

# Hillsdale K-6 Student Handbook



**2025-2026**

**Hillsdale K-6  
Student Handbook  
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## **HILLSDALE K-6 Student Handbook**

### **“Home of the Falcons”**

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to Hillsdale K-6! The faculty and staff are proud of our reputation of providing a well-rounded education in a safe, warm, and caring environment.

Hillsdale K-6 is dedicated to preparing our students for their next phase of life. We strive to prepare the whole child, engaging them in hands-on curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. We welcome the partnerships with parents, students, and community members as we train our students to be active participants in their educational experience.

Our staff has spent time training in all things Google. We are a Google school utilizing daily the Google Suite, including Classroom, Calendar, Meets, Docs, and Sheets, as well as other add-on apps. We utilize a robust PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program to encourage our students to continue to strive for their best results. We embrace the A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) and self-defense training given by our local agencies. We continue to refine our delivery of state standard aligned curriculum utilizing formative assessment practices to shape our students' learning. As we seek to engage our young people in the learning process, we incorporate technology and hands-on learning opportunities, such as career opportunities into our lessons. We use innovative teaching strategies like team teaching and flexible instructional time to provide leveled rigor for each learner.

We encourage you to take an active role in your child's education so that together we can help all students develop and reach their full potential. Please make yourself familiar with this handbook of the policies and procedures of Hillsdale K-6.

At Hillsdale Local Schools, we are **BUILDING CHARACTER, EXPECTING EXCELLENCE!**

**Go Falcons!**

Mr. Williams  
PK-6 Principal

# We Have Falcon Pride!



## **Hillsdale Motto**

Building Character – Expecting Excellence

## **Mission Statement**

Hillsdale: focused on success through innovation, empowerment, and collaboration.

## **Vision Statement**

The Hillsdale Local Schools, in partnership with the community, will build character and expect excellence by providing a safe and challenging environment that prepares students to be successful in life.

# Hillsdale PK-6

District Phone Number	419-368-8500
District Website	www.hillsdale.k12.oh.us
Progress Book Login	https://pa.tccsa.net
<b>Hillsdale PK-6 Office (Angie Sigler)</b>	<b>419-368-4364</b>
Mr. Tom Williams, Principal	<a href="mailto:twilliams@hillsdalelocalschools.org">twilliams@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Mrs. Becky Hartsel, Preschool Coordinator	<a href="mailto:bhartsel@hillsdalelocalschools.org">bhartsel@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Mrs. Kelly Hohler, Counselor	<a href="mailto:khohler@hillsdalelocalschools.org">khohler@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Mrs. Angie Sigler, Secretary	<a href="mailto:asigler@hillsdalelocalschools.org">asigler@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>

To leave a voicemail for any teacher, call 419-368-4364 and the building secretary will enter the teacher's extension number when prompted.

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Sarah Root	Prek	<a href="mailto:sroot@hillsdalelocalschools.org">sroot@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Cynthia Stands	Prek	<a href="mailto:cstands@hillsdalelocalschools.org">cstands@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Stacey Dilgard	K	<a href="mailto:sdilgard@hillsdalelocalschools.org">sdilgard@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
Regina Hickey	K	<a href="mailto:rhipkey@hillsdalelocalschools.org">rhipkey@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
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Chris Shenberger	PE	<a href="mailto:cshenburger@hillsdalelocalschools.org">cshenburger@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>
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Tammy Hoverstock	Liaison	<a href="mailto:thoverstock@hillsdalelocalschools.org">thoverstock@hillsdalelocalschools.org</a>

## **Administrative Information**

### **Visitors:**

All visitors must report to the PreK-6 office upon entering the school to receive a visitor's badge. For the safety of all students and staff, the building will be locked at 8:00AM, requiring you to buzz into the office for entrance.

### **Address, Emergency Contacts, Email Change:**

Please notify the school secretary immediately of any changes in a student's residential address, telephone contacts, emergency medical information, or parental email contacts. It is vital that this information is kept current, especially in emergency situations. Please make sure you also update any changes in Final Forms.

### **Bus Notes, Transportation Changes:**

At the beginning of the year, each student will establish his/her normal transportation routine. Students will be picked up and dropped off at the same location each day. The morning and afternoon locations may be different, but they have to stay the same each day to avoid confusion for the students and school. If your child is normally a bus rider, and you are picking your child up from school, please send in a note in the morning to alert the school to this change. If a permanent change needs to be made to a student's pick-up or drop-off location, such changes should be reported to the district's transportation director and Final Forms will need to be adjusted accordingly. Please give a few days notice so that changes can be insured.

If a student will be picked up at school by someone other than their custodial parent or guardian, the school must also receive a written note indicating the name of the person picking up the student, their relationship to the student, and the time and date they will be picking the student up. To ensure student safety, we are not able to receive verbal changes by phone. Board Policy EEA/EEAC

### **Communicable Diseases:**

Please notify the school if your child is suspected of having or has been confirmed to have a communicable disease. Your cooperation will help us to monitor the situation. In such situations, communication is critical to stop the spread of certain diseases. Board Policy JHCC

### **Concerns and Complaints:**

All concerns and complaints will be dealt with promptly by the appropriate parties involved. It is everyone's goal that student and parent concerns are addressed, considered, and responded to appropriately and fairly. If a concern originates from a school situation, the student or parents should first discuss the issue with the teacher, coach, advisor, or staff member most directly involved. If the parties concerned believe the discussion has not led to a satisfactory conclusion, the involved parties may proceed to discuss the matter with the building principal in an attempt to reach a solution. Concerns about administrative action may be addressed directly with the building principal. Board Policy KL

### **Custody Notifications and Matters of the Court System:**

When a child custody decree, including a temporary order of child custody, is issued by the court system, the custodial parent is obligated to immediately notify the school administration of custodial arrangements and to provide the district with a certified copy of the order that establishes or modifies issues of child custody. Board Policy JEC

### **Directory Information:**

According to the Ohio Revised Code 3319.321, the following information is considered directory information: student's name, parents' names, address, date of birth, and grade. If required, this information will be made available to the public unless the recipient is engaged in for-profit activities. Please see Photo & Name Release policy.

