

Ruth Fox Middle School



2024-2025

Student / Parent Handbook



Ruth Fox Middle School Staff

Ruth Fox Middle School

6570 Brush Street

P.O. Box 3620

North Branch, Michigan 48461

Phone: (810) 688-3284

Fax: (810) 688-2930

Mr. Terauds	Principal	dterauds@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Lowe	Assistant Principal	jlowe@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Buckner	Social Worker	jbuckner@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Anderson	ELA 5/6	Tanderson@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Baksa	Art	rbaksa@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Barkowska	Physical Education	bbarkowska@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Brady	Science/SS 5/6	sbrady@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Brown	STEAM Lab (5-8)	lbrown@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Buchanan	Math 7/8	dbuchanan@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Buike	Science 8, Math 7	jbuie@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Beatty	Social Studies 7	mbeatty@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Chisholm	Math 6	dchisholm@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Ehardt	Band	jehardt@nbbrncos.net
Ms. Finley	School Social Worker	dfinley@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Goldstein	Math 5	mgoldstein@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Grask	Science/SS 5	agrasak@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Grzecki	Special Education	egrzecki@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Hirokey	Health (5-8)	dhirokey@nbbrncos.net
Mr. James	Social Studies 7/8	ajames@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Kriewall	SS 8	ckriewall@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Lewis	Curriculum Coach	clewis@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Luea	Speech	jluea@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. McClain	ELA 7	amcclain@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. McNulty	Coding/Girls Fitness	cmcnulty@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. C. Mitchell	Science 8	cmitchell@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. H. Mitchell	ELA 5	hmitchell@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Priemer	ELA 6	cpriemer@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Reichenbach	Math 7	nreichenbach@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Reynolds	Sci/SS 5/6	mreynolds@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Rose	Curriculum Coach	krose@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Savoy	Math 5/6	asavoy@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Schaaf	Special Education	aschaaf@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Sherrieb	ELA 7/Science 7	asherrieb@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Sieh	ELA 8/SS 8	rsieh@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Schulte	ELA 8	aschulte@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Shafer	Special Education	bshafer@nbbrncos.net
Mr. Sutton	Science 7	tsutton@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Tatro	Social Studies 6	ltatro@nbbrncos.net
Ms. Travis	ELA 6	ltravis@nbbrncos.net

Mrs. Weingartz	Special Education	aweingartz@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Whipple	Math 8	dwhipple@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Woodruff	Science 6	cwoodruff@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Yens	Special Education	dyens@nbbrncos.net
Mrs. Young	Math 5/6	syoun@nbbrncos.net

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Welcome

Welcome to Ruth Fox Middle School, “Home of the Broncos.” This is where spirit, pride, and tradition are the symbols of a school in which the entire community takes pride. As students you are very important to the development of images and traditions of our school. All members of our school community expect an attitude of respect for both individuals and property.

This handbook has been developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that occur during the school year and to provide you and your parents the necessary information needed for a successful and rewarding middle school experience. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for reference throughout the school year. The handbook is also available online at www.nbbroncos.net. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please talk to the Ruth Fox Middle School staff.

Mission Statement

North Branch Area Schools serve as a learning community dedicated to excellence. Additionally, at Ruth Middle School we strive to build bridges for learning and character development, guiding our students toward a successful future. It is also our mission to provide our students with the best education possible while making every student feel cared for and accepted.

Equal Education Opportunity

It is the policy of this district to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District’s Compliance Office listed below.

Mr. James Fish
Superintendent
(810) 688-3570
Jfish@nbbroncos.net

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

Parent Involvement

North Branch Area Schools recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision makers in education. We believe that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism. Please refer to board policy 2112 for additional information.

School Day

Office hours at Ruth Fox Middle School are from 6:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. ***Students may enter the building at 6:55 a.m

Schedules will be determined based on individual academic teams.

Student ID's

Students will be given a photo ID. Student ID's may be needed to check out a book from the school media center and will be used for hot lunch identification/payment. No ID equals being unable to check out a book.

ID's can be replaced in the main office for \$5 each.

Lockers

School lockers are property of the district. At no time does the district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. School authorities, for any reason, may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Since lockers are provided to individuals to secure student belongings, students are not allowed to share lockers. Students may be fined for damage done to any locker.

Other locker advice - do not provide your combination to anyone! Students are strongly advised not to set their locker combination or jam the bottom of their locker, so that for convenience it opens without using the combination. Following these guidelines will keep your personal belongings safe.

If a student has a problem with their locker, he/she should ask a staff member for assistance or report the issue to the office.

Building Neatness (Bronco Pride)

The Ruth Fox Middle School is your school, and everyone should be proud of the building. Students are expected to pick up paper, ect, in the classrooms and in the halls in a united effort to keep the building neat and clean at all times. It is not enough that you refrain yourself, but you must also help to protect the school by discouraging and reporting damage done to the building, the books, the equipment and the buses by others. **Please do your part to keep a neat and pleasant learning environment.**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school cannot and will not be responsible for personal property. **The safest place for valuable items is at home.**

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student and/or their parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of their behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teacher and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish their educational goals.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the Ruth Fox Middle School principal or Social Worker.

Student Well-Being

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down, and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident they must notify any staff member immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by the parent or guardian, and filed in the school office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

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

Safety Standards ([SB Policy 7430](#))

The Board of Education believes that the employees and students of this District, as well as visitors, are entitled to function in an environment as free from hazards as can reasonably be provided. In this regard and in accordance with law, the Board will provide reasonable and adequate protection to the lives, safety, and health of its employees.

School Safety Information ([SB Policy 8400](#))

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining a safe school environment. The Board believes that school crime and violence are multifaceted problems which need to be addressed in a manner that

utilizes the best resources and coordinated efforts of School District personnel, law enforcement agencies, and families. The Board further believes that school administrators and local law enforcement officials must work together to provide for the safety and welfare of students while they are at school or a school-sponsored activity or while enroute to or from school, or a school-sponsored activity. The Board also believes that the first step in addressing school crime and violence is to assess the extent and nature of the problem(s) or threat, and then plan and implement strategies that promote school safety and minimize the likelihood of school crime and violence.

The Superintendent shall convene a meeting for the purpose of conferring regarding the *School Safety Information Policy Agreement*, and making modifications as deemed necessary and proper; discussing additional training that might be needed; and, discussing any other such related matters as may be deemed to be necessary by the participants. Participants in this meeting shall include the Superintendent, members of the Board, the County Prosecutor or his/her designee, and representatives from the local law enforcement agencies. The following may also be invited to participate in the meeting:

- A. building administrators;
- B. teachers;
- C. parents;
- D. Fire Marshal or his/her designee;
- E. representative(s) from emergency medical services;
- F. representative(s) from county emergency management service agency;
- G. School Resource Officer.

The Superintendent shall make a report to the Board about all such reviews and recommend the approval and adoption of any proposed revisions or additions.

Drug-Free School Zone (SB Policy 5530)

The possession, use, or sale of tobacco, vapes, alcohol, or other drugs (including over the counter medications) is prohibited on school grounds. Students who bring these items to school (including matches, lighters, etc.) will be subject to the State of Michigan law as well as suspension or expulsion from school. Possessing, using, or being under the influence of any illegal or controlled drug substance or over the counter medication or any substance represented to be a controlled substance (i.e., caffeine pills, look-alike drugs, etc.) may result in disciplinary action and/or a referral to the police.

Injury and Illness

All injuries must be reported to Ruth Fox Middle School staff member. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether or not the students should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

Homebound Instruction

The district shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the Lapeer County Intermediate School District. The district will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this state, parent, student or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

Enrolling in the School

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document,
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- C. proof of residency (2),
- D. proof of immunizations.

