. Violation of Law
		30. Other Conduct
		31. Repeated Violations or Other Circumstances
		33. Pornographic Material
		34. Unauthorized Recording
		35. Violent Conduct



**Note:** Any violation that violates the law or may cause an imminent harm to person or property may result in a police report being filed.