### **Dispensing of Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications:**

The school understands that there are situations where students must take medications during the course of the school day. To prevent abuse and potential medication errors, the school has established very strict guidelines for the dispensing of medication. In order for a student to take any prescription medication on school property, proper forms must be completed by the doctor and parent; according to ORC 3313.713 and Board policy. The forms, along with the medication, must then be dropped off at the school office and verified by the school nurse. The prescription must be brought to the school in the original container, must clearly identify the name of the prescription and student. Absolutely no non-prescription medication is to be self-administered by students during the school day. All medication must be taken to the office and directions for administration must be included on the appropriate form signed by parents. Parents, please do not send your child's medication with your child on the bus to give to the office. Under no circumstance will the school dispense medication, either prescription or non-prescription, without the appropriate forms being on file, nor will the school furnish non-prescription medications to students. Board Policy JHCD

**Emergency Medical Authorization:**

Parents are required by law (ORC 3313.712) to have their child's Emergency Medical Authorization (EMA) on file at the school office at all times. It is critical that these are completed on Final Forms at the start of each school year. Changes in contact persons, contact numbers, emails, and medical providers are the parents/guardians responsibility and must be reported immediately to the school office to ensure the accuracy of information.

**Emergency School Closings and Delays:**

In the event of an emergency situation or inclement weather, the superintendent may choose to close or delay the start time. Notification of such events will be announced over a One Call message, as well as being posted on local radio and television stations. Every attempt will be made to announce delays and closings by 6:30AM. Board Policy EBCD

**Fire, Severe Weather, and Safety Drills:**

All students are given instructions on the proper procedures for fire, severe weather, and safety drills. Fire drills are conducted as per state regulations and severe weather drills are practiced a number of times each year. The Ashland County Sheriff's Department reviews our safety drill protocols and supervises the building as we run through our mock emergency drills. ORC 3737.73

**School Counseling:**

School Counselor, Mrs. Kelly Hohler, is available at 419-368-4364 or khohler@hillsdalelocalschools.org to assist students with educational decisions, deal with personal, social, and health concerns, and to help support students to maximize their educational ability through a variety of resources. Any parent who has concerns regarding their child's personal and social interactions or who has concerns about any mental health issues facing their child should contact the school counselor.

**School Fees:**

Each year students are charged a student fee to offset the costs of education and consumable materials that students use during the course of the year. Students can pay their student fees any time after the first day of school. Students have the first nine weeks to pay their fees. Parents of those students who qualify for free lunches will have their child's fees waived. Board Policy JN

**School Fines:**

If a textbook is lost or if damage exceeds normal use, the student will be charged an amount equal to the repair or replacement costs of the book. A schedule of charges for damaged or lost library books will be available from the school librarian. Physical damage to school property or equipment is a serious offense. Students will be required to pay all costs associated with the cleaning, repair, or replacement of damaged school property. The building principal will work with the maintenance staff and the superintendent to determine the exact cost of such repairs and to work out payment arrangements with parents, if needed. Board Policy JN

**School Health Professional:**

A school health professional will maintain student medical records, provide vision and hearing screenings, administer Scoliosis checks, offer head lice screenings, assistance, follow-ups, and verify all student immunization records as required by ORC 3313.670.

**Student Immunizations:**

All students need to have current vaccinations on record with our school nurse. The school nurse will communicate with parents of students who need to update their vaccinations. This is for the protection of all students. Board Policy JHCB

**Volunteers:**

Volunteers play an important role at our school. Without the support of parents as volunteers, we could not accomplish some of our educational and fun event goals. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the principal or classroom teacher to express your interest in these important roles. All volunteers will need a FBI/BCI background check before volunteering at the school. Board Policy IICC

**Withdrawal of a Student:**

When a student is withdrawing from Hillsdale, parents must notify the office at least one week prior to the student's last day of school. Student transcripts and records will be released once all school obligations have been met. Students must obtain a withdrawal/transfer form from the office and have each teacher sign it, return all textbooks and library books, and pay all school fees, fines, and lunch charges. When financial obligations are met, teachers will then verify the child's current grades. Once the receiving school files a

records request, all transcripts and documents will be mailed or faxed to the new school. If Hillsdale obligations are not met, records may be withheld, prolonging the student's registration to their new school. ORC 3317.034

## Attendance

### **Reporting Absences: Board Policy JED**

All absences (except pre-arranged absences) from school require a phone call from a parent, or legal guardian, to the office before 8:30AM for each absence. We are required by law (O.R.C. 3313.205) to contact you to determine the reason for your child's absence from school. If we cannot reach a parent by phone, we will contact you by email. A written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be turned into the office upon return to school.

Half-day absence will be charged to students if they arrive after 9:30 AM or leave before 1:30PM. If a student must arrive late or leave early, the student must provide a parental note explaining the nature of the situation, the day that it will occur, and the time the student will be missing. If someone other than the student's parents or legal guardian will be picking up the student, the student must provide a SIGNED and DATED note from the parent. The school will not release a child to an unauthorized individual.

### **Excused Absences:**

Regular attendance at school is not only important to a child's academic success, but it is also the law. The compulsory attendance law (OAC 3301-69-02) and Board Policy JED states that parents are responsible for seeing that their children attend school regularly.

Below are the list of excused absences:

- Personal Illness
- Illness of the student's family necessitating the presence of the child
- Death of a family member or relative (*applies to absences of up to 18 school hours unless a reasonable cause may be shown for a longer absence*)
- Needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians for a limited period of time when approved by the superintendent (*applies to students who are 14 years of age and older*)
- Quarantine for contagious disease
- Acts of God
- Observance of religious holidays *consistent with a student's truly held religious belief*
- Traveling out of state to a Board of Education approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (*applies to absences of up to 24 school hours*)
- College visits
- Absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status
- Absences due to a student being homeless
- Emergency or unplanned circumstances approved by the principal/superintendent

*Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to make up for missed work. Students are requested to bring a note to school after each absence explaining the reason for the absence or tardiness.*

*The Board policy discourages absences from school for vacations and other nonemergency trips. (Board Policy JED) The responsibility for such absences resides with the parents, and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be retaught by their teacher. If the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts will be made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent.*

### **Unexcused Absences:**

Students who are absent for disciplinary reasons, or reasons not allowed under the Ohio Revised Code (Section 5107.287), will be considered unexcused. All work that a student missed during the unexcused absence is recommended to be completed.