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. The guidance counselor will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures. Our homeless Liaison (Ashley Cooper) can be reached at acooper@nbbbronzos.net or by calling 810-688-3001

New students eighteen (18) years of age or older are not required to be accompanied by a parent when enrolling. When residing with a parent, these students are encouraged to include the parents in the enrollment process. When conducting themselves in school, adult students have the responsibilities of both student and parent.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that

student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the superintendent determines to be relevant.

Scheduling and Assignment

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are also available to all students through Family Access (skyward.) Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the Ruth Fox Middle School office. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need to pass prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a pass or schedule change.

International students and foreign-exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

Early Dismissal

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent, guardian or a person whose name is on the emergency information in the School office or the parent coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

Parents needing to communicate a message to their child with regards to end of the day transportation needs should make every attempt to notify the office by 1:30 pm on the day of the change. This will ensure that office staff has enough time to communicate the message to the student. We cannot guarantee messages received after 1:30 p.m. can be delivered to the student prior to the end of the school day.

Transfer Out of the District

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the Ruth Fox Middle School office for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

Withdrawal From School

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of their parents.

Immunizations

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from state immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with state law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the Ruth Fox Middle School office.

Emergency Medical Authorization

The board has established a policy that every student must have an emergency medical authorization form completed and signed by their parent or guardian in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities. The emergency medical authorization form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each year. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student's educational program.

Use of Medications

No student is allowed to provide or sell any type of medication to another student. Violations of this rule will be considered violations of Policy **5530** - Drug Prevention and of the Student Code of Conduct and will be disciplined.

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The medication request and authorization form must be filed with the
- C. office before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours
- D. All medications must be registered with the main office and be presented in their original container.
- E. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
- F. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- G. The parents shall have the sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself or herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- H. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

Asthma Inhalers and Epi-pens

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication plan developed by appropriate school staff and updated annually. In both cases the proper paperwork must also be on file in the main office.

Non-prescription (Over-the-Counter) Medications

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form, which is available at the school office. It is recommended that a physician authorize the use of nonprescription medication; however, it is not required. All other conditions described above under use of medication will also apply to non-prescribed medications.

Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests

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

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, Covid-19, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines. Ruth Fox Middle School will continue to follow Lapeer County Health Department mandates as they are made available.

Health Services (SB Policy 5310)

In compliance with law, the Board of Education may require students to submit to periodic health examinations to:

- A. protect the school community from the spread of communicable disease;
- B. determine that each student's participation in health, safety, and physical education courses meets his/her individual needs;
- C. determine that the learning potential of each child is not lessened by a remediable, physical disability.

Any health services program should also include instruction to staff members on the observance of students for conditions that indicate physical defect or disability.

The Board shall directly notify the parents of students, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening is scheduled or expected to be scheduled for students if the examination or screening is: (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a specific student, or other students.

The Lapeer County Health Department performs required hearing and vision screenings to 5th and 7th grade students on a yearly basis. Follow up hearing and vision exams may be scheduled in 6th and 8th grade.

Control of Noncasual-Contact Communicable Diseases

In the case of non-casual-contact, communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV, (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

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

Non-casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

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

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the building principal at (810) 688-4431 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

STUDENT RECORDS and FERPA

Semester grades are recorded on your permanent school records.

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the Board nor its employee's shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to

access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:

- A. a student's name;
- B. major field of study;
- C. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- D. height if member of an athletic team;
- E. weight, if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate;
- F. years of attendance
- G. date of graduation;
- H. awards received
- I. honor rolls;
- J. scholarships;
- K. school photographs or videos of students participating in school events or activities

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

The Board shall provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information (names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students) as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. "Armed forces of the United States" means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student's directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives, then the officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student's directory information. (SB Policy 8330)

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the school district is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the Ruth Fox Middle School office. You will be given an

appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent will be informed of their right to a hearing on that matter,

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the district has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the district's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student and/or their parents, to submit to or participate in any survey analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

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

Consistent with the PPRA and board policy, the superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

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

The superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the district of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the district, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose; and
- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

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

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

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses: FERPA@ED.Gov; and PPRA@ED.Gov.

Student Fees, Fines and Supplies

Ruth Fox Middle School charges specific fees for some non-curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss of damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit.

The district will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or their family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes.

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment, including but not limited to: books, lockers, desks, tables, chairs, computers/chromebooks and other materials located on school property determined to be damaged by the student. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

Late fees or fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly as others may need their use.

Failure to pay fines, fees or charges in one building will transfer within the district to the next building and/or grade level.

Student Fund-Raising

All student fundraising, either sponsored by the school or within an independent organization, must be approved by the building administrator or other district administrator prior to the fundraising start date.

Student Valuables

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The school cannot be responsible for their safekeeping and will not be liable for loss of damage to personal valuables.

Review of Instructional Materials and Activities

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction dealing with health and reproductive education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities (SB Policy 2266)

The Board of Education of the North Branch School District (hereinafter referred to as "the Board" or "the District") does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), in its education programs or activities, and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The Board is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

The Board prohibits Sexual Harassment that occurs within its education programs and activities. When the District has actual knowledge of Sexual Harassment in its education program or activity against a person in the United States, it shall promptly respond in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.

Pursuant to its Title IX obligations, the Board is committed to eliminating Sexual Harassment and will take appropriate action when an individual is determined responsible for violating this policy. Board employees, students, third-party vendors and contractors, guests, and other members of the School District community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions set forth in this policy. The Board will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the District's education programs and activities.

Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information (SB Policy 2416)

_____The Board of Education respects the privacy rights of parents and their children. No student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

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

Fire, Lock Down and Tornado Drills

The school complies with all building safety laws and will conduct all drills in accordance with state law. Fire, tornado, and lock down drills are held periodically throughout the school year. The route for leaving the building in case of fire or tornado are posted in each room. Students will walk quickly, quietly and orderly out the assigned exit and to their assigned area. For lock down drills, students will follow ALICE procedures. All drills are to be practiced as if it were a real situation.

The State of Michigan requires the following drills to be completed throughout the year (Public Act 12-2014):

- Fire - 5 Drills
- Lockdown - 3 Drills
- Tornado - 2 Drills

Emergency Closings and Delays

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will post this information on our school's website as well as Facebook and other social media sites.

The school may also send out a mass communication via telephone, e-mail or text message using Skyalert or other media relaying school closing or delay information.

Please do not call the school. If no report is heard or message received it should be assumed that school will be in session.

Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards

The school is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the North Branch Area Schools District's Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the board offices upon request.

Visitors

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the main office upon entering the school to obtain a visitor's pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, they should call or e-mail for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time. Additionally:

- Volunteers must complete the NBAS Central Registry Clearance form, and receive clearance from NBAS Central Administration prior to volunteering.
- Student visitors will not be permitted during the school day or at middle school dances.
- Additional Visitor Policies can be found via [NBAS School Board Policy - 1950](#)

Use of Library

General rules for library usage include:.

- A. Books may be checked out for two weeks.

- B. All materials are due on Fridays, unless school is not in session. If school is not in session on a Friday the materials are due the following scheduled school day. Materials can always be turned in early!
- C. Any student with an overdue book may be denied circulation privileges until the book is returned.
- D. Any book lost or damaged will be charged to the student.
- E. Reference books and magazines will not be circulated except with permission of the librarian.

Cafeteria

Expectations for the cafeteria:

- A. Walk to the cafeteria
- B. Wait in line outside the cafeteria against the north wall of the hallway in a single file line for hot lunch; keeping voices down and hands and feet to yourself
- C. Cold lunch may enter and choose a seat
- D. Once students choose a seat for the day, they are to remain in that seat
- E. Clean up after yourself; walk to the trash cans do not throw items from your seat!
- F. Ask permission to use the restroom
- G. Tables will be dismissed one at a time by the lunch monitors once the area is determined to be clean
- H. Refusal to comply with reasonable requests will be considered insubordination and disciplinary action may be considered

Assemblies

Assembly programs including pep assemblies, speakers, are held in the gymnasium throughout the school year. An admission fee may be charged or specific guidelines to participate may be instituted, depending on the nature of the presentation. Students on social probation will not be eligible to participate. Students will be addressed via the PA system to report to the gymnasium with their classroom teacher. Directions will be provided to each classroom teacher on where their particular students are expected to sit.

Students are expected to behave as a polite audience using applause to show appreciation. Booing, whistling, stomping of feet are not acceptable forms of applause. Students who make poor choices during an assembly will be asked to leave and may be subject to disciplinary action. Attending an assembly is a privilege.

Student Insurance

The school district offers all students the opportunity to purchase supplemental accident insurance. The insurance is available in a variety of plans. Information is generally sent home with all students at the beginning of the school year; however it is also available in the office of each school building. Parents should be aware that the school does not, under any circumstance, provide medical insurance for children in the event of an injury at school. You are encouraged to consider this supplemental insurance plan, especially if you do not have other medical insurance protection.

Student Sales

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the building principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

Lost and Found

The lost and found areas are in the $\frac{5}{8}$ and $\frac{7}{8}$ commons areas. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each quarter.

Advertising Outside Activities

Announcements or advertisements for outside activities may not be posted without receiving prior approval from the building principal or other district administrator.

Field Trips

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

Expectations of representing the school building, school district and community are to be adhered to on such trips. Failure to represent these entities appropriately may result in disciplinary action.

Grades

The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which a student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. Each teacher may place a different emphasis on these areas in determining a grade and will so inform the students at the beginning of the course work. If a student is not sure how their grade will be determined they should ask the teacher.

Grading Periods and Reporting of Student Progress

Students shall receive a report card at the end of each semester, this may be hard copy or virtual, which is approximately an eighteen week period. The report card will indicate their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term.

Progress reports are mid-term grades at approximately the 9th week of the semester. These will be available through your child's student access via Skyward or may be sent home upon parent request. North Branch Area Schools, including Ruth Fox Middle School, uses SkyWard to record and monitor student progress. Students and parents have a family access username and password to access information regarding their student's academic progress. Contact Ruth Fox Middle School if you are in need of family access login information or training on how to use the resource.

Parents and school personnel are encouraged to develop and maintain an open two-way communication regarding student progress. Teachers may be contacted via e-mail, telephone (you may have to leave a message), and with an appointment a face-to-face meeting.

Promotion, Placement, and Retention

Promotion to the next grade or level is based on the following criteria:

- A. current level of achievement
- B. potential for success at the next level
- C. emotional, physical and/or social maturity

Middle school students who fail two of the four terms per year in any one subject and/or three (3) or more E's on their report card are at risk of retention or conditional promotion. Opportunities may be offered to make up these courses through correspondence programs or summer school. Successful, documented completion of such program may allow the student to be promoted to the next grade or level.

Recognition of Student Achievement

There are times when it is necessary to recognize student achievement and successes in academic areas and extra-curricular areas. These methods of recognition include but are not limited to: written and verbal praise, certificates, trophies and/or medals.

Honor roll is published at the end of each semester for those students maintaining a "B" average or higher.

Attendance awards will be presented at the end of the school year to those students with perfect attendance and those missing three or less days.

Homework

The assignment of homework is at the discretion of each individual teacher. Each teacher should review their policy including expectations of homework completion with students at the beginning of the course work. Students and parents alike should expect that homework will be a part of the middle school experience. Any questions regarding homework should be directed towards each student's individual teachers.

Academic Integrity/Honesty

Permission must be obtained before collaborating with AI chatbots (like ChatGPT) on any assignment. When AI is permitted to be used to enhance or elevate creative work, all text generated by AI must be cited.

Mobile Device Handbook (I to I Policy)

At North Branch Area Schools, it is our belief that technology will help to provide learners with a scalable and sustainable 21st Century learning environment that will have a positive impact on student achievement and literacy for all, while preparing students to be college, career and life ready.

In order to accomplish this feat, Ruth Fox Middle School will provide a device for every student (Ipad or Chromebook) to help build their knowledge as they move through Middle School. These devices will be the responsibility of the student, and should be taken home daily for charging and returned the next day.

The following link will take you to the full [NBAS Student Mobile Device Handbook](#).

Computer Technology and Networks

An Acceptable Use Policy or AUP, must be on file for every student before the end of the first week of school to ensure the use of the school's computers and network. To view the district's AUP, visit the district website at www.nbbrncos.net. Failure to abide by the conditions set forth in the AUP will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the loss of privileges in using the schools computers and network.

Failure to return the AUP by the end of the first week of school, will prohibit students from participating in activities which require the use of school computers and/or the network until the AUP can be processed by staff.

Examples of common violations of the AUP includes, but are not limited to:

Tier 1 offenses: music, email, video, instant messaging/chat, gaming and others deemed inappropriate or distracting by staff

Tier 2 offenses: involvement of violence, profanity, nudity, weapons or drug references and others as deemed inappropriate or distracting by staff

Tier 3 offenses: hacking, downloading, bullying and others deemed inappropriate or distracting by staff

Consequences for AUP violations include, but are not limited to:

1st offense

Tier 1: one day loss of computer privileges

Tier 2: one week loss of computer privileges

Tier 3: minimum two week loss of computer privileges

2nd offense

Tier 1: three day loss of computer privileges

Tier 2: minimum two week loss of computer privileges and possible detention or suspension

Tier 3: loss of computer privileges for the remainder of the semester and a 3 day out of school suspension and placed on social probation

3rd offense

Tier 1: two week loss of computer privilege and possible detention or suspension

Tier 2: loss of computer privileges for the remainder of the semester and a 3 day out of school suspension and placed on social probation

Tier 3: loss of computer privileges for the remainder of the school year, a minimum 3 day out of school suspension, possible referral to the superintendent and/or board of education, possible report filed with law enforcement, and placed on social probation for the remainder of the school year.

Student Assessment

All Ruth Fox Middle School students will participate in an appropriate version of the identified state wide assessment. Additional group tests may be given to students to monitor progress and determine mastery levels. These tests are used to help staff determine instructional needs.

Classroom tests will be used to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected and prepared by the classroom teachers to assess how well students have achieved specific objectives and content.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and

instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the building principal at (810) 688-4431 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

Athletics

Ruth Fox Middle School provides a variety of athletic opportunities in which students may participate providing they meet any eligibility requirements that may apply. A student's use of a performance enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and participation. The following is a list of activities currently being offered. For further information, contact the building principal or district athletic director.

7th Grade: cheerleading, boys' and girls' basketball, girls' volleyball, track, cross-country and wrestling

8th Grade: cheerleading, boys' and girls' basketball, girls' volleyball, football, track, cross-country and wrestling

Athletes represent the school building, school district and community. Student athletes are expected to represent these entities in a responsible and respectful manner. All athletes are expected to meet set standards as outlined in the athletic handbook and this student handbook in order to be eligible to participate.

Middle school athletes who are placed on social probation will not be allowed to participate or continue to participate in athletic events until they earn their way off of social probation over a period of 6 weeks.