### **Tardiness:**

A student is tardy if he/she is not in class by 8:00AM. A student arriving at school after 8:00 AM must report to the office with a written parental excuse to obtain an admit slip to class. Students who are tardy because of doctor/dentist appointments or court appearances must bring proof of appointment with them when they return to school in order for the tardiness to be excused. Oversleeping and car trouble are not examples of an excused tardy. Excessive tardiness will be defined as five or more tardies and will be cumulative throughout each semester. The principal will issue and supervise detentions for excessive tardiness to school with the following consequences:

1st Offense – (5th tardy): Noon Detention  
2nd Offense – (10th tardy): Noon Detention

\*\* Students amassing 20 or more times late to school for the school year may experience loss of participation in extra activities.

## Academics

### **The Responsibility of the Learner:**

The teachers at Hillsdale Local Schools are committed to helping students achieve academically and personally. They have invested countless hours of lesson planning, curriculum development, and content alignment to ensure they are thoroughly covering the content standards as set forth by the Ohio Department of Education.

Students that come to Hillsdale Local Schools should come prepared to learn each day. It is a student's responsibility to read assigned materials, complete assignments on time, and to do his/her best. A student needs to ask teachers for assistance when something is not understood and to always have the needed books and supplies in order to find success. The staff of Hillsdale Local Schools will have high expectations and provide opportunities for success. -

### **Grading (Grades K-3): Board Policy IKA**

Students will earn a 3, 2, or 1 depending on their skill level in grades K-3.

3	Met the Standard/Skill
2	Progressing toward the Standard/Skill
1	Limited Progress
No Mark	- Not assessed at this time

### **Grading Scale (Grades 4-6):**

Grades are assigned by each teacher based upon a student's daily work, homework, written assignments, special projects, performances, participation, and assessments such as tests and quizzes. Grades will be awarded as follows:

94-100%	A	4.0
90-93.9	A-	3.7
87-89.9	B+	3.3
83-86.9	B	3.0
80-82.9	B-	2.7
77-79.9	C+	2.3
73-76.9	C	2.0
70-72.9	C-	1.7
67-69.9	D+	1.3
63-66.9	D	1.0
60-62.9	D-	0.7

### **Course Final Averages (Grades 4-6):**

The yearly grade will be determined by averaging the grades from each grading period.

### **Progress Reports & Grade Cards:**

All students will receive their grade cards electronically on Progress Book for each of the grading periods approximately five days following the end of the grading period.

### **Progress Book:**

Progress Book provides parents with access to their child's grades. At the beginning of each year, any parent who does not already have an account will receive a letter with a registration key and directions on how to set up an account. Parents are urged to keep the letter for reference throughout the year. Progress Book provides immediate access to student grades at any time. Students also have access to Progress Book to view their grades and any outstanding work that needs to be completed. All are encouraged to enter an email address in their Progress Book profile. Should your password be forgotten or lost, your account access can be restored via email sent directly from Progress Book. If you fail to register your email on Progress Book, you can request a new password by calling the school. Parents can access Progress Book by going to <https://progress.tccsa.net>.

## **Conferences:**

Academic success is critical to a student's development and there is no better way to ensure your child's success than to establish open lines of communication. There are two sets of scheduled parent-teacher conferences: One will be in October and the other in late February/early March. Parents are encouraged to participate in Parent/Teacher conferences to discuss their child's progress.

Parents and teachers alike are encouraged to schedule informal conferences whenever student performance warrants such. These may be held before school, after school, or during a teacher's planning period. Parents wanting to schedule a conference must make an appointment with the teacher (or teachers) for whom they wish to speak.

## **Honor Roll (Grades 4-6):**

Students who earn all A's will be listed on the Scholar Roll, and students earning all A's and B's will be included on the Honor Roll.

## **Academic Letter "H" (Grades 5-6):**

In an attempt to recognize and encourage consistent academic success, Hillsdale offers an academic letter "H" award. This award will be given at the end of the student's eighth grade year. In order to be eligible, a student must maintain a 3.7 GPA in each subject area each year in grades 5-6-7-8.

## **Achievement Assessments:**

The State of Ohio requires all students to take grade-appropriate state achievement assessments. These tests will be administered in the spring of each year with 3rd grade also taking a Fall ELA assessment. These tests not only help to paint a clearer picture of a student's achievement, but are also used to help evaluate the overall effectiveness of our district. It is very important that students put forth their best effort and do everything possible to be at school during testing week.

## **Retention (Grades 4-6):**

Any student who earns a failing grade (F) during any two of the four grading periods, in the course of a year, in two or more core subject areas, is eligible for retention. If there is reason to believe that a student may be in jeopardy of not progressing to the next grade level, the child's teachers, the principal, and the student's parents/guardians will meet to develop a success plan with the intent of identifying the areas of weakness and developing strategies for improvement. Preventing the retention is the ultimate goal. Every attempt will be made to help the student find success. To this end, successful completion of a summer school class may be an option. However, the desire and motivation to succeed must come from within the student. The principal will closely monitor the student's progress and will make the final retention determination. Board Policy IKE

## **Homework:**

The value of homework is the experience it gives the student to work independently to reinforce his/her skills on concepts already explained in the classroom. Homework lessons are prepared carefully with the skills needed by the individual student in mind. Homework is not optional; students are expected to complete assignments on time and submit them when due. There is no exception to this rule. *(5th and 6th Grade) For this reason "schools without failure" was established, a Wednesday after school detention will be given in accordance with the grade level homework policy if homework is not completed in a timely fashion.*

Teachers will assign a reasonable amount of homework in their respective subject area as they see fit. Each grade level team has established their own homework policies and expectations for their students. Please reference these expectations with the teachers beginning of the year syllabi. Regardless of when they are assigned or when they are due, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work is completed when due. Board Policy IKB

***Students who are absent are required to make up missed work and are responsible for asking their teachers for missing assignments immediately upon return to school. If a student is absent for one day, they have one day more than the number of days missed to make up their work.*** For example, if a student missed three days, they have 4 days (3+1 = 4 days) to complete missed work. Parents are encouraged to check Progress Book for missing assignments.

## **Academic Integrity:**

Hillsdale students are expected to complete their own work and not complete other students' work. Students are not permitted to copy or otherwise plagiarize another's work. Students are not permitted to cheat which includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the work of another as your own.
- Copying information from another's test, exam, theme, book report, project, homework, or term paper.
- Preparing to cheat in advance.