All students must have a physical signed by a physician on file before being allowed to practice or participate.

Student Employment

The school does not encourage students to take jobs outside of the school that could interfere with their success in school. If a student believes that they must maintain a job in addition to attending school, they must first contact the school office to discuss any legal requirements and obtain any needed documents.

Student Council Officers and Representatives

Officers and representatives may be elected in the spring or fall. These officers, with approval of and under the direction of their sponsor(s), will plan various activities for the student body. Officers and representatives must demonstrate leadership, responsibility and maintain a "C" average. The following criteria have been established for any student elected as a student council member and may result in dismissal for the student who cannot meet the criteria throughout the elected officer's year:

- A. receive a passing grade in all classes
- B. exemplary attendance
- C. no office referrals

School Dance Guidelines-

- 1) Outside guests will not be permitted to attend Ruth Fox Middle School dances. Only Ruth Fox Middle School students are permitted to enter school dances. Any parent or guardian planning on

attending, volunteering for, or chaperoning a student activity must complete a clearance request and receive approval prior to the event from the building principal.

- 2) After arrival at a Ruth Fox Middle School dance or other activity, any student who leaves will not be permitted to re-enter. Students who leave early may need to call parents in order to leave early.
- 3) The school dress-code is to be adhered to at all dances and school activities. Exceptions may be made only by the building principal.
- 4) Students must be in school all day on the day of the event in order to attend the activity, unless the principal has granted prior approval.
- 5) A lack of available chaperones may cause the dance or activity to be canceled.
- 6) Transportation home at the conclusion of the activity must be arranged in advance. Students not picked up promptly at the end of an activity or dance will not be allowed to attend future activities or dances.
- 7) Any student who has been referred to Truancy will not be invited to participate.

Attendance Policy

In an effort to encourage students to attend school everyday and to encourage parents to help us make attending school a priority, RFMS has adopted the following initiatives for the 2023-2024 school year.

Rewards for good attendance may include:

- PBIS rewards events
- school dances
- School wide celebrations
- Class and grade competitions
- Prizes and drawings throughout the year

★ ALL extra-curricular events and school sponsored activities are tied to attendance, grades and behavior. With regard to attendance, students may only attend these events if they have 10 or less absences, with administrative discretion. If a student is referred or part of the Truancy program, they may be excluded from after-school activities and events.

Opportunities to make up missed learning and time:

- During recess and lunch (for 5th and 6th graders)
- MTSS time
- Other times as agreed upon by teacher.

Procedures

When a child is absent, parents should call the school to verify they are aware of the absence.

810-688-3284.

Both verified as well as unverified absences have a negative impact on your child's education and potentially puts them behind in their classes and behind in the knowledge of content. Excessive

absences may lead to a Truancy program referral to help families overcome barriers for successful student attendance.

Absence:

- **5th and 6th** - any time missed from school for more than 1 hour.
- **7th and 8th** - any time missed from a period more than 15 minutes.

Verified Absences:

- Funerals
- Parent notification of illness (School reserves the right to request doctor verification of excessive parent verified illnesses - [SB Policy 5200](#))
- Doctor's notes
- School related
- Military attendance

Verified Absences absences are not excused absences. Verified absences count towards a student's totals days absent. The following days are not counted toward Truancy: doctor's notes, funeral, school related, military attendance. Note, School Related requests may be denied due to excessive previous attendance

Unverified Absences: Those absences which are **not** explained/verified by a parent or guardian, are subject to a contact from the school and/or investigation as to the reason of absence. Excessive unverified absences may be subject to loss of after school activity privileges, or referral to Truancy.

Tardies: missing less than 15 minutes of class time in a day.

A student who arrives late to school or after 7:15 am must 1) report to the office, 2) be signed in, 3) be permitted to class. From 7:16 to 7:31 the students will be marked as tardy. Students who arrive to school after 7:31 will be marked as absent. Students who leave school before 2:05 will be marked as absent. Tardies do not count as absences. However, students with excessive tardies may not be allowed to attend school activities, parties or celebrations.

Excessive Tardies: 7 cumulative tardies or more per term. If students have excessive tardies (7 or more tardies per term) they **may** have to serve a 30 minute after school detention for every tardy beyond 7.

* Tardy detentions are to be made up within the week that the tardy detention was given. Failure to serve tardy detention results in a Saturday Detention and 2 points. Failure to serve the Saturday Detentions will result in In-School Suspension and 2 points.

Make up tests and other school work:

Students who are absent from school for any reason, will be expected to make up the learning that was missed during their absence. Students will be expected to return makeup work to the appropriate teacher within a given number of days equal to the amount of time that was missed. Ex. if a student misses school Monday and Tuesday, the student has two days to return the work. All missing work in the

scenario would be due to the teachers by Friday. If work was assigned before the absence with an established due date, students may not be given more time due to absence.

Student attendance at after school events/ sporting events when absent:

Only those students who had a non-illness related verified school absence may attend after school events.

- Students will not be permitted to practice or play in sporting events if they are absent from school (except in the case of non-illness related verified absences).
- Students may not attend *any* after school events on school grounds if they are absent from school (except in the case of non-illness related verified absences).

Suspension From School

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused (verified) or unexcused (unverified). Suspensions of three or more days, office staff will make arrangements for work to be collected on behalf of the student so they may work during their suspension.

5610 - EMERGENCY REMOVAL, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION OF NONDISABLED STUDENTS

A student may be removed from the classroom, suspended or expelled for persistent disobedience or gross misconduct. A student may not be expelled or excluded from the regular school program based on pregnancy status.

The Board of Education recognizes that exclusion from the educational programs of the District, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in this District and one that cannot be imposed without due process since exclusion deprives a child of the right to an education. The Board also recognizes that it may be necessary for a teacher to remove a student from class for conduct which is disruptive to the learning environment, and that such removals are not subject to a prior hearing, provided said removal is for a period of less than twenty-four (24) hours. However, if an emergency removal may result in a suspension, then due process must be ensured.

For purposes of this policy, "suspension" shall be either short-term (not more than ten (10) days) or long-term suspension of a student from a regular District program.

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise defined in Federal and/or State law and Policy 5610.01, "expulsion" shall be the permanent exclusion of a student from the schools of this District. Students who are expelled permanently may petition for reinstatement under the provisions stipulated in Policy 5610.01.

The Superintendent may recommend to the Board a long-term suspension or that a student be expelled.

In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, appropriate due process rights described in Policy 5611 must be observed. The principal or designee shall check to make sure the student is not classified as disabled under Section 504. Consideration for restorative justice will also be made. [Restorative Practices](#); The school shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion (MCL 380.1310c). The district emphasizes restorative practices in order to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions.

No student, otherwise eligible for attendance, shall be excluded from a District program unless that student has substantially interfered with the maintenance of good order and/or the educational environment, or unless it is necessary to protect that student's or other students' physical or emotional safety and well-being.

A student may be removed from a class, subject, or activity for one (1) day by his/her teacher for certain conduct as specified in the Code of Conduct, or the student may be given a short-term suspension by the Superintendent or the building principal or designee. A student so removed will be allowed to attend other classes taught by other teachers during the term of the one (1) day removal. A student removed from the same class for ten (10) days will receive a due process hearing for each suspension beyond ten (10) days, consistent with required due process for long-term suspensions. The Board designates the Superintendent as its representative at any hearings regarding the appeal of a suspension.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy which shall include:

- A. promulgation of standards of behavior to all students in accordance with Board policy on student discipline;
- B. procedures that ensure due process

Make-Up Tests and Other School Work

Students with verified (excused) absences or serving suspension shall be given the opportunity to make-up work, including classroom tests that have been missed. Students will be expected to return makeup work from an excused (verified) absence or suspension to the appropriate teacher within a given number of days equal to the amount of time that was missed.

If a student is absent on the day a state-wide or other standardized test is given, the office will contact the student upon their return to make arrangements to complete the test.

Students must take the initiative to ask their teachers what work has been missed after an absence.

If a student is absent two or more consecutive days parents may request homework by calling the main office. Homework requests will not be accepted for a single absence.

Student Attendance at School Events

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible without interfering with their schoolwork and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.

Students planning to attend after school events need to make proper transportation arrangements as they will not be permitted to remain in the school building without adequate and/or prearranged supervision with prior approval from the building principal between the end of the school day and the scheduled start

time of the after school event. Failure to comply may jeopardize the student's ability to attend after school activities and may result in disciplinary action.

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening activities as nonparticipants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that a parent or adult chaperone accompany them when they attend the event. The school will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without a chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in an after school sponsored activity. Students must comply with the code of conduct regardless of the location. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Code of Conduct

A major component of the educational program at Ruth Fox Middle School is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Each student shall be expected to:

- A. abide by national, state, and local laws as well as the rules of the school
- B. respect the civil rights of others
- C. act courteously to adults and fellow students
- D. be prompt and attentive in class
- E. work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability or ethnic background
- F. complete assigned tasks on time and as directed
- G. help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly and productive
- H. act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, school and community

Dress and Grooming

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion that disrupts the educational process, presents a safety risk, or is not appropriate in the judgment of the administration will not be permitted.

The following general dress guidelines must be adhered to and are applied equally to male and female students:

Shirts

- a. Must be sufficient to cover the body and under garments.
 - i. Shirts that are low cut, midriff-baring, open-back, side-baring arm holes or see-through may not be worn. Shirts must touch/overlap bottoms.
 - ii. Shirt straps should be a minimum of 3 fingers wide. Any shirt straps narrower must be covered by another appropriate article of clothing.
- b. Shirts may not contain obscene language, weapons, inappropriate gestures, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or have sexual references or innuendos.
- c. Outdoor coats may not be worn in the classroom. Light jackets and jean jackets are

permitted.

Bottoms - We understand all bodies are different and clothing fits individuals differently.

- a. Bottoms are to be worn so that underwear and/or buttocks are not visible.
 - i. Shorts need a 3" inseam.
 - ii. Pants, shorts, leggings or skirts can not have holes above the 3" inseam.
- b. Shorts need to be visible below tops.
- c. Pajama Pants are not appropriate school wear, unless it is a special theme day.
- d. Sweatpants and athletic pants with pockets may be worn as daily attire

Shoes

- a. Shoes must be worn at all times for student safety.
 - i. Bedroom shoes/slippers are NOT allowed.
- b. Athletic shoes may be required for Physical Education classes

Accessories

Head Coverings

- a. Bandanas may not be worn on the head, tied around the leg or hanging out of pants pockets.
- b. Head bands are to not exceed 1.5 inches and must serve a functional purpose
- c. Head coverings exceptions can be granted for religious or medical reasons by the administration.

Hats

- a. Hats and hoods are not allowed between the "arrival bell" to the "dismissal bell." Hats are to be stored in lockers.
- b. Hats are allowed on special occasion "hat days" inside the building.
- c. 5th and 6th graders are allowed to carry their weather appropriate hats to the cafeteria to be worn on the playground/outside only.

Flags

- a. Are not to be worn as clothing and are not permissible during the school day, unless approved by the teacher for an academic assignment or school administration.

Dress Consequences

Students unable to follow the dress code rules will be subject to disciplinary action.

1st offense = documented and asked to change clothes or call home for appropriate clothing

2nd offense = documented and asked to change clothes or call home for appropriate clothing, awarded 1-3 discipline point

3rd offense = documented and asked to change clothes or call home for appropriate clothing, awarded 2 discipline points and subject to a one or two day suspension or alternative disciplinary action.

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

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Communication Devices

Ruth Fox Middle School is an "Away for the Day" campus, as it relates to personal communication devices (PCDs). All students may not use PCD's during the instructional day (First bell to last bell). Use of PCDs, except approved by a teacher or administrator, at another time is prohibited and they must be turned off and stored in lockers. ~~out of sight.~~

Technology including, but not limited to, PCDs intended and actually used for instructional purposes (e.g., taking notes, recording classroom lectures, writing papers) may ~~will~~ be permitted, as approved by the classroom teacher or the building principal.

For purposes of this policy, "personal communication device" includes computers, tablets (e.g., iPads and similar devices), electronic readers ("e-readers"; e.g., Kindles and similar devices), cell/smartphones (e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Android devices, Windows Mobile devices, etc.), bluetooth headphones, and cellular smart watches. Students may not use PCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school. Students may use PCDs while riding to and from school on a school bus or other Board-provided vehicles or on a school bus or Board-provided vehicle during school-sponsored activities, at the discretion of the bus driver, classroom teacher and/or sponsor/advisor/coach. Distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated.

Also, during after school activities, PCDs shall be powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored out of sight when directed by the administrator or sponsor.

Under certain circumstances (ex. medically necessary), a student may keep his/her PCD "On" with prior approval from the building principal.

Except as authorized by a teacher, administrator or IEP team, students are prohibited from using PCDs during the school day, including while off-campus on a field trip, to capture, record and/or transmit the words or sounds (i.e., audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person. Using a PCD to capture, record and/or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without proper consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted. Students who violate this provision and/or use a PCD to violate the privacy rights of another person may have their PCD confiscated and held until a parent/guardian picks it up. If the violation involves potentially illegal activity the confiscated-PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement.

PCDs, including but not limited to those with cameras, may not be activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include, but are not limited to, classrooms, gymnasiums, locker rooms, shower facilities, rest/bathrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or

degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The Superintendent and building principals are authorized to determine other specific locations and situations where use of a PCD is absolutely prohibited.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property.

Students may not use a PCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. See Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior. In particular, students are prohibited from using PCDs to: (1) transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive, or sexually explicit or that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based upon their race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, or political beliefs; and (2) engage in "sexting" - i.e., sending, receiving, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form. Violation of these prohibitions shall result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, such actions will be reported to local law enforcement and child services as required by law.

Students are also prohibited from using a PCD to capture, record, and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using PCDs to receive such information.

Possession of a PCD by a student is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise abuses this privilege.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD. The building principal will also refer the matter to law enforcement or child services if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g., child pornography, sexting). Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the PCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed, unless the violation involves potentially illegal activity in which case the PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement. A confiscated device will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the building's central office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian or turned-over to law enforcement. School officials will not search or otherwise tamper with PCDs in District custody unless they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of the law or other school rules. Any search will be conducted in accordance with Policy [5771](#) – Search and Seizure. If multiple offenses occur, a student may lose his/her privilege to bring a PCD to school for a designated length of time or on a permanent basis.

A person who discovers a student using a PCD in violation of this policy is required to report the violation to the building principal.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their PCDs. The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse or unauthorized use of, PCDs brought onto its property.

Parents/Guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.

Students may use school phones to contact parents/guardians during the school day.

Violation of these guidelines will result in:

- First Offense – PCD will be confiscated and taken to the office where it will be held until the end of the school day.
- Second Offense –device is confiscated and a parent/guardian is contacted to pick up the phone and up to 3 discipline points may be awarded. Electronic device will be held until a parent comes to pick it up.
- Third Offense –device is confiscated and parent is contacted to pick up the device. Discipline may include after school or Saturday detention and 1-3 discipline points awarded.
- Fourth Offense –device is confiscated and parent is contacted to pick up the device. Discipline may include detention, Saturday detention and/or suspension of 1-3 days in addition to 3-5 discipline points awarded. PCD privileges may be revoked.