- Failure to follow test procedures or instructions directly related to the integrity of the test.
- **Plagiarism** is a very serious offense and breach of trust. Plagiarism is defined: when a student directly copies the written words of another individual without stating their source of information, they are guilty of plagiarism and cheating. Any student who plagiarizes an assignment will meet with the involved teacher and the principal to determine what disciplinary action is in order. Discipline could range from loss of credit for the assignment to the loss of credit for the entire course. Typically, the first offense is loss of credit on an assignment, followed by a second loss of credit and a detention.

When a teacher determines that an action of cheating has taken place, they will:

- Confer with the student in question
- Assign a grade of a zero (0) for the assignment/assessment to which the cheating occurred
- Notify the principal and the student's parents

### **Field Trips:**

Many educational experiences can be provided for the students away from the school building. The purpose of field trips is to extend the curriculum and provide educational opportunities to students. Participation in these trips is considered a privilege and may require students to pay a fee. Students failing to show responsible and cooperative behavior throughout the school year may forfeit their opportunity to join the rest of their classmates during such experiences. Students may be denied the right to participate in such trips due to suspensions, chronic behavior problems, poor school attendance, repeated tardiness, or lack of academic effort. Final decisions regarding student participation in a field trip lie with the student's team of teachers and the principal. Board Policy IICA

## **School Environment**

### **Hillsdale PBIS:**

PBIS or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports are concepts that Hillsdale has anchored to their motto of Building Character and Expecting Excellence. We practice and model appropriate behaviors in the classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, playground, and on the bus. We know that this is a work in progress and we take this role seriously. The anchor beliefs are "Be Respectful, Be Prepared, and Be Engaged" for 5th-12th grade, and "Be Respectful, Responsible, and Really Awesome" for PreK-4th grade. We review and celebrate these behaviors on a regular basis.

### **Assemblies:**

Assemblies are occasionally planned throughout the school year to expose our students to a variety of educational and cultural experiences. Assemblies are considered a privilege and students should be on their best behavior and represent our school well. Misbehavior will result in denial of assembly privileges.

### **Cafeteria and Kitchen:**

Hillsdale has a closed lunch period lasting 30 minutes for each grade. All students will spend their lunch period in the cafeteria, regardless if they are buying a school lunch or eating a lunch brought from home. Payments for lunch are made on-line through Pay Schools or by bringing in money/check to give to the cafeteria. (Call the school for your child's student identification number.)

Students will only be allowed to charge lunches in emergency situations. Charges will be limited to \$23.75 and only a standard lunch can be charged. Additional food items, a second lunch, fruit juices, waters, and ice creams must be paid for at the time of purchase. Such items cannot be charged.

School lunches can be purchased for \$3.00

School breakfasts can be purchased for \$1.75

Breakfast is available from 7:30 to 8:00 AM

Extra Milk .75

### **Free and Reduced Lunch Costs:**

The application for free or reduced lunch costs is found on the school webpage and needs to be filled out at the beginning of each school year. The online page will help parents to determine if they are potentially eligible under federal guidelines. All applications are forwarded to the district's director of food service for final review and an official determination. Board Policy EF/EFB

**Water Bottles:**

Water bottles are permitted but must be spill proof and contain water only.

**No Gum in School:**

Please have students keep gum at home as it is hard to get out of carpets and other similar materials.

**Cell Phone, and Electronic Device Usage:**

Since our focus at Hillsdale is on academic achievement, CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE NOT PERMITTED at school without the principal's prior approval. All cell phones must be kept in your locker and only retrieved at the end of the school day. Students are only permitted to use the office phone for emergencies or to call home because of illness. Students are not permitted to call or text using a cell phone or smartwatch during the school day. No student is ever permitted to use a classroom phone unless the teacher initiates the call. If you feel there are extenuating circumstances, please contact the principal. Board Policy JFCK

**Tardiness to Class:**

Students are expected to be at each class on time. If a teacher delays a student, a pass should be issued to admit the student to class. Students may be assigned a detention if tardiness to class becomes a barrier to their learning or the learning of others.

**Displays of Affection:**

Any displays of affection between students that attract undue attention shall be considered inappropriate and are prohibited on school property. This includes close body contact, hugging, kissing, and similar actions. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action by the principal and parents will be notified.

**Extra-curricular Activities:**

In addition to our academic program, we offer a variety of activities for student enrichment. It is our hope that you participate in these activities to help develop a wide variety of interests. New activities will be added if there is sufficient student interest. Board Policy IGD

**Clubs/Organizations (Grades 5-6):**

Drama	Book Club
Student Council	Chess Club
Power of the Pencil	FCA
Empowerment	History Day
Solo & Ensemble	Spelling Bee
Talent Show	

**Hall Traffic, Elevator, and Stair Usage:**

No student is allowed to be in the halls without permission. Grades 5 and 6 are only allowed on the grades 7 and 8 side of the building during class changes to a special. Elevator use is prohibited without an adult accompanying the student or approved usage. Stair usage is only allowed when traveling between class to specials or the media center.

**Intervention/Recess:**

Students will have the opportunity for recess. Students will be expected to play in a manner that coincides with our motto of Building Character and Expecting Excellence. Students will be expected to use equipment and play in a manner to not damage property and to keep everyone safe. Students should reach out to the recess aides with questions or concerns during recess time.

Any students engaged in play that is deemed too “rough” will be asked to find a new activity. Recess is a privilege, not a right. A student can be prohibited from going to recess for making poor choices about their behavior.

Students who remain inside during this time will be under the supervision of a teacher and will have the opportunity to catch up on late and missing homework, or to work in small groups with a teacher to better understand recently taught concepts. This intervention time should never be seen as a punishment, but rather a time to get caught up on work and a time to get individualized assistance from their teacher.

**Restroom Facilities:**

Great care should be taken by all not to vandalize or mistreat the restroom facilities. Students should use the facilities appropriately and only one student should be in a stall at a time.

**Media Center:**

The school media center is the hub of the school's academia. The media aide specialist is available to help students with their assignments, projects and basic study skills. A variety of books, magazines, and reference materials are available. An orientation conducted by the media aide specialist will help students use the media center more efficiently.

Each homeroom will be provided with a weekly class period to select books from the media center's collection and spend time reading in the media center environment. Failure to exhibit appropriate behavior in the media center might result in media center privileges being suspended by the principal at the recommendation of the media specialist aide.

**Lockers (Grades 3-6):**

Each student is assigned a locker. They are provided for students to store coats, backpacks, textbooks, and other educational supplies. Lockers are to be kept clean and orderly at all times. No mirrors, stickers, picture frames with glass, etc. are to be fastened to or affixed to the locker at any time. Locker assignments may only be changed within the office. Students need to stick with the locker assigned to them or get principal permission for the change. (ORC 3313.20)

Lockers are the property of the school, and destruction of school property will be dealt with appropriately.

Lockers and the contents are subject to random locker searches by authorized school personnel at any time without regards to any reasonable cause or suspicions. (ORC 3313.20)

Lockers are to be used before homeroom period, immediately before and after lunch, and at the end of the day during designated times. Teachers are not obligated to allow students to return to their locker at any point other than during the announced locker times. Any student accessing materials in their locker at any time other than during approved times must have direct permission from a teacher or other school personnel.

**Lost and Found:**

If you find an article in the building or on school grounds, please bring it to the office. If you have lost something, please let the secretary know as soon as possible. The school is not responsible for lost items. Placing your name clearly on all of your personal items will greatly increase the chances of having lost items returned to you. Items not claimed within a reasonable amount of time will be donated to Associated Charities.

**School Hours:**

The student day begins at 8:00AM. Students are not to be at school prior to 7:30 AM. The cafeteria/gym area is where all students must sit and wait until the beginning of the student day. For safety reasons, no student or parent is permitted to wander the halls. Buses typically arrive between 7:35-7:45 each day. Students are released from the building between 2:45 PM and 2:55PM and parents can pick them up in front of the building. Students will be leaving by bus each day around 3:10PM. If your child arrives late or needs to leave early, please sign them in or out in the office.

**Textbooks:**

All textbooks are property of Hillsdale Local Schools and are on loan to students for use in class. Students are responsible for their care and return. Damaging or destroying a textbook is considered destruction of school property and students will be charged for the cost of lost or damaged books. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that all textbooks are properly covered with paper book covers at all times and that their name is clearly printed in the inside cover of the book. Once a book is issued to a student, it becomes their responsibility.

# Dress Code

## **Dress Code Philosophy:**

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents/guardians. The district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student. In general, dress and grooming should be appropriate for the age of the student and the learning environment. Clothing worn to school should be of good sense, good taste, and clean. Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times. Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, and cleavage are covered with opaque material. Board Policy JFCA

All questionable attire will be reviewed by the principal, who has the final decision. Student dress codes and administrative enforcement should not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, gender identity or cultural observance.

Courses with curricular attire (professionalism, public speaking, job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, and maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as science (eye or body) or PE (athletic attire/shoes).

Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to call home and have different clothing brought to school, or the student will be sent home for the remainder of the day. In some cases a student may be asked to sit in the office until arrangements can be made with parents. The absence due to dress code violations will be unexcused.

- Footwear must be worn at all times and must be of a style that protects the toes and feet from injury. Flip-flops, slippers, and shoes with rubber or metal spikes of any kind are not permitted.
- Clothing that is torn or having any open holes or abrasions above the knee is prohibited, including jeans with fabric under the holes.
- All shorts must be hemmed (no frayed edges), cut-offs are not to be worn to school and all shorts must not be higher than mid-thigh.
- Pajama pants are not permitted in school. In addition, leggings, yoga pants, jeggings, or stretchy material pants will not be permitted without a covering that (like the shorts) comes down to mid-thigh.
- Clothing cannot display profane or obscene language, gestures or pictures or have any sexual connotations. Any clothing that contains the logo of, or advertisement for, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly prohibited.
- Halter-tops, bareback shirts, spaghetti-strapped tops, bare midriffs, see-through clothing, muscle shirts, tank tops, and low-cut tops are not acceptable.
- Underclothing should not be visible at any time. All pants, dresses, and shorts must be worn at the natural waist. All dresses and skirts must not be higher than mid-thigh.
- Hats, outside weather apparel, sweatbands, or sunglasses may not be worn in the building during the school day.
- Jewelry should be a length or design that does not endanger the safety of the individual, nor distract from the learning environment.
- Spikes, chains (attached to clothing, or wrapped around the waist, ankles, or neck) and leather belts around the neck are not permitted in any shape or form. The principal will make a determination between acceptable jewelry and unacceptable chains.

# Discipline

## **Student Discipline:**

The Ohio Revised Code 3313.661 specifies that the school has the right to expect reasonable behavior from students. Teachers and Staff stand in loco parentis to students under their supervision and may exercise such powers of control, restraint, and correction over students as may be deemed reasonably necessary to perform their duties as a teacher or staff member, in order to accomplish the purpose of education, and ensure the safety of the student body. Each student is responsible for his/her individual behavior while at school, traveling to and from school, and at school-sponsored functions. Board Policy JFC

## **Student Code of Conduct:**

The student code of conduct is published in conformity with ORC 3313.661 and specifies the school's expectations for student behavior. Students have a right to expect reasonable treatment from school employees and fellow classmates. The school, in turn, has a right to expect reasonable and safe conduct from the student body. Violation of any reasonable behavior expectation can result in disciplinary action, which will be determined by the building principal. These disciplinary actions span in severity from warnings and detentions to the most severe cases receiving a suspension. Board Policy JFC

The Board has "zero tolerance" of violent, disruptive, harassing, intimidating, bullying or any other inappropriate behavior by its students. For this reason the district has differentiated between incidents of "Zero Tolerance" and less severe incidents. Hillsdale Local Schools practice progressive discipline. **However, the severity of the offense and ages of students involved, may necessitate a deviation from the normal progression of consequences stated below. Students in grades K-3 are only able to be suspended from school for offenses that involve a dangerous weapon or the immediate health of the student, classmates, staff, or teachers.**

## **Zero Tolerance Progression of Consequences for Grades 4-6:**

1<sup>st</sup> Offense five days of In-school Detention or three days of Out of School Suspension.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense seven days of In-school Detention or five days of Out of School Suspension.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense ten days of Out of School Suspension, recommend to superintendent to expel.

All zero tolerance offenses may result in notification of law enforcement.

## **ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES:**

The following offenses are deemed zero tolerance and are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion. Board Policy JFC

**Rule 1. Dangerous weapons and instruments** - A student shall not possess, use, transmit, threaten to use, or conceal any dangerous weapon or instrument which might be considered capable of inflicting harm to another person. **The O.R.C. 3313.66 requires expulsion for one year for any student for possession of a gun, knife, or weapon to school or school-sponsored activities. Law enforcement will also be contacted.**

**Rule 2. Narcotics and drugs** – It is prohibited by Ohio law for a student to possess, use, sell, transmit, conceal or be under the influence of any drug, narcotic or mind or body-altering chemical substance, which is not directly prescribed for that student by a person licensed to prescribe medicine while at any school-sponsored activity which is on or off school property. This prohibition includes synthetic and/or look alike substances. **An automatic 10 day out of school suspension and recommendation for expulsion pertains to this violation. Law enforcement will be contacted.**

**Rule 3. Unauthorized touching** - A student shall not cause physical injury or behave in such a way which could threaten to cause physical injury to any other person or themselves while under the jurisdiction of the school.

**Rule 4. Tobacco, alcoholic beverages** - It is prohibited by Ohio law for a minor to possess, use, sell, transmit, conceal or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage. Ohio law also prohibits the use, consumption, or possession of cigarettes, other tobacco products, or papers used to roll cigarettes. It is also prohibited for a minor to assist, pay or share in the costs of such products. A student shall not possess, use, sell, transmit, or conceal any tobacco product or device or look-alike product or device, or use tobacco products on school property or at a school-sponsored activity or event on or off school property. The prohibition also includes devices that are tobacco substitutes, such as but not limited to, vapor pipes, e-cigarettes, etc. The full statute can be found in The Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.87.

**Rule 5. Theft** - A student shall not take or attempt to take into possession the property of the school or any person's private property which is on school property at any time while under the jurisdiction of the school.

**Rule 6. Damage to school or private property** - A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to school property or to private property on school grounds at any time, or at a school activity on or off school property. Misconduct by a student that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or, the property of a district official or employee, will result in appropriate discipline.

**Rule 7. Bullying, Harassment and /or Hazing**

***Bullying*** is defined as any intentional written, verbal, non-verbal, electronic, graphic or physical act that a student, or group of students, exhibits toward another particular student more than once; and the pattern of behavior that is exhibited causes emotional, mental or physical harm to the particular student.

***Harassment*** is defined as intimidation by threats or by actual physical violence.

***Hazing*** is defined as student participation in any act or ritual that intends to injure, degrade, disgrace or coerce another student or any act of initiation, which causes or risks causing mental or physical harm to any person.

Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. (O.R.C. 2307.44 & Policy IFCF) In all cases, a victim or fellow student is expected to notify an adult school official (teacher, counselor, support staff or principal) as soon as possible after the incident.

**Rule 8. Fire/Explosives** - A student shall not cause or attempt to cause the setting of fire or use or possess any incendiary device (such as fireworks).

**Rule 9. Gangs:**

Gangs are prohibited. (Refer to O.R.C. 3313.20; 3313.66 & Policy JFCEA.)

**OTHER OFFENSES:**

Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in verbal or written warning or reprimand, referral to school counselor, parental contact or conference, automatic restitution, detention, in-school detention, emergency removal, referral to law enforcement agencies, suspension or expulsion from school and after school activities for the following offenses:

**Rule 10. Disruption** - A student shall not by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, fire, or otherwise cause disruption of the school on or off school grounds. Misconduct by a pupil that occurs off property owned or controlled by the district, but that is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on property owned or controlled by the district, will result in appropriate discipline.

**Rule 11. Complicity** – No student shall encourage others, or conspire with others, to violate the Hillsdale Code of Conduct.

**Rule 12. Insubordination** - A student shall not fail to comply with directions of any authorized school personnel or school regulations while under the jurisdiction of the school.

**Rule 13. Disrespect, frightening, degrading, disgraceful acts or profanity** - A student shall not engage in any act which is seen as disrespectful, or frightens, degrades, disgraces, or is profane to any other person or themselves by written, verbal, pictorial, or gestural means while under the jurisdiction of the school.

**Rule 14. Truancy** - A student shall not be truant from school for part or all of a day. Truancy is declared when a student is absent from school, study hall, class, or any other properly assigned activity without school authorization.

**Rule 15. Tardiness** - A student shall not be tardy to school, class, study hall, or assigned activity.

**Rule 16. Repeated violations** - Refusing to comply with the direction of any authorized school personnel or school regulations while under the jurisdiction of the school.

**Rule 17. Violation of law** - A student shall not violate any ordinance of civil, state, or federal law while under the jurisdiction of the school (i.e. pulling false fire alarm, discharge of fire extinguisher, and/or threat of bomb).

**Rule 18. Falsification** - A student shall not falsely use, in writing, the name of another person, or falsify times, dates, addresses or other data on school forms or correspondence directed to the school or school personnel.

**Rule 19. False reports** - A student shall not falsely report incidents, or make accusations, or give false testimony to school personnel.

**Rule 20. Distribution of printed materials or sale of material goods** - A student shall not display, distribute, or sell any type of printed or written material or any material goods on school property without the authorization of school personnel.

**Rule 21. School bus rules and regulations** - A student shall not violate any rule or regulation that is established for the use of bus transportation.

**Rule 22. Athletic training rules** - Students will be denied the right to participate in athletics if they use drugs, tobacco, and/or alcohol. Athletic training rules are distributed to all athletes at the beginning of the respective seasons and should be signed by parents. Additional training rules by individual coaches will be enforced by said coach.

**Rule 23. Trespass** - A student shall not enter upon school grounds or premises of a school building to which the student is not assigned during or after school hours, except with the express permission of the principal of that building, or to attend or participate in a school-sponsored event where students from his/her regularly assigned school have been invited to attend or participate. A student under out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall not enter the grounds or premises of any school building or attend any school activity without the permission of the principal.

**Rule 24. Gambling** - A student shall not play any game for money or other consideration.

**Rule 25. Libel or Slander** - No student shall commit libel or slander. Libel is defamation expressed by print, writing, pictures or signs; slander is defamation by speaking.

**Rule 26. Extortion** - A student shall not compel or attempt to compel any student, school employee, or other person to give up anything of value by means of threat, harassment, intimidation, or injury to person, property, or reputation of said person.

**Rule 27. Use of Motor Vehicles** - A student shall not use or permit to be used a motor vehicle at or near a school activity on or off the school premises in such a way as to endanger the safety of any other person.

**Rule 28. Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices:**

Since our focus at Hillsdale is on academic achievement, CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE NOT PERMITTED at school without the principal's prior approval. All cell phones must be kept in the students' lockers. Please plan ahead, so that calls home for missing assignments and books are at a minimum and don't become a habit. Students are only permitted to use the office phone for emergencies or to call home because of illness. Extra-curricular students will have access to a school phone should they need to call home for a ride. No student is ever permitted to use a classroom phone unless the teacher initiates the call. If you feel there are extenuating circumstances, please contact the principal.

**Procedures not covered in handbook**

Questions or concerns not answered in this handbook will be the responsibility of the principal to determine based upon Hillsdale's educational goals.

**School-Wide Discipline Plan:**

School-wide discipline is essential to establishing an educational atmosphere that encourages learning, promotes academic success, and provides a safe and secure environment for all children. The discipline plan is designed to address minor, day-to-day infractions and to help students gain a better understanding of the school's expectations and how to align their behavior to meet those expectations.

In the event that a student fails to meet behavior expectations, a teacher or staff member will identify the violation, the situation surrounding the incident, and the punishment that will result. These corrective measures range in warnings to the student and may include after-school detentions, in-school detentions, and suspensions. In some instances the principal may recommend expulsion to the superintendent.

**Possible Disciplinary Actions:**

1. Verbal Reprimand
2. Student-Teacher/Principal Conference
3. Notification of Parents over the phone, in person, or in writing
4. Noon Detention - Half or entire lunch/recess
5. Items removed, collected, or destroyed
6. Loss of school privileges - Recess, Assembly, Field Trip, Field Day, etc...
7. Detention - Noon or After School

8. Parent Conference
9. Counseling
10. Behavior Contract
11. Referral to School Nurse/School Psychologist
12. Referral to Liaison or School-Based Therapist
13. Removal from Class
14. Notification of School Resource Officer, Juvenile Court, or other authorities
15. Emergency Removal - Student is causing imminent danger to people or property
16. Bus Removal
17. Community Service
18. In-School Detention - 1 to 10 Days
19. Out of School Suspension - 1 to 10 Days
20. Expulsion - 1 to 80 Days - principal recommends to the superintendent

### **Noon and After-School Detention:**

Noon detentions cover either ½ or all of the hour of recess and lunch. An after-school detention will be held from 2:40 to 4:00pm. If a student is assigned to an after-school detention by the principal, they are required to be there. Failure to report to the detention on the date assigned without previously notifying the principal will result in an additional after-school detention being assigned.

If a student fails to serve either of those two detentions, they may be suspended.

### **Detention In-School:**

In-school detention results in the loss of the privilege to participate in regular classes during the time of the probation, but the student is counted in attendance as present and given credit for work. Students spend the school day in a designated room with supervision completing assigned work from teachers. There is no appeal for a detention in-school.

### **Suspension Out-of-School:**

Suspension results in the loss of the privilege to participate in classes and extracurricular activities during the time of the suspension. Parents will be notified. Suspensions are out of school, and students are not permitted on school property during the time of their suspension. In all cases, a suspension is subject to appeal with the maximum single suspension set at 10 school days. A student who is suspended may not attend school or any activities. A suspended student will receive an unexcused absence for each class. Students who are suspended out of school are permitted to make up missed work. Board Policy JGD

### **The following procedures will apply to make-up work for suspended students:**

- Assignments provided to students while suspended must be completed by the student while suspended and turned in on the first day the student is back from the suspension. Parents must make arrangements for the timely pickup of these assignments as required.
- Students will be expected to take any tests missed while on suspension when they return from a suspension.
- Some assignments, such as labs, presentations, and so on, may not be able to be made up. Alternative assignments may be available under some circumstances. A suspended student may complete a Community Service Option (CSO) to change an unexcused absence to an excused absence. This CSO would enable the suspended student to complete assignments missed during the suspension period for full credit. To complete a CSO, the suspended student must complete six (6) hours of bona fide community service per day of suspension for a reputable agency (principal approval of agency). Completion of the CSO will be shown through the submission of the appropriate form that may be requested from the principal by the student's parent/guardian. Completion of the CSO must occur prior to the student's return from suspension, with all necessary paperwork submitted to the principal within two (2) days of the student's return to school. CSO may only be used for the first suspension out-of-school for the school year.

### **Appeals Process:**

1. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the superintendent within five days of notification of the suspension. 2. Any suspension begins immediately upon written notification to the student and parents/guardians. It will remain in effect during the appeal process. 3. Written notification of the outcome of the appeal must be presented to the student and parents/guardians within 24 hours after the hearing takes place.

### **Emergency Removal from Class or School:**

If a student poses a continuing danger to other people or school property, or if a student is disrupting or disturbing the learning environment, a teacher may remove the student from class. The principal may remove a student from school, at any time, under similar situations. (ORC 3313.66.)

### **Bus Transportation, Rules, and Student Safety:**

The School Board provides transportation for district students. Riding on Board-owned vehicles is a privilege, and students will lose that privilege for failing to demonstrate appropriate behavior and adherence to school and bus rules. Once a student is assigned to a specific bus route, they are not allowed to ride another bus without the permission of the principal.

Students should be at their designated bus stop five minutes before their scheduled pick-up time. They should wait quietly and at a safe distance from the road. Upon the arrival of the bus, students should wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and follow all hand gestures of the driver, who will indicate it is safe to board the bus. Once on the bus, the school rules apply. When a student exits the bus, it is important that they maintain the zone of safety (10 feet all the way around the bus), and be sure to cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus so they are in full view of the driver.

Drivers will promptly report all inappropriate behavior to the principal and disciplinary action will follow. A principal has the option to randomly view bus surveillance video to monitor student behavior as well. Poor behavior will often follow the following disciplinary plan for bus safety:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
First	Written Warning
Second	3 day suspension of bus privileges
Third	5 day suspension of bus privileges
Fourth	10 day suspension of bus privileges
Fifth	Suspension of bus privileges for the remainder of the semester or 30 days (whichever is greater)

A copy of each bus report will be sent home with the child for parents to sign. A student is not permitted to ride any bus until the bus warning report is signed, returned to school, and the consequences indicated in the report have been satisfied. The principal may opt to increase the severity of a student's punishment at his discretion; the above rubric is a basic guide. Behavior that warrants a student being excluded from riding a Board-owned vehicle permanently will be referred to the superintendent. Fighting on the bus will result in automatic loss of riding privileges for 3 days. Board Policy EEA/EEAC

## **Hillsdale Local School District Policies**

### **Hazing and Bullying:**

(Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

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

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This behavior is prohibited on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying by an electronic act may be suspended.

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

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

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

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

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying and/or dating violence. If any of the prohibited behaviors are planned or discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering District employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all such activities immediately. All hazing, bullying and/or dating violence incidents are reported immediately to the superintendent/designee and appropriate discipline is administered.

The superintendent/designee must provide the Board President with a semiannual written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District's website, to the extent permitted by law. The administration provides training on the District's hazing and bullying policy to District employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students. Additional training is provided to elementary employees in violence and substance abuse prevention and positive youth development. District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State and Federal law.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance or assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual. Board Policy JFCF

### **Photograph Refusal:**

Throughout the school year, there are times when children are photographed for news releases for newspapers, newsletters, social media, or our website covering various activities within the school. In view of publishing children's pictures, there may be some parents who do not wish to have their children photographed. If this is the situation, please contact the school office at 419-368-4364.

## **Truancy Policy**

### **TRUANCY:**

The Board endeavors to reduce truancy through cooperation with parents/guardians, diligence in investigating the causes of absence and use of strict guidelines in regard to tardiness and unexcused absence.

When the Board determines that a student has been truant and that the parent, guardian or other person having care of a child has failed to ensure the child's attendance at school, State law authorizes the Board to require the parent/guardian to attend a specified educational program.

This program has been established according to the rules adopted by the State Board of Education for the purpose of encouraging parental involvement in compelling the child's attendance at school.

At the request of the superintendent, or when it comes to the attention of the school attendance officer or other appropriate officer of the District, the designated officer must investigate any case of supposed truancy within the District and must warn the child, if found truant, and the child's parent/guardian in writing of the legal consequences of being a "habitual" truant.

A "habitual truant" is any child of compulsory school age who is absent without a legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one month or 72 or more hours in a school year.

The parent/guardian is required to have the child attend school immediately after notification. If the parent/guardian fails to get the child to attend school, the attendance officer or other appropriate officer, if directed by the superintendent or the Board, must send notice requiring the child's parent to attend a parental education program.

Regarding "habitual truants," the Board must take as an intervention strategy any appropriate action contained in Board policy.

The Board directs the administration to develop intervention strategies that include all of the following actions if applicable:

1. providing a truancy intervention plan meeting State law requirements for any student who is excessively absent from school;
2. providing counseling for a habitual truant;
3. requesting or requiring a parent/guardian having control of a habitual truant to attend parental involvement programs;
4. requesting or requiring a parent/guardian of a habitual truant to attend truancy prevention mediation programs;
5. notification to the registrar of motor vehicles or
6. taking appropriate legal action.

The attendance officer provides notice to the parent/guardian of a student who is absent, with or without an excuse, for 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 or more hours in a school year or seven days after the date of the absence triggering the notice. At the time of notice, the District may take any appropriate action as outlined in this policy as an intervention strategy. Board Policy JEDA

## **Absence Intervention Plan**

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, when a student's absences surpass the threshold for a habitual truant, the principal or the superintendent assigns the student to an absence intervention team within 10 days of the triggering event. The absence intervention team must be developed within seven school days of the triggering event and is based on the needs of the individual student. The team must include a representative from the student's school or District, a representative from the student's school or District who knows the student and the student's parent/guardian or designee, and also may include a school psychologist, counselor, social worker or representative of an agency designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences. During the seven days while developing the team, the superintendent or principal makes at least three meaningful, good faith attempts to secure participation of the student's parent/guardian. If the student's parent is unresponsive the District investigates whether the failure to respond triggers mandatory reporting to the appropriate children's services agency and instructs the absence team to develop the intervention plan without the parent.

Within 14 school days after a student is assigned to a team, the team develops a student specific intervention plan to work to reduce or eliminate further absences. The plan includes, at minimum, a statement the District will file a complaint in Juvenile court not later than 61 days after the date the plan is implemented, if the student refuses to participate or fails to make satisfactory progress. The District makes reasonable efforts to provide the student's parent/guardian with written notice of the plan within seven days of development.

The absence intervention plan for a student may include contacting the juvenile court to have a student informally enrolled in an alternative to adjudication. The Board directs the superintendent to develop written procedures regarding the use of and selection process for offering these alternatives to ensure fairness.

If the student becomes habitually truant within 21 school days prior to the last day of instruction of a school year, the District may either assign a school official to work with the student's parents/guardian to develop an intervention plan during the summer and implement the plan no later than seven days prior to the first day of instruction of the next school year, or reconvene the absence intervention process on the first day of instruction of the next school year.

### **Filing a Complaint with Juvenile Court**

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the attendance officer must file a complaint against the student in juvenile court on the 61st day after implementation of the absence intervention plan when:

1. the student's absences have surpassed the threshold for a habitual truant;
2. the District has made meaningful attempts to re-engage the student through the absence intervention plan, other intervention strategies and any offered alternatives to adjudication and
3. the student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan, or any offered intervention strategies or alternatives to adjudication as determined by the absence intervention team.

If the 61st day after intervention falls on a day during the summer months, the District may extend the implementation of the plan and delay the filing of the complaint for an additional 30 days after the first day of instruction of the next school year.

Unless the absence intervention team determines the student has made substantial progress on their absence intervention plan, the attendance officer must file a complaint against the student in juvenile court if the student is absent without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours or 42 or more hours during a school month at any time during the implementation phase of the intervention plan or other intervention strategy.

LEGAL REFS; ORC 3313.663; 3313.668

3321.03 through 3321.04; 3321.07 through 3321.09; 3321.19; 3321.191; 321.22; 3321.38

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