**** Refusal to turn off the electronic device or turn it over to a staff member making such a request may result in an office referral, discipline points and appropriate discipline for student insubordination.**

Tobacco

A student will not use or possess tobacco in any area under the control of a school district, including all activities or events supervised by the school district. This policy includes, but is not limited to the following: chew, cigars, cigarettes, hookah use, loose tobacco, e-cigarettes, snuf, orbs, and strips. Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies to the use or possession of tobacco product by students in District buildings, on District property (owned or leased), on District buses, and at any District-related event and when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. Use of tobacco; shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes, inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, or pipe, or any other lighted or heated product containing, made, or derived from nicotine, tobacco, marijuana, or other plant, whether natural or synthetic, that is intended for inhalation (use of a tobacco product includes using an electronic smoking device). The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other smoking paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy. [] 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.

Weapons

It is the policy of North Branch Area Schools that any student who possesses a weapon at school shall be expelled. Although the expulsion is permanent, students are eligible to apply for reinstatement after 180 days (or 90 days for students in grade 5 or below). The policy applies to school buildings, buses, athletic fields, and school grounds.

A weapon is defined as a “firearm, gun revolver, pistol, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife, pocket knife opened by mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles.” A student expelled under this policy is not eligible to enroll in any other public school and the expulsion becomes part of their permanent school record. The school is required to report the incident to the local law enforcement agency and to refer the student to the appropriate social service or mental health agency.

This policy implements federal and state legislation. It is designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees, and visitors.

Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence: Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

Hazing

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any district sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for the purpose of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by and individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- A. Illegal activity, such as drinking and drugs;
- B. Physical punishment or infliction of pain;
- C. Intentional humiliation or embarrassment
- D. Dangerous activity;
- E. Activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress
- F. Forced detention or kidnapping; undressing or otherwise exposing initiatives.

Administrators, faculty members, or other employees of the district shall be alert particularly to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed and order to end all hazing activities and/or planned hazing activities immediately. All hazing activities shall be reported to the Superintendent. Students,

administrators, faculty members who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be held personally liable for civil or criminal penalties.

Anti-Harassment

Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment 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 would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to any Ruth Fox Middle School staff member or may report it directly to the guidance counselor at Ruth Fox Middle School, phone (810) 688-4431.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

- A. submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- B. submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- C. the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

- A. verbal harassment or abuse;
- B. pressure for sexual activity;
- C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- D. unwelcome touching;
- E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety;
- G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- H. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

Bullying

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures,

comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

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. 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 procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Reporting

The District shall report incidents of bullying to the Department of Education on an annual basis according to the form and procedures established by the Department of Education.

Should this Policy be amended or otherwise modified, the District shall submit a copy of the amended or modified Policy to the Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days after adopting the modification.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor 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.

A student may also submit a report or complaint to any of the above designated individuals through email, voicemail, regular mail or by leaving a sealed note addressed to the individual at that person's office or desk. The student may submit a report or complaint anonymously, but this may affect the ability to fully investigate the matter, when the complaining student is not available to provide additional information during the course of the investigation.

The identity of a student who reports bullying, hazing or aggressive behavior, as well as those students who provide information during an investigation will remain confidential to the extent possible and to the extent allowable by law. Only school personnel directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or responsible for remedying any violations will be provided access to the identity of the complaining student(s) and student witnesses, and then only to the extent necessary to effectively deal with the situation.

The identity of the student who files the report or complaint will not be voluntarily shared with the alleged perpetrator(s) or the witnesses unless the student (and his/her parent/guardian) give written permission to do so. Any investigation report will likewise not be voluntarily produced with the names of the reporting student(s) or witnesses. However, under certain circumstances, the District may be required by law to disclose the report and/or the student(s) names. Also, under certain circumstances, the identity of the reporting student may become obvious even without disclosure by school personnel.

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 shall be made to those identified above. While reports may be made anonymously, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report without other corroborating evidence.

The Principal (or other designated administrator) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit and should be completed within three (3) school days after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include 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 or other appropriate 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.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying (i.e. any electronic communication, including, but not limited to electronically transmitted acts, such as internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its

subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

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

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

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:

Anti-Harassment, see Policy 5517;

Hazing, see Policy 5516.

Bicycles

Students riding bicycles to school must park them in the rack provided as soon as they arrive at school. The bikes are to stay there until the student is leaving for the day. Bikes should be secured to the rack with a bicycle lock to ensure safety of the student's property. All bicyclists are asked to obey the following guidelines:

- A. Ride in accordance with state and local laws (on the same side of the road as the flow of traffic)
- B. Do not ride on the lawns, or across parking lots
- C. Do not block traffic

Safety Concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards, scooters or any other form of personal transportation device in the school hallways or district pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within the buildings and grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline

Discipline Philosophy

Discipline problems in school can be broken down into three basic types:

- a. Dangerous or illegal acts,
- b. Acts which disrupt the normal activities of the school, or
- c. Persistent misbehavior indicating a poor attitude toward the school.

Both parents and students must understand that the school has to respond to each of these types of misconduct in order to protect the safety and rights of our students and staff. Schools are locations in which the primary emphasis must be placed on learning. The students who misbehave are not only creating life habits, which are unsound, but they are also interfering with the educational growth of others. The Board of Education fully realizes that young people of this age can and do make mistakes in judgment. Because of this realization, the following discipline policy has been established as a means of:

- Allowing for some mistakes without serious consequences
- Disciplining students for serious misbehavior
- Dealing with persistent rule violators

Students at Ruth Fox Middle School are expected to exhibit good citizenship while they are under the jurisdiction of the school. This includes: on the way to and from school, during the day, during lunch period, and at all athletic and social events sponsored by the school.

Violation of school discipline policy will result in an assessment of points to the student involved in the violation. The number of points assessed and the total number of points a student has accumulated will determine the disciplinary action to be taken by the school. The number of points assessed for each violation is based upon the seriousness of the violation. Parents can expect to be notified by mail and/or phone of all rule violations, which result in points being assessed as well as being made aware of the possible consequences of continued misbehavior. Due process will be provided.

The board of education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The code includes types of misconduct that will cause a student to be subject to disciplinary action. The board has also adopted the list of behaviors and terms contained in the list.

It is the school staff's responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the school's staff and administration. District policy ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after a review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

DISCIPLINE POINTS

Examples of unacceptable behavior, though not all-inclusive, are listed below the corresponding number of discipline points, which may be assessed for each occurrence:

Level 1 Offenses: (0-5 Discipline Points)

Level 1 offenses are situations that may be handled in the classroom; or if the behavior warrants, the student may be referred to the Ruth Fox office for further discipline. Depending on severity or repetition, a Level I violation may be reclassified as a Level II or Level III violation.

- Violation of dress code (Student will be asked to change – see Dress and Appearance section of handbook.)
- Displays of affection beyond the holding of hands and friendship hugs (no long embraces of a personal nature or kisses, etc.)
- Being in areas designated as off limits before, during, or after the school day
- Habitual failure to bring appropriate materials to class
- Endangering the safety of others by tripping, kicking, pushing, throwing objects, etc. (More severe action will be taken if there is physical damage or personal injury.)
- Possession or use of PCD such as cell phones, i Pods, mp3 players, personal gaming systems, for any reason other than educational purposes after the first misuse or refusal to turn over a PCD to a staff member.
- Student disorder/demonstration: Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to discipline depending on the level of disruption.
- Out of class or in the halls without a proper pass
- Leaving school without permission and all other forms of unexcused absences
- Boisterous and inappropriate behavior

- Excessive tardiness
- Profanity, vulgarity, or obscene gestures
- Possession of PCD's (phones, electronic devices, etc.) 1st offense
- Sexual Harassment (Level 1) A student will not use words, pictures, objects, gestures, or other actions relating to sexual activity or a person's gender that cause embarrassment, discomfort, or a reluctance to participate in school activities.
- Violation of Cafeteria Rules

School Response to Level 1 Offenses:

School administrators and staff may use appropriate intervention strategies, as determined by local district policies including, but not limited to, staff and student/parent conferences, auxiliary staff intervention and counseling programs, student programs for conflict resolution and peer mediation, and programs for anger management and violence prevention. Any of the following intervention strategies and disciplinary actions may be used:

- Discipline Points
- Administrator/student conference or reprimand;
- Administrator and teacher-parent/guardian conferences;
- Referrals and conferences involving various support staff or agencies;
- Daily/weekly progress reports;
- Behavioral contracts;
- Change in student's class schedule;
- School service assignment;
- Confiscation of inappropriate item;
- Restitution/restoration;
- Before and/or after-school detention;
- Denial of participation in class and/or school activities;
- Saturday detention;
- In-school suspension;
- Other intervention strategies, as needed;
- Restorative Practices: The school shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion (MCL 380.1310c). The district emphasizes restorative practices in order to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions.
- Out-of-school suspension (short-term) from one (1) school day up to and including ten (10) school days;
- Law enforcement agency notification;

Level 2 Offenses: (0-10 Discipline Points)

Level 2 offenses are more serious infractions and are to be reported to the Ruth Fox office immediately. Level 2 offenses accumulate for one year only. Depending upon severity or repetition, a Level 2 violation may be reclassified as a Level 3 violation.

- Possession or use of articles prohibited in school such as but not limited to matches, cigarette lighters, squirt guns, laser pointers, rubber bands and water balloons.
- Profane, obscene, and vulgar materials including but not limited to text, music or electronic media with parental advisory of explicit content, writings, language, and/or gestures, etc.
- Infringement on the rights of others such as extortion of money, materials, favors, etc.

- Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.
- Refusal to follow the reasonable directions, orders, or requests of any school employee
- Display of gang signs or symbols (Items, notebooks, etc. will be taken from the student.)
- Forgery of a parent's, guardian's, teacher's, principal's, or other's signature
- Cheating on tests, exams, or other assigned school work; this includes plagiarism.
- Harassment or bullying
- Destruction of property
- False Identification
- Assault and battery / fighting
- threatening physical harm against any student
- Use or possession of tobacco products (including chew, vape, etc.) in school facilities or on school property (including parking lots and outdoor athletic facilities)
- Sexual Harassment (Level 2) A student will not make unwelcome sexual advances, request sexual favors or engage in verbal communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature with or toward any other student, school district personnel or adult volunteers.
- Theft from another student, teacher, or the school district (Less than \$100)
- Repeated profanity, vulgarity, or obscene gestures
- Spitting on someone or at someone
- Verbal confrontation or threatening behavior
- Lewd and obscene behavior
- Pornography

School Responses to Level 2 Offenses:

Intervention strategies are not limited to those listed herein. Other methods of addressing misconduct may be more appropriate, depending upon the circumstances. Any or all of the following intervention strategies and disciplinary actions may be used:

- Any school response to a Level 1 violation, listed above;
- Discipline Points
- Restorative Practices: The school shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion (MCL 380.1310c). The district emphasizes restorative practices in order to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions.
- Out-of-school suspension (short term) for one (1) school day, up to and including ten (10) school days.
- NOTE: Fighting poses an immediate threat to student safety. In most cases, out-of school suspension is imposed even for a first offense. The length of suspension will depend on severity or repetition.
- Recommendation to the school district board of education or its designees for long-term suspension or expulsion;
- Law enforcement agency notification;

Level 3 Offenses: (5-15 Discipline Points)

Level 3 offenses are major infractions to be reported to the Ruth Fox office immediately. All Level 3 offenses accumulate for the student's middle school career. Depending on severity or repetition, a Level 1 or Level 2 violation may be reclassified as a Level 3.

- Vandalism to school building or property including but not limited to cars in parking lots. (Restitution will be made and contact with police if necessary.)
- Setting false fire alarms
- Possessing, using, or being under the influence of any illegal or controlled drug substance or any substance represented to be a controlled substance (i.e. caffeine pills, look-alike drugs, etc.) This includes the possession of prescription drugs as well as over the counter drugs per our board policy and school code.
- Possessing, using, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage (***Use of Breath-Test Instruments:*** The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol by an outside agency to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test. The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.)
- Possessing or using firecrackers, fireworks, smoke bombs, offensive smelling devices, etc.
- Physical or verbal harassment of others including, but not limited to race, religion, sex, etc. (This is for repeated offenses or severe circumstances.)
- Second offense of harassment or bullying
- Possession of pornography and/or the sharing of pornography – police may be notified and police report may be filed.
- Verbal assault of a staff member
- Theft of over \$100

School Responses to Level 3 Offenses:

Any or all of the following intervention strategies or disciplinary actions may be used:

- Any school response to a Level I or II violation, listed above;
- Discipline Points
- Restorative Practices: The school shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion (MCL 380.1310c). The district emphasizes restorative practices in order to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions.
- Recommendation to the Board of Education or its designee for long-term suspension or expulsion; [NOTE: Drug-related behaviors pose an immediate threat to student safety. In all Level III drug-related cases, out of school suspension is imposed even for the first offense.]
- Placement in an alternative education program or transfer to another building;
- In the event a student is expelled for possession of a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone, arson in a school building or on school grounds, or criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school grounds, the school board shall ensure that, within three days after the expulsion, an official of the school district refers the individual to the appropriate county department of the family independence agency or county community mental health agency, and notifies the individual's parent or legal guardian or, if the individual is at least age 18 or is an emancipated minor, notifies the individual of the referral. (MCL 380.1311[4]).
- Requesting an emotional, behavioral, and/or chemical dependency evaluation and treatment and/or counseling recommendation. The intervention strategy or discipline may require the

student to follow any or all treatment recommendations of the evaluation. The evaluation must be from a source approved by the administration.

Violations warranting immediate suspension, referral to the Board of Education, and police notification are:

- Striking or threatening physical harm against any North Branch Area School employee
- Arson or attempted arson (setting fires)
- Possession, use of, or transference of weapons or articles that can be used as weapons
- Criminal Sexual Conduct in a school building or on school grounds
- Felony - the commission of a criminal act that takes place during the school day and/or on school property that in some cases results in being charged with or convicted of a felony offense

DISCIPLINE POINTS ACCUMULATE LIKE ON A DRIVER'S LICENSE

If and when a student reaches a total of five (5) points, he/she will(may) be subject to a total of two days of suspension from school or an equivalent disciplinary action. Discipline points will continue to accumulate even after disciplinary action has been completed.

When a student reaches a total of ten (10) points, he/she will(may) be subject to a total of five days of suspension or an equivalent disciplinary action. Students with ten (10) points will be placed on social probation and not allowed to participate in sports, class sponsored parties, dances, trips, etc. An accumulation of fifteen (15) disciplinary points will (may) result in a total of ten (10) suspension days or an equivalent disciplinary action.

If and when a student reaches a total of twenty-one (21) points, he/she may be subject to recommendation for a hearing before the Board of Education. If a hearing is held, the Board will act upon a recommendation from the school principal. The most serious recommendation is expulsion from school.

All students begin each new school year with a point total of zero (0) points.

Points may be removed.

If a student goes six (6) weeks without receiving any office referrals, three (3) points will be deducted from his/her accumulation.

The building principal is free to use alternative disciplinary actions.

Nothing in this policy should be construed as being restrictive to the freedom of the principal to take alternative disciplinary actions. The building principal may make use of short-term suspension, detention, social probation, clean-up duty, etc., in addition to the actions as listed in this section.

Alternatives to suspension may not be offered.

There are times and circumstances that necessitate an immediate suspension from school with no alternative disciplinary actions offered. Suspension will become automatic when the time remaining in the school year becomes so short that alternative actions cannot be offered. Suspension will also be used without alternative in instances where the nature of the offense is as gross or serious as to require immediate separation from school for the safety and well-being of both students and staff. Also, students

who violate detention rules, fail to serve detention, or those who face suspension a second time, may not be offered an alternative to suspension from school.

Student Questioning and Confidentiality

In the investigation process, students may be questioned by school officials at any time, without parent notice or consent, consistent with the District's obligation to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations.

Law enforcement officers may be called to the school at the request of school administration. Students questioned by law enforcement or Children's Protective Services will be consistent with NBAS School Board Policy 5540.

Discipline of Student with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Due Process Rights

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

Suspension from School

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After the informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, by phone or in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the Superintendent of Schools. The request for an appeal must be in writing. Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed.

During the appeal process, the student is allowed to remain in school (possibly in the in school suspension setting) unless safety is a factor. If that is the case, the student shall be immediately removed under the Emergency Removal Procedure.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension or after the return to school (depending on the assignment). Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips,

skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

Long-term suspension or expulsion from school

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten [10] days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents that will contain:

- the charge and related evidence
- the time and place of the Board meeting
- the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion;
- a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- a statement that the student and/or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired students or parents;
- a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction;
- the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if Board/hearing officer approved.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Superintendent and the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Ruth Fox Middle School makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the building principal.

Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student lockers, and desks, which are on or in the proximity of school premises under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must

provide the lock's combination or key to the physical education teacher if a gym locker is locked or to the principal if a school locker is locked.

When administrators have individualized reasonable suspicion to believe a search is necessary for a student, they believe it may be credible that the student may possess evidence of a violation of state or federal law, a violation of school rule, or a condition that endangers the safety or health of the students or others. When searching a student, in addition to conducting a normal search, administrators may operate a hand-held wand in order to enable searches to become more accurate, efficient, and less intrusive.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items, which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Student Rights of Expression

The school recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, non-commercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges or other insignia; clothing; banners; audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. Material cannot be displayed if it:
 - a. Is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and or vulgar
 - b. Advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law
 - c. Intends to be insulting or harassing or it intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event
 - d. It presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations or the commission of an unlawful act
- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after schools in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building

Student Concerns, Suggestions, and Grievances

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has a suggestion that could improve the school they should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or student council.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or student council.

A student may have their right to a hearing if the student believes they have been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

Personal Curriculum

The Personal Curriculum is a process to modify specific graduation credit requirements and/or content expectations based on the individual learning needs of a student. It is designed to serve students who want to accelerate or go beyond the MMC requirements and students who need to individualize learning requirements to meet the MMC requirements for high school graduation. A personal curriculum may be requested prior to 9th grade for a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), with the earliest implementation at the start of 9th grade. For students without an IEP, a request for a PC is allowable after the student has completed 9th grade. To request a Personal Curriculum, please contact your North Branch High School.

Transportation

Student Driving

Driving automobiles, motorcycles and tractors to school is a privilege reserved for high school students and is not permitted at the middle school level.

Regulations for Bus Riding Students

1. Bus riding is a privilege. You must follow all rules and regulations and treat your driver with respect and courtesy. Any student who defies the bus driver in any way will lose his/her bus privileges. Drivers have the responsibility of getting students to and from school safely. They must have your cooperation at all times. Drivers may assign seats as needed.
2. **Only students entitled to transportation will be permitted to ride the buses.** If you desire to ride a bus other than your own, you must present a note from your parents, signed by the principal of your school, to the bus driver. Secondary students riding the elementary bus must have a pass signed by their principal.
3. When waiting for the bus:
 - a. Arrive at your stop five minutes early as drivers are told they must not wait for tardy students.
 - b. Stand quietly and respect people's property.
 - c. Pushing, fighting, or playing games is not allowed.

- d. Wait until the bus completely stops before attempting to board.
4. While boarding or departing the bus:
 - a. Form a single line, and step on and off quickly and quietly.
 - b. Pushing, fighting, or playing games is not allowed.
5. Cross properly ten feet in front of the bus after stopping and looking to make sure traffic is clear.
 - a. Board the bus from the side of the road. Do not stand in the road.
 - b. With the exception of band instruments, students are not permitted to bring objects on the bus that are too large to be held in their laps.
6. While on the bus:
 - a. Students must remain seated while the bus is in motion.
 - b. Students must not stand up to leave the bus or change seats until the bus stops.
 - c. Students must not throw anything on or from the bus or extend any part of the body from open windows. The buses will not have windows down any more than three notches.
 - d. Use of profane or vulgar language on the bus will result in loss of riding privileges.
 - e. You are not permitted to litter on the bus at any time.
 - f. Damage to seats or interior of the bus will be paid for by the student or students involved and riding privileges will be withdrawn.
 - g. Students are expected at all times to listen and follow directions from the bus driver.
 - h. MP3's, iPods, and other personal listening devices with individual headphones are allowed on the bus. Students use these at their own risk.
 - i. NO eating or drinking on the bus.
7. Severe disruptions include but are not limited to:
 - a. Fighting (throwing a punch), improper language, obscene gestures, vandalizing, defying the bus driver or stopping the bus driver from driving the bus in a safe manner.
 - b. Any student who displays knives, sharp instruments of any sort, firecrackers, cigarettes, cigars (either lighted or unlighted), chewing tobacco, matches, rubber bands, water pistols, water balloons, etc., will lose his/her riding privilege. Please also note that glass bottles are not allowed on the bus. (Consequence is a minimum three-day suspension of bus-riding privilege.)
8. In the event of an emergency:
 - a. Stay Calm.
 - b. Listen for instructions
 - c. Use the emergency door only during emergencies or drills.
9. In the event of no school:
 - a. The information will be broadcast on area radio stations.
10. Continued disregard for rules and regulations:
 - a. Will result in the loss of student's bus riding privileges. Please become familiar with the student bus discipline policy.

- b. Transportation may not be available on the late bus runs due to overcrowding or a student's previous disregard for rules and regulations. In this case, the parent must arrange transportation.
11. In the event of missing your regular bus:
- a. Students may ride the elementary buses in the morning **up to three times**.
 - b. All junior and senior high students riding the elementary buses will be reported as unexcused tardies.

Annual Pesticide Notification

As part of the North Branch Area School District's pest management program, pesticides are occasionally applied. You have the right to be informed prior to any pesticide application made to the school grounds and building. In certain emergencies, pesticides may be applied without prior notice, but you will be provided notice following any such application if you need prior notification, please complete the information below and submit to:

Director of Operations & Technology Department, North Branch Area Schools, 6655 Jefferson Road, P.O. Box 3620 North Branch 48461. (810) 688-3570

Pesticide prior notification request should include:

- Parent/Guardian Name
- Student's Name
- Home Address
- Telephone Numbers (Day & Night)
- School Building or Site

Appendix

- NBAS Food Service policy
- 6th-12th grade required notice:
 - Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide