

North Tonawanda Middle School Student Handbook 2025 - 2026

Mission

North Tonawanda Middle School staff is dedicated to providing a student-centered learning environment that will enable all students to become lifelong productive members of society through the development of their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical abilities, while respecting the rights, talents, and individual differences of others.

Vision

Our students will be lifelong productive members of society who respect the rights, talents, and individual differences of self and others.



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FOREWORD

This handbook is intended to give each student of North Tonawanda Middle School an overall view of student life. Our expectations of him/her, operational procedures, and policies will affect student daily routine. Students, as school citizens, have rights as well as responsibilities. The information contained in this handbook attempts to provide every student with an understanding of and appreciation for the need for a safe and orderly school environment. It contains policy, procedures, expectations, allowances, maps, and other necessary information. All students must read this handbook thoroughly and are urged to SHARE THE Code of Conduct WITH THEIR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN so that all concerned will have a working knowledge of school life and of all the factors that go into building operating procedures. We look forward to a most pleasant and memorable year. Students should feel free to ask questions and seek assistance whether it is from their individual school counselor, a teacher, the main office, or an administrator. The staff is here to help and aid you in making the school year the best school year possible.

QUICK GUIDE

If You.....

Then go to.....

Recover or report lost articles/books	Attendance Office
Need advice about schedules	Student Support Center
Need working papers	Student Support Center
Have a hall locker problem	Main Office
Have a gym locker problem	Physical Education Teacher
Need to pay for a lost book/lock	Main Office
Are late to school or have early dismissal	Attendance Office
Want a morning announcement made	Main Office
Feeling ill	Health Office
Need to discuss a social/personal problem	Student Support Center

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

NORTH TONAWANDA MIDDLE SCHOOL MAIN OFFICE	807-3700
Mrs. Lauren Miranto, Principal	
Dr. Joseph M. Pray, Assistant Principal	
ATTENDANCE OFFICE	
Mrs. Rena McCune, Attendance Clerk	807-3716
STUDENT SUPPORT CENTER	807-3114
SCHOOL COUNSELORS	
Mrs. Angela Vecchio (7 th Grade)	807-3708
Mrs. Alyssa Hawkins (8 th Grade)	807-3715
SOCIAL WORKERS	
Mr. Christopher Janicki-Howe	807-3620
Mrs. Jill Lyons	807-3707
HEALTH OFFICE	
Mrs. Sumi	807-3704
PSYCHOLOGIST	
Dr. Kristin Stroh	807-3825
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICIER	
Officer MaryEllen Parish	807-3700

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2025-2026

August	27-28	Staff Development
September	1	Labor Day (no school)

	3	First Day of Classes
	18	Open House
	26	Fall Picture Day
October	13	Columbus Day (no school)
November	7	Picture Retake Day
	11	Veteran's Day (no school)
	26-28	Thanksgiving Recess
December	4	Parent/Teacher Conferences
	22-Jan 2	Winter Recess
January	19	Dr. Martin Luther King Day (no school)
February	16	President's Day Observance (no school)
	17	Lunar New Year (no school)
March	13	Staff Development (no school)
	30-Apr 10	Spring Recess
April	6-May 15	NYS 3-8 Computer-Based Testing Window
	14-25	Spring Recess
May	25	Memorial Day (no school)
June	19	Juneteenth Observance

DAILY SCHEDULE

Breakfast	7:15-7:30		
HR/Period 1	7:30-8:15		
Period 2	8:19-8:58		
Period 3	9:02-9:41		
Period 4	9:45-10:24		
Period 5/6	10:28-11:07	Period 5 Lunch	10:28-10:53
Period 7/8	11:11-11:50	Period 7 Lunch	11:11-11:36
Period 9/10	11:54-12:33	Period 9 Lunch	11:54-12:19
Period 11	12:37-1:02	Period 11 Lunch	12:37-1:02
Period 12	1:06-1:45		
Period 13	1:49-2:30		

SCHOOL SUPPORT CENTER

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The guidance philosophy is to provide a developmental program that will facilitate and support the educational achievement of all students. Students may receive assistance from school counselors in a number of ways such as: personal education needs, program planning, scheduling, career planning, standard test interpretation, and personal development. Each student will be assigned a school counselor for the 2023-2024 school year.

There are social workers available to help all our students. Their focus is to help students and families resolve problems that interfere with school success.

Teachers, counselors, and administrators are available to conference with parents/guardians regarding any aspect of a student's school or personal life. For parent/guardian convenience, days as well as evening conferences are scheduled throughout the school year. The Student Support Office can be contacted directly by calling 807-3700 Option 4.

ACADEMIC TEAMS

Students are placed on one of four academic teams. There are two seventh grade teams (Aries, and Orion), and two eighth grade teams (Draco, and Phoenix).

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an important part of the instructional program because it reinforces the work that is done in class. Students are expected to be responsible for the completion of their assigned homework, which, on average, is about an hour per night. Some subjects such as math and foreign language will give brief nightly assignments, while others will give fewer but longer assignments. Teachers try to work together on team to balance the workload as much as they can.

Students are expected to develop an organizational system to track their homework assignments. They are expected to record assignments, complete them, and bring them to class in a timely manner. All classroom and homework assignments should be recorded in the homework binder

and brought to each class. Each teacher has an area in the classroom where homework is posted. Students can also find homework on the Schoology homework calendar. We suggest that students bring their homework binder and all work home each night, even if it was completed in school. This way, parents/guardians can see the completed work and know what is happening in school. So, when you ask, "What did you do in school today?" your child can't tell you "nothing".

If your child forgets to bring any necessary materials home from school, the school is open for activities most evenings. You may return to the school with your child to pick up the needed materials. For students who are absent multiple days, a homework request can be made to the grade level counselors and picked up in the main office by 3pm.

▪ **Parent Portal:**

To help parents maintain a strong school connection, the North Tonawanda City School District has implemented a web-based communication tool known as the Parent Portal. The Parent Portal provides parents with 24/7 access to their child's academic information. Once the application process has been completed, parents will have on-line access to attendance information, progress reports, report cards and current grades. Step by step directions for creating an account are available on the NTCSD web-site under the Parent Portal tab. Parents should check the portal for the most up to date grades, not Schoology.

Parent Role: Parents and families are crucial factors in the academic success of children.

- Parents/guardians are asked to create a home environment that supports the development of positive learning, attitudes, and habits.
- Seek and value the school's perspective on the student.
- When concerns arise, please seek information directly from the school, consulting with those best able to address the concerns.
- Remain informed by frequently visiting the parent portal and district website.
- Keep open lines of communication with teachers, counselors, etc. throughout the school year.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Support the school policies and procedures.
- The other important piece parents can offer assistance with is organizing student materials. Organizing these binders can be difficult in middle school. On a night where there is little or no homework, students should be encouraged to bring home a binder or two to organize loose papers and transfer papers from the homework binder into the proper subject binders, etc.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be online through the Parent Portal at the end of each ten-week marking period. The grades are a reflection of the student's progress in each class over the course of the school year. In addition to quarterly grades, progress reports are also available on the Parent Portal at the 5-week mark between report cards to indicate areas of proficiency and/or deficiency. Parents/guardians may access current grades at any time using the Parent Portal.

The grading system used by each teacher should help the students understand their strengths and achievements and point out any areas of weakness. If a student does not understand a given grade, he/she should ask for an explanation from their teacher. Then, if needed, the support of the grade level counselor.

The following grades represent the criteria to earn High Honor Roll, Honor Roll, and Merit Roll status.

Grades 7 & 8

Marking Period Average

High Honor Roll
Honor Roll
Merit Roll

95-100
90-94.9
85-89.9

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is extremely important. Students must be in school every day to fully benefit from the educational opportunities available to them. Nothing can replace the valuable class time that is lost due to absenteeism. The positive interaction between students and their teachers during class study and activity times within the school day is irreplaceable. It is the student's responsibility to be in school every day and in his/her assigned place at the specified times.

If your child is going to be absent from school, the parent/guardian **MUST** call the Attendance Office at **807-3716** as soon as possible. This number is available 24 hours a day. Global Connect calls will be made to all households who have not called school to report an absence.

Whenever possible, medical, and dental appointments should be scheduled outside of regular school hours. Students who are absent from school for a full day are not able to participate in school-sponsored activities on that same day (i.e. dances, after school clubs and sports activities). Students whose absences are deemed excessive and unexcused will receive attendance letters and may lose privileges or be referred to PINS or CPS.

All students who are returning to school after an absence **MUST** present a written explanation, signed by his/her parent/guardian, which states the child's full name with the dates and reason for the absence. This should be done within three days of his/her return from an absence. In the absence of an excuse, student absences will be recorded as unexcused without an excused note.

Trips or vacations are **NOT** considered excusable absences per North Tonawanda City School District policy. It is not the responsibility of the school to give advance assignments related to any such absences.

No student may leave school for any reason, from the time the student arrives in the morning until the end of the last period, unless he/she has received permission from an administrator, the school nurse, or has an approved early dismissal. If a student needs to leave early for an appointment, they should bring a note, signed by his/her parent/guardian, which states the child's full name with the date, time and reason for the requested early release. All requests for early dismissal should be submitted to the homeroom teacher. ~~The homeroom teacher will issue a pass for early dismissal.~~

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

Students will be permitted to enter the building starting at **7:15 a.m.** for breakfast. They must report to the cafeteria where they will remain until **7:20 a.m.** The school day officially begins with **homeroom at 7:30 a.m.** Students who need to enter the school before the official opening time must have faculty approval and supervision. The school day officially ends when classes are dismissed at 2:30 p.m. No students will be allowed to remain after school for any activities unless they have faculty permission and supervision. Excessive tardiness and truancy will result in disciplinary consequences.

THE LATE BUS

ONLY students who have participated in an extra-curricular activity or after school detention may ride the late bus. Students will be given a pass for this bus. The late bus picks up outside of door 1 (main office) Monday-Friday @ 3:25pm. Students without a pass will need to call his/her parents for transportation home.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

When conditions or situations warrant emergency closing of schools, a public announcement will be made on the local TV and radio stations, and the Global Connect system. If no announcement is made, school will be in session. When school is cancelled for the day, all activities planned for that day are also cancelled. Please do not try to call the school. We need to keep our phone lines open for emergency instructions.

EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

NORTH TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT

PHILOSOPHY AND INTRODUCTION

The North Tonawanda Board of Education's commitment to provide a safe and orderly school environment in which students receive and district personnel deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference requires responsible behavior by students, district personnel, parents, and visitors in achieving its goal. The district's expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions are based upon the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, and integrity.

The Board recognizes the need to define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property (including school buses) and/or at school sponsored events, identify consequences of unacceptable conduct, and ensure that discipline when it is warranted is administered promptly, consistently, and developmentally appropriate. To this end, the Board adopts this Code of Conduct, which unless otherwise indicated, applies to all students, district personnel, parents, and visitors when on school property and/or attending school functions.

DEFINITIONS

In accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act, School District policy and practice must ensure that no student is subject to discrimination or harassment, based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex by any individual on school property, on a school bus, or at a school function.

School Property means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school; or in or on a school bus (Education Law Section 11(1)).

School Bus means every motor vehicle owned and operated for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity, to or from school or school activities, or, privately owned and operated for compensation for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to or from school or school activities (Education Law Section 11(1) and Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 142).

School Function means a school sponsored extracurricular event or activity (Education Law Section 11(2)).

Disability means (a) a physical, mental or medical impairment resulting from anatomical, physiological, genetic or neurological conditions which prevents the exercise of a normal bodily function or is demonstrable by medically accepted clinical or laboratory diagnostic techniques or (b) a record of such an impairment or (c) a condition regarded by others as such an impairment, provided, however, that in all provisions of this article dealing with employment, the term must be limited to disabilities which, upon the provision of reasonable accommodations, do not prevent the complainant from performing in a reasonable manner the activities involved in the job or occupation sought or held (Education Law Section 11(4) and Executive Law Section 292(21)).

Employee means any person receiving compensation from a school district or employee of a contracted service provider or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to title nine B of article five of the Social Services Law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to such district, its students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involve direct student contact (Education Law Section 11(4) and 1125(3)).

Sexual Orientation includes heterosexuality, homosexuality, pansexual or bisexuality, or asexuality among many self-identified titles (Education Law Section 11(5)).

Gender means actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression (Education Law Section 11(6)).

Gender Identity means a person's inner sense of psychological knowledge of being male, female, neither, or both.

Harassment means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for their physical safety; such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex (Education Law Section 11(7)).

Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination and includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity, and the status of being transgender. Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals.

Cyberbullying (also referred to as "Internet bullying") means any harassment or bullying that occurs through or by any form of electronic communication. Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to instant messaging, direct messaging, text messaging, e-mail, digital photographs or images, social networking, or website postings (blogs, chat rooms, etc.), when such use of technology interferes with the operation of the school, or infringes upon the general health, safety or welfare of students or employees. Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to any use of technology that constitutes harassment, teasing, intimidation, threatening, or terrorizing of another individual. Cyberbullying originating off school property will be investigated and could lead to discipline or corrective action. Examples of cyberbullying include but are not limited to:

- Sending to others or posting any inappropriate, hurtful, rude, or derogatory emails or other electronic messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including but not limited to blogs).
- Spreading rumors or lies about others by text message or e-mail or posting on any social networking sites.
- Creating or sharing pictures, websites, videos or social media profiles, including fake profiles that embarrass, humiliate, or make fun of others.

Race means a group of persons related by a common descent or heredity. For purposes of enumeration the U.S. Census Bureau uses terms such as: "White/Caucasian", "Black/African American/African-descent", "Asian", "Bi-racial", "Hispanics/Latinos" etc. to describe and classify the inhabitants of the United States.

Color means the term refers to the apparent pigmentation of the skin, especially as an indication or possible indication of race.

Weight means aside from the obvious meaning in the physical sciences, the word is used in reference to a person's "size".

National Origin means a person's country of birth or ancestor's country of birth.

Ethnic Group means a group of people who identify with each other through a common heritage including language, culture, and often a shared or common religion and or ideology that stresses ancestry.

Religion means specific fundamental beliefs and practices generally agreed to by large numbers of the group or a body of persons adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices.

Religious Practice means a term including practices and observances such as attending worship services, wearing religious garb or symbols, praying at prescribed times, displaying religious objects, adhering to certain dietary rules, refraining from certain activities, proselytizing, etc.

Disability means any restriction or lack (due to any impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered typical.

Weapon means a firearm as defined in 18 USC §921 for purposes of the Gun-Free Schools Act. It also means any other gun, BB gun, pistol, revolver, shotgun, rifle, machine gun, disguised gun, dagger, dirk, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, gravity knife, brass knuckles, slingshot, metal knuckle knife, box cutters, cane sword, electronic dart gun, Kung Fu star, electronic stun gun, pepper spray or other noxious spray, explosive or incendiary bomb, or other device, instrument, material or substance that can cause physical injury or death when used to cause physical injury or death.

PROVISIONS REGARDING CONDUCT IN SCHOOL OR ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

No person on school property will engage in or take part in any activities, which violate laws, threaten, result, or are likely to result in:

1. Physical injury to self or another person
2. Damage to school property, the property of students, employees or visitors
3. Disruption of orderly conduct at school events and/or on school property.
4. Harassment of or interference with the rights of others
5. Sexual harassment
6. Disobedience of a direct request made by a teacher or staff member
7. Loitering on school property
8. Bullying and intimidation

DRESS CODE

Children and adults will be dressed in clothes that are appropriate for school.

1. Clothes will not present a safety hazard.
2. Clothing will not be distracting to the learning environment.
3. Hats will not be worn in school.
4. Jewelry and accessories will not present a safety hazard and will not be distracting to the learning environment.

STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

With every right comes a responsibility.

It is the student's right:

- 1) To attend school in the district in which one's parent or legal guardian resides.
- 2) To expect that school will be a safe, orderly and purposeful place for all students to gain an education and to be treated fairly.
- 3) To be respected as an individual.
- 4) To express one's opinions verbally or in writing.
- 5) To dress in such a way as to express one's personality within the context of the dress code.
- 6) To be afforded equal and appropriate educational opportunities.
- 7) To take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color creed, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, national origin, ethnic group, political affiliation, age, marital status, or disability.
- 8) To have access to relevant and objective information concerning drug and alcohol abuse, as well as access to individuals or agencies capable of providing direct assistance to students with serious personal problems.
- 9) To be protected from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or religious practice, sex, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability, by employees or students on school property or at a school-sponsored event, function or activity.

It is the student's responsibility:

- 1) To attend school daily, regularly and on time, perform assignments, and strive to do the highest quality work possible and be granted the opportunity to receive a good education.
- 2) To be aware of all rules and expectations regulating student's behavior and conduct oneself in accordance with these guidelines.
- 3) To respect one another, and to treat others in the manner that one would want to be treated.
- 4) To express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or restrict, the rights and privileges of others.
- 5) To dress appropriately in accordance with the dress code, so as not to endanger physical health, safety, limit participation in school activities or be unduly distracting.
- 6) To be aware of available educational programs in order to use and develop one's capabilities to their maximum.
- 7) To work to the best of one's ability in all academic and extracurricular activities, as well as being fair and supportive of others.
- 8) To be aware of the information and services available and to seek assistance in dealing with concerns when appropriate or as they arise in a timely manner.
- 9) To respect one another and treat others fairly in accordance with the District Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Dignity Act. To conduct themselves in a manner that fosters an environment that is free from intimidation, harassment, or discrimination. To report and encourage others, to report any incidents of intimidation, harassment, or discrimination as they arise and in a timely manner.

ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

Expectations for Parents / Guardians

- 1) Recognize that the education of their children is a joint responsibility of the parents or guardians and school community.
- 2) Send their children to school ready to participate and learn as required by New York State Education Law and in accordance with the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy (#7110). Ensure that children attend school regularly and on time. Ensure absences are excused.
- 3) Insist their children be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
- 4) Help their children understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
- 5) Know school rules and help their children understand them to maintain a safe, orderly environment in accordance with the District Code of Conduct.
- 6) Convey to their children a supportive attitude towards education and the district.
- 7) Build positive relationships with teachers, other parents, and their children's friends.
- 8) Work with our schools to maintain open and respectful communication.
- 9) Help their children deal effectively with peer pressure.
- 10) Inform school officials of changes in the home demographics (phone number, address) and major life events. That may affect student conduct or performance.
- 11) Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.
- 12) Teach their children respect and dignity for themselves, and other students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, which will strengthen the child's confidence and promote learning in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act.

Expectations for Visitors

1. Follow the District Code of Conduct at all times.
2. Report to the office and sign in before visiting a class or speaking to a teacher or pupil during regular school hours.
3. Wear a visitor's badge during regular school hours.
4. Must show ID

Expectations for Teachers

- 1) Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn. Set an example of ethical and respectful behavior.
- 2) Be prepared to teach.
- 3) Demonstrate interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
- 4) Know school policies and rules and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- 5) Communicate to students and parents/guardians:
 - i. Course objectives and requirements.
 - ii. Marking/grading procedures.
 - iii. Assignment deadlines.
 - iv. Expectations for students.
 - v. Classroom discipline plan.
- 6) Communicate regularly with students, parents/guardians and other teachers concerning growth and achievement as warranted.
- 7) Confront issues of discrimination and harassment in any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any students, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- 8) Refrain from personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.
- 9) Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a teacher's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) and/or Title IX Coordinators in a timely manner.
- 10) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

Expectations for School Counselors

- 1) Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- 2) Initiate and appropriately document teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to resolve problems.
- 3) Regularly review with the students and parents/guardians as needed their educational progress, career plans and graduation requirements.
- 4) Provide information to assist students with career planning.
- 5) Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
- 6) Coordinate Intervention Support Services, as needed, with student, parent, building principal, and teachers.
- 7) Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an

understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.

- 8) Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the counselor's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) and/or Title IX Coordinators in a timely manner.
- 9) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

Expectations for Student Support Service Personnel Providers

- 1) Support educational and academic goals.
- 2) Know school rules, abide by them and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- 3) Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social, and emotional problems.
- 4) Set a good example for students and colleagues by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct.
- 5) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
- 6) Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences and parent/
- 7) teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary or re-
- 8) quested, as a way to resolve problems and communicate as necessary in any other manner with parents and other staff regarding student progress and needs.
- 9) Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plan.
- 10) Provide information to assist students with career planning.
- 11) Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extra-curricular programs.
- 12) Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
- 13) Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) and/or Title IX Coordinators in a timely manner.
- 14) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

Expectations for Other School Staff

1. Follow the Code of Conduct; know, abide by and enforce school rules in a fair and consistent manner.
2. Set a good example for students and other staff by demonstrating dependability, integrity and other standards of ethical conduct to create a safe and quality educational environment.
3. Assist in promoting a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment.
4. Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.
5. Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn.
6. Report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to a staff member's attention to the building administrator and/or Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) and/or Title IX Coordinators in a timely manner.

Expectations for Principals

- 1) Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
- 2) Ensure that students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the principal and approach the principal for redress of grievances.
- 3) Evaluate on a regular basis the effective safety, behavioral and school management issues related to all instructional programs.
- 4) Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
- 5) Be responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct, ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly, consistently and fairly and, when necessary, appropriately documenting actions within student age-appropriate norms.
- 6) Maintain and encourage a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, or sex, with an understanding of appropriate appearance, language, and behavior in a school setting, which will strengthen students' self-image and promote confidence to learn. Set an example of ethical and respectful behavior.
- 7) Arrange for the continuing educational programming for the student removed from class.
- 8) Follow up on any incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to the principal's attention in a timely manner in collaboration with the Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) and/or Title IX Coordinators.
- 9) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

Expectations for the Superintendent

- 1) Promote a safe, orderly, respectful and stimulating school environment, free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment, supporting active teaching and learning. Set an example of ethical and respectful behavior.

- 2) Review with District administrators the policies of the Board of Education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
- 3) Inform the School Board about educational trends, including student discipline.
- 4) Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- 5) Work with District administrators in enforcing the Code of Conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.
- 6) Address all areas of school-related safety concerns.
- 7) Maintain confidentiality about all personal information and educational records concerning students and their families.

Board of Education

- 1) Collaborate with students, teachers, administrators and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a Code of Conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, District personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
- 2) Approve and review at least annually the District's Code of Conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation.
- 3) Appoint at least one Dignity Act Coordinator in each school building. Appoint Title IX Coordinators for the District.
- 4) Lead by example in a professional, respectful and courteous manner at all times.

Student Use of Electronic Communication Devices

Students are prohibited from using or having on or in an operational mode any cellular telephone, laser pointer or pen or any other type of telecommunications or imaging device during instructional time, except as expressly permitted in connection with authorized use in classrooms. While students are permitted to possess such devices during the school day (such as iPads), they are prohibited from using them in any manner which invades the privacy of students, employees, volunteers or visitors. Students are not permitted to use any form of information technology, including their own personal electronic devices, to intimidate, harass or threaten others. This type of harassment is generally referred to as cyberbullying which may be direct and indirect. If a student violates this prohibition, then they are subject to discipline under this provision and/or any other provision in the District Code of Conduct that may be applicable to the circumstances involved. Any electronic device that is permitted on school property is encouraged to be kept on the person and in a concealed manner.

District staff/volunteers and all other Board personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and behavior (including possession/use of electronic devices) and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance and conduct in the school setting.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The District Board expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner per the District Code of Conduct, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of facilities and equipment. These expectations also apply to internships and student work experience.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to develop self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to be clear and specific in expressing its expectations for student conduct while on District property or engaged in a District function. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior or who violate these school rules will be required to accept the consequences for their conduct. Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school or removal from a program, when they engage in conduct that is disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, violent, endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others, engage in misconduct on the school bus, or engage in academic misconduct including work/internship sites.

A. Engage in Conduct That is Disorderly

Examples of disorderly conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Engaging in any act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community, running in hallways, making unreasonable noise, and using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive, intimidating, or that incite others.
- 2) Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- 3) Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
- 4) Misusing computer/electronic communications devices, including any unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, software, or Internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; evading the district's content filter; using an outside wireless network; or any other violation of the District Acceptable Use Policy.
- 5) Unauthorized use (or attempting to use) any electronic, communication, or recording device (including but not limited to cameras, video cameras, tape recorders, cell phones, iPods, smartphones (i.e. iPhones and/or Android devices), web-enabled devices of any kind, tablets

(iPads and similar devices), or other mobile computing devices to capture, record, and/or transmit the words or sounds (i.e. audio) and/or images (i.e. pictures or video) of any student, staff member, or other person, unless expressly approved by a school administrator or other authorized school official. Regardless of authorization, it is never permissible to use such devices in restrooms, locker rooms, shower facilities, changing areas, or any other area where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Authorized possession of an electronic or communications device at school or during the course of any school-related activity is a privilege that may be forfeited, relinquished, or rescinded if the student fails to comply with the provisions of this Code of Conduct.

- 6) Unauthorized use of personal computer, laptop, tablet or e-reader and/or other computerized information resources through the district computer system is prohibited.

B. Engage in Conduct That is Insubordinate

Examples of insubordinate conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other District employees or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- 2) Missing or leaving school or class without permission.

C. Engage in Conduct That is Disruptive

Examples of disruptive conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, District administrators or other District employees or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- 2) Endangering the health and safety of other students or staff or interfering with classes or District activities by means of inappropriate appearance or behavior.
- 3) Repetitive disruptive behavior may be considered insubordinate.

D. Engage in Conduct That is Violent

Examples of violent conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Committing, threatening or attempting an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, or scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other District employee.
- 2) Committing, threatening or attempting an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, or scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or at school sponsored events.
- 3) Engaging in harassing conduct, verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical well-being.
- 4) Possessing a weapon (see definition). Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on District property or at a District function.
- 5) Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
- 6) Threatening to use any weapon(s).
- 7) Using weapon(s).
- 8) Intentionally damaging or destroying District property, the personal property of a student, teacher, volunteer, contractor, vendor, administrator, other District employee or any person lawfully on District property, or at a District function including but not limited to graffiti or arson.
- 9) Communication by any means, including oral, written or electronic (such as through the Internet, email or texting) off school property, where the content of such communication (a) can reasonably be interpreted as a threat to commit an act of violence on school property; or (b) results in material or substantial disruption to the educational environment.

E. Engage in Any Conduct That Endangers the Safety, Morals, Health or Welfare of Others

Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Lying, deceiving or giving false information to school personnel.
- 2) Stealing District property or the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or while attending a school function.
- 3) Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them. This can include posting or publishing video, audio recordings or pictures on any social media (written material, cell phones, Internet, YouTube, etc.).

- 4) Discrimination, based on a person's actual or perceived race, age, sexual orientation, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, color, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, marital or veteran status, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner on school property or at a school function.
- 5) Harassment, the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, political affiliation, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, marital or veteran status, use of a recognized guide dog, hearing dog or service dog, disability, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity or sex.
- 6) Bullying and intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm and/or emotional discomfort; for example, "play" fighting, extortion of money, overt teasing, etc. Bullying that is persistent and ongoing where one individual is at a positional advantage over another.
- 7) "Internet bullying" (also referred to as "cyberbullying") including the use of instant messaging, email, websites, chat rooms, text messaging, and all forms of social media, or by any other electronic means, when such use interferes with the operation of the school; or infringes upon the general health, safety and welfare of students or employees.
- 8) Sexual harassment, which includes unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taking, sending or receiving sexually explicit videos, pictures or auditory recordings and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.
- 9) Displaying signs of gang affiliation or engaging in gang-related behaviors that are observed to increase the level of conflict or violent behavior.
- 10) Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any District or school sponsored activity, organization, club, team or personal friend group.
- 11) Selling, using, possessing or distributing obscene material.
- 12) Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tobacco products or illegal and/or controlled substances, counterfeit and designer drugs, or paraphernalia for use of such drugs or be under the influence of any such substances on school property or at a school function. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, synthetic cannabinoids, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
- 13) Inappropriately using, sharing, selling, attempting to sell, distributing or exchanging prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
- 14) Possessing, consuming, selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging "look-alike drugs"; or, possessing or consuming (without authorization), selling, attempting to sell, distributing, or exchanging other substances such as dietary supplements, weight loss pills, etc.
- 15) Gambling and gaming.
- 16) Inappropriate touching and/or indecent exposure, that is, exposure to the sight of the private parts of the body or undergarments in a lewd or indecent manner. This paragraph encompasses and prohibits any and all indecent exposure, including but not limited to indecent exposure that is in-person or electronic (i.e., by possession or transmission of nude, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit pictures, recordings, or messages).
- 17) Initiating or reporting warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misusing 911, or inappropriately discharging a fire extinguisher.

F. Engage in Misconduct While on a School Bus

It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on District buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving, fighting, harassment, and discrimination will not be tolerated.

Engage in Any Form of Academic Misconduct

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Plagiarism.
- 2) Cheating.
- 3) Altering records.
- 4) Accessing other users email accounts or network storage accounts and/or attempting to read, delete, copy, modify, and interfere with the transferring and receiving of electronic communications.
- 5) Violation of the District Acceptable Use Policy for technology.
- 6) Assisting another student in any of the above actions.

RANGE OF CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THIS CODE

Options include but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Warning, verbal or written reprimand which stays in the students file (referral copy)
- 2) Time Out
- 3) Change of seat, Change of placement.
- 4) Loss of privileges — includes eligibility and Probation at HS

- 5) Parent notification by teacher and/or administrator (call or note)
- 6) Assignment of lunch or after school detention
- 7) Suspension from school transportation
- 8) Suspension from class, and Suspension from school
- 9) (All classes) includes In-school suspension.
- 10) Referral to Student Review Team (SRT)
- 11) Mediation/conflict resolution/ restorative practices
- 12) Referral to CSE (Committee on Special Education), Referral to the Police or Law enforcement, Referral to social service agencies such as Child Protective Services, Referral to Family Court, PINS petition
- 13) Removal from school property

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES and MINIMUM SUSPENSION PERIOD for incidents involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of physical force, vandalism, violation of another student's civil rights and/or threats of violence.

Acts such as the threat of serious physical injury, assault causing bodily harm, sexual assault, hate-motivated violence, robbery, extortion, possession and/or use of weapons, and extensive vandalism will result in suspension (minimum of five days) and possibly one or more of the following: Contact with police, alternative learning placement, and recommendation for expulsion.

NOTE: The federal Gun-Free School Act of 1994 (20 USC 8921) requires all states that receive funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have a law that requires school districts to suspend students who bring firearms to school for a minimum of one calendar year. Section 3214 (3) (d) of the Education Law has been amended to comply with the federal law.

PROVISIONS FOR STUDENT DETENTION, SUSPENSION AND/OR REMOVAL FROM THE CLASSROOM

(Consistent with Education Law 3214 and other applicable federal, state, and local laws).

- 1) Detention after school or before school may be assigned by teachers and administrators.
- 2) Suspension may range from 1-5 days with prior notification to the parents. The preferred type of suspension is In School. However, a severe disciplinary situation may require Out of School Suspension. Only the building principal may suspend students.
- 3) Teacher Removal of a Student from the Classroom.
- 4) The classroom teacher must contact the building administrator's office to have a student removed. The teacher must decide whether the student needs to be escorted to the office and then inform the administrator concerning the situation.
- 5) The administrator will determine the length of removal after consulting with the teacher.
- 6) The classroom teacher must show the administrator evidence in writing, before the end of the day with the reason for removal. If not the first incident, the teacher must indicate communications with the home and interventions already used for this student. Teachers should be able to establish that they have sought assistance in any of the following ways:
 - i. Attempted communication with parents before the removal was requested. This will demonstrate that the parents were apprised of the situation and had ample opportunity to intervene at home. A written record of these communications must be kept.
 - ii. Tried interventions (with specific dates) prior to removal - including, but not limited to, presentation of this student before the building SRT (Student Review Team). A written record of these interventions must be kept.
 - iii. Asked the SRT to review the case.
 - iv. Documented that this student is a known "Disruptive" and/or "Violent" student, with an FBA (FBA Functional Behavior Assessment) as well as a BIP already in place (Behavior Intervention Plan).
- 7) The Classroom Teacher must meet with the removed student within 24 hours to explain the reason for removal. At that time, the student must provide a completed Responsibility Plan for review before the student returns to the classroom.
- 8) For short-term REMOVAL, alternative placements and interventions will be considered by the administration.
- 9) The classroom teacher will continue to plan, using short-term curricular goals for this student and correct all work submitted by the ISS tutor (necessary for short-term removal).

NOTE: Students with special needs may be referred back to the CSE (Committee on Special Education) for a placement review.

PROCEDURES BY WHICH VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT ARE REPORTED, DETERMINED, DISCIPLINARY MEASURES IMPOSED AND MEASURES CARRIED OUT INCLUDING PROCEDURES BY WHICH LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES SHALL BE NOTIFIED OF CODE VIOLATIONS

All violations of the CODE OF CONDUCT must be referred to a building administrator in writing within a reasonable time frame (appropriate to the event). There will be an investigation into the alleged misconduct. All written teacher made referrals will be returned in writing. All student and parent referrals will be handled most expediently either by phone, in person, or in writing. The CODE OF CONDUCT and the appropriate School

Handbook will be consulted to assign consequences for violations of the code. ALL HANDBOOKS WILL INCLUDE THE "CODE OF CONDUCT" AND ARE TO BE APPROVED ANNUALLY BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the CODE OF CONDUCT to a teacher, school counselor/social worker, the building principal or his/her designee. Any student observing another student possessing a weapon, alcohol, or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the building principal, principal's designee, or the superintendent.

All district staff that are authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to do so in a prompt, fair and lawful manner. District staff that are not authorized to impose disciplinary sanctions are expected to promptly report violations of the CODE OF CONDUCT to their supervisor. This supervisor shall in turn impose the appropriate disciplinary sanction, if so authorized, or refer the matter to a staff member who is authorized to impose an appropriate sanction.

The building principal or designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order and security of the school (as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the principal or designee learns of the violation). The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed the same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student and explain the conduct that violated the CODE OF CONDUCT and constituted a crime.

UPDATES - PROVISION ENSURING THAT SUCH CODE AND THE ENFORCEMENT THEREOF ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS RELATING TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Every effort will be made to keep the CODE OF CONDUCT in compliance with prevailing laws. In addition, the school attorney will review and advise the District when any changes are proposed in either law or in the CODE OF CONDUCT.

PARENT NOTIFICATION - PROVISIONS SETTING FORTH THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER AND PROCEDURES BY WHICH PERSONS IN PARENTAL RELATION TO THE STUDENT SHALL BE NOTIFIED OF CODE VIOLATIONS.

Parents or person in parental relation to students shall be contacted by school personnel when their child is going to be suspended.

REFERRALS - CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER AND PROCEDURES BY WHICH A COMPLAINT IN CRIMINAL COURT, A JUVENILE DELINQUENCY PETITION OR PERSON IN NEED OF SUPERVISION A PETITION SHALL BE FILED OR WHEN A REFERRAL TO APPROPRIATE HUMAN SERVICE AGENCY SHALL BE MADE

- 1) Counseling - The school counseling office (school counselor or a social worker) shall handle all referrals of students to counseling.
- 2) PINS Petitions - The district may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that they require supervision and treatment by:
 - i. Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.
 - ii. Engaging in ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
 - iii. Knowingly or unlawfully possessing marijuana or any other illegal drug in violation of Penal Law §221.05. A single violation of this law will be sufficient basis for filing a PINS petition.
- 3) Juvenile Delinquents and Juvenile Offenders - The superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:
 - i. Any student under the age of 16 who is found to have brought a weapon to school, or
 - ii. Any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law 1.20 (42).

NOTE: The superintendent is required to refer students aged 16 and older or any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile offender status to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. (A 14 or 15-year-old student who possesses a firearm on school grounds qualifies as juvenile offender under Criminal Procedures Law. See Penal Law 265 for weapon/firearm and Penal Law 220.000 (14) regarding juvenile offender status).

FAMILY RIGHTS AND PRIVACY (FERPA).

Notice Regarding Family Rights and Privacy

The District's procedures for the confidentiality of student records are consistent with federal statutes, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) The parents, those acting in a parental relationship, of eligible students at the North Tonawanda City School District are hereby notified that you have the following rights in relation to student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Board of Education Policy #7240:

- 1) The right to inspect and review a student's education records, unless otherwise limited by court order or other legally binding instrument, within 45 days of receipt of request.
- 2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education record that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

- i. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School Principal (or appropriate school official); clearly identify the part of the record they want changed; and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
 - i. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- 4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.
 - i. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4600
- 5) If either a student's parent, those acting in a parental relationship, or the eligible student desire to obtain copies of the policy pertaining to student records, notification should be presented in writing to the Administration Building, 176 Walck Road, North Tonawanda, NY 14120.

NOTE: All rights and protections given parents under FERPA and this policy transfer to the student when he or she reaches age 18 and petitions for self-determination, or attends a post-secondary school, or has been designated an "emancipated minor." The student then becomes an "eligible" student.

Designated Directory Information

The school district designates the following personally identifiable information contained in a student's education record as "directory information" and shall release the information without prior written consent unless it is for commercial purposes.

- 1) Student's name
- 2) Name(s) of the student's parent(s) or legal guardians
- 3) Student's grade designation (i.e., first grade, tenth grade, etc.)
- 4) Student's extracurricular school activities and offices (e.g., member of the Math Club; Secretary of Student Council)
- 5) Student's school achievement, awards and honors
- 6) (e.g., member of National Honor Society; selected for MVP award in Soccer)
- 7) Relevant statistics and personal data if a member of an athletic team or other school sponsored course, organization, or activity.
- 8) Present and previous school(s) attended by the student.

Any other information will require parental consent through an "opt-out" process to release to any agency including military recruiters, institutions of higher education, and potential employers. You must advise the school district in writing of any and all items which you refuse to permit the District to designate as directory information about the student.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THE CODE OF CONDUCT MAY BE AS FOLLOWS:

- **AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION**

Students will be assigned after school detention for being excessively late to class, not completing homework assignments, being habitually unprepared for class, or for rule violations that warrant disciplinary action. Students who are assigned detention must report to detention (to assigned locations) by 2:35 p.m. to receive credit for serving detention. Detention is from **2:37 – 3:20 p.m.** on Mon, Tues, and Thurs. Late bus transportation will be provided for all students are eligible for district transportation, per district policy. Students who fail to show up for detention (for unapproved reasons) will have their parents contacted and still have to serve detention after school the following day. Students who continue to miss after school detention may face further disciplinary consequences.

- **ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (A.L.E.)**

The District recognizes the educational setting must balance the need of students to attend school and the need for order in the classroom to establish an environment conducive to learning. As such, Principals and the Superintendent are authorized to place students who would otherwise be suspended from school as the result of a Code of Conduct violation in the A.L.E. During this time, the student is expected to complete tasks provided by classroom teachers for the day(s) he/she is in attendance. The A.L.E. room is very structured. While serving the consequence, students may participate in after school activities following completion of their assigned time.

- **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

Students who receive Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) are also placed on the Loss of Privilege list for the duration of OSS and are not permitted on school property during regular school hours. They are however required to attend tutoring every day from **2:30-4:30 pm**. Tutoring is provided at North Tonawanda Middle School Monday-Friday. Attendance at tutoring is recorded as part of the student's attendance record. Students who fail to attend (OSS) tutoring are marked truant. The parents of students who are Out-of-School Suspended are required to attend a conference with their child and an administrator before they can be readmitted to school (unless otherwise notified).

- **LOSS OF PRIVILEGE LIST**

It is expected that the students at North Tonawanda Middle School maintain proper conduct and strive for academic excellence. Students who are unable to do this may be placed on a loss of privilege list. Students on this list may not participate in extra-curricular activities. Students can be placed on the list for behavior, attendance, and/or academics.

- **OTHER**

Can include but is not limited to: Referral to the school counselor, school social worker or an outside agency, conference with student and parent, and/or student and staff member, mediation, restricted travel, loss of privilege, removal from cafeteria.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Students should arrive on time and attend school each day that school is in session.

TARDINESS

When a student arrives late to school, he/she misses the important morning announcements that are made during homeroom. Any student arriving to homeroom after the official start of school (**7:30 a.m.**) must report directly to the Attendance Office with a **written excuse** explaining the tardiness. Excused tardies include doctor's appointments, attendance in court, funerals, religious observances and/or impassable roads. Sleeping in or missing the bus is not an excused tardy.

Arriving late to homeroom will result in a tardy being documented. Students who are late for homeroom must report to the Attendance Office. The Attendance Office will issue a pass to homeroom or class depending on the students' time of arrival. Students who receive more than 4 unexcused tardies in one grading quarter will be issued disciplinary consequences. (ie. lunch detention)

TRUANCY

Any student who is absent from school without his/her parent/guardians' knowledge and permission will be considered truant. The consequences for truancy may be in school suspension (ISS), detention, referral to the school counselor or social worker, or a referral to youth court. Students who are deemed truant may not receive credit for any assignments given that day.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Students will respect themselves, other students, faculty and staff at all times. Students are expected to act courteously at all times and be considerate of others, the school and its properties.

Middle school students should walk on the right side while in the hallways and should be on time for all classes. **Students who are late to class will receive a teacher issued detention after the third time they are tardy. Unexcused tardiness to class that exceeds ten (10) minutes will be treated as a class skip resulting in a discipline referral and the assignment of after school detention.** All students are required to have a pass while in the hallway during class time and are expected to use proper manners and appropriate language at all times. Students are responsible for all textbooks they are issued. If a textbook is damaged or lost, a fine will be assessed.

All students are expected to demonstrate integrity and honesty in the submission of all work and to document accurately, regardless of the information that is ultimately presented (summary, paraphrase or direct quotation) or the medium used (written, oral or visual). Plagiarism, in any form, including the use of artificial intelligence to complete assignments is unacceptable and may result in a grade of zero to be given.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Ask questions and seek help from the teacher or librarian.
- Submit only his/her own work.
Plagiarism Includes:
 - Directly copying the work or ideas of another submitted as the student's own, including copying from that of another student or adult, or from an electronic or print source.
 - Lack of appropriate in-text documentation. Paraphrasing without documentation is plagiarism.
 - Documentation that does not check out or does not match the Works Cited or Works Consulted list.
 - The use of artificial intelligence to complete assignments.
 - Work turned in without any evidence of research or creative process or that is obviously inconsistent with student's previous work.

Food and drinks are not allowed in the hallways and classrooms. Students are permitted to carry a water bottle only. Students who misuse their water bottle may lose privilege to carry a water bottle in school.

All students are expected to use the waste containers that are provided and to pick up after themselves. Students should never write on or damage windows, doors, lockers, walls, mirrors or ceilings.

Any students who are in possession of, or under the influence of drugs, alcohol or a controlled substance which is not prescribed by a doctor (or approved by the school nurse) are in violation of district policy. All such offenses will incur 5 days of out-of-school suspension, a parent conference, possible notification of legal authorities, and a Superintendent's suspension hearing.

SCHOOL- WIDE BEHAVIORAL TEACHING MATRIX

VOICE LEVELS: 0=silent, 1=whisper, 2=conversation, 3=presentation, 4=emergency

NTMS School Wide Expectations

Students at NTMS believe in...

	Respect Students are expected to:	Responsibility Students are expected to:	Safety Students are expected to:
In the Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be active listeners. Follow classroom rules & procedures. Be aware of the rights of others. Be tolerant of the opinions of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be on time. Have all needed supplies Strive for quality work. Help keep the classrooms clean. Follow the voice level guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the NTMS Dress Code guidelines. Respect other student's space and rights. Follow safety procedures especially during fire drills and lockdowns.
In the Hallways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use voice level 1 - 2. Use appropriate language and good manners. Respect other student's space. Respect all school property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the <u>right</u> side of the hall. Take the direct route to each classroom. Pace themselves - be on time! Help keep the hallways clean! Keep hands and feet to yourself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the right side of the hall. No earbuds or headphones in hallways. Respect other student's space and rights. Follow safety procedures especially during fire drills and lockdowns.
In the Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect other student's space and rights. Use voice level 1 - 2. Respect the cafeteria monitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be prepared to order and pay for lunch. Clean up after themselves!!! Respect the cafeteria monitors. Only 8 students per table. Have a pre-signed pass before entering the cafeteria to leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the directions of the cafeteria monitors. Follow safety procedures especially during fire drills. Wait to be directed to purchase a lunch or throwing trash away. Stay <u>seated</u> until dismissed.

Middle school students will accept responsibility for his/her actions.

DRESS / APPEARANCE

The Middle School Community believes that the student dress code should be neat, clean and appropriate at all times. Proper dress affects the school environment, student conduct, and the quality of schoolwork. Per the North Tonawanda City School District Code of Conduct dress that distracts or interferes with the learning process will not be allowed in school. Appropriate dress is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the student.

When we have sufficient grounds for concern about a student's appearance, a home contact will be made. **The student will be required to change into more appropriate clothing before being allowed to return to class.** If clothes/shoes are not available to change into, or if a student refuses to comply with the school dress code policy, that student will remain in the ISS room for the duration of the day. Repeat offenders will face disciplinary consequences. These guidelines will be observed during school hours and all school functions including dances, field trips, and public performances.

Due to frequent changes in fashion, it is impossible to specifically describe all clothing styles that might be considered unacceptable to wear to school. However, students should be dressed in a way as not to offend school community standards. Therefore, the following attire will be prohibited:

- a. Slippers or sneakers that serve as rollerblades.
- b. Shorts, skirts, dresses, and tops that do not adequately cover undergarments and/or personal body parts.
- c. Headwear or sunglasses except for medical or religious purposes that have been approved by an administrator.
- d. Clothing that advertises, display, or represent sex, alcoholic beverages, tobacco items, drugs, weapons and/or gang related themes.
- e. Apparel or accessories that display obscene/vulgar words or images, sexually explicit or suggestive remarks.
- f. Mid-cut shirts that reveal midriff.
- g. Outdoor coats, jackets, etc.
- h. Wearing of a scent that has a negative impact on others.

School administrators or their designee will make the final decision on any questionable dress code concerns.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS WHILE IN THE CAFETERIA

- Students will enter the cafeteria and place their belongings at a table of their choice, first come first serve, 4 students per table.
- Students will wait to be dismissed from their table to get in line and receive a lunch.
- All food and drink must be consumed in the cafeteria.
- Students may **ONLY** leave their seats (at the discretion of the lunch monitors) to purchase food, return trays and dispose of and recycle their waste.
- Running will not be tolerated in the cafeteria.
- Throwing anything for any reason will result in immediate removal from the cafeteria.
- Students who are uncooperative or exhibit poor behavior may be assigned to sit in the. Failure to comply will warrant removal from the cafeteria or will be assigned a seat.
- Students may request permission to use the lavatory, must sign out and take the lavatory pass.
- Students who wish to see a teacher must obtain a pass **before** lunch and present it to a lunch monitor, or they will not be permitted to leave.
- Students will be dismissed by (at the discretion of the lunch monitors) once their area has been properly cleared of all trays, garbage, and debris.

SHOW PRIDE AND RESPECT FOR NTMS BY TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEAVING YOUR TABLE AREA CLEAN AND ORDERLY.

CELL PHONE / ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Please refer to district policy "Away for the Day"

BUS CONDUCT

Bus transportation is provided as a privilege to those who live outside the board approved mileage limits in which a student can walk to their assigned school. Bus transportation may also be provided for a school sponsored field trip. The following rules governing student behavior are in effect at all times while riding the bus:

1. Students who are provided district transportation are to remain on school property upon arrival to the middle school.
2. The bus drivers are your supervisors and are in charge. Their instructions are to be obeyed and their rules followed.
3. Students need to remain seated at all times, respect each other and property, and refrain from throwing any objects.
4. Profanity will not be tolerated.
5. Use quiet voices. Enter and exit the bus quietly and in an orderly fashion.
6. No food or beverages are permitted.
7. Remain seated in your seat. The driver is authorized to assign seats to uncooperative students if necessary.
8. Identification must be shown if requested. You are only permitted to ride your assigned bus and get on and off at your assigned bus stop.
9. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Failure to abide by the rules will result in the loss of your bus riding privileges.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual Harassment is illegal when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individuals' placement/advancement.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for placement or advancement decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

There are district procedures in place to address any such harassment. This information is readily available to all faculty, staff and students.

Conduct & Loss of Privilege:

- The Administration in the school will review all incidents of misconduct and will consider placing a child on the loss of privilege list if warranted. A child can be placed on the loss of privilege list for up to 15 school days. Problems such as but not limited to, fighting, harassment, theft, vandalism, forgery, cheating, and insubordination will be considered grounds for loss of privilege.
- Students and parents will be notified when a student is placed on the loss of privilege list. A student on the loss of privilege list is unable to participate or attend school events and activities. However, a student on the loss of privilege list may become eligible upon approval of the administration. A decision will be rendered after a letter is written by the student and/or guardian requesting permission to attend or participate in an activity. The student must be able to show proof that no serious incidents or attendance problems have occurred since the original incident that placed them on the list.
- Any student suspended may not participate in after school activities or athletic events during the period of suspension. For example, if a student is suspended on the day prior to the eighth-grade luncheon he or she loses the right to go and will forfeit the price of transportation, tickets, and pre-paid meals.
- Students are also subject to the rules for their clubs, organization, team, and/or group.
- Student athletes are subject to the rules established by the NYSPHAA, Section IV, Niagara Frontier League, and the NTMS handbook.

**** Please see the North Tonawanda City School District Extra-Curricular Activities Handbook for additional information.**

LOST AND FOUND

Students who have lost or misplaced items should check with their team teachers. Students who find items in school or on the bus are asked to bring them to the Main Office.

LIBRARY

Students will have an opportunity to sign out library books during their enrichment or study hall. Students who have overdue books will be notified in homeroom and a phone call will be made home to parents at the end of the school year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will have access to locker rooms during physical education. Therefore, students will change for P.E. class. Students are expected to wear athletic clothing and sneakers for class. When weather permits the students will be going outside.

Physical Education (gym) is a required part of the curriculum for all students and is mandated by the New York State Education Department. A student is required to earn a passing grade in physical education in order to complete requirements for each grade and participate in extra-curricular activities.

All physical education equipment should have names on them so if lost they can be promptly returned. All cosmetics brought into the locker room such as make-up, shampoo, deodorants, etc., are to be in plastic or metal containers for safety purposes (no glass). No items that could be hazardous are to be brought to any physical education class. Electrical hair dryers and curling irons are not permitted in the locker room.

Students are to leave all valuables such as watches, rings, or large sums of money at home. Physical education teachers will not be responsible for students' valuables. **All jewelry must be removed including earrings in newly pierced ears, necklaces, rings, etc., while participating in any activity. Please do not plan on piercing ears just prior or during the school year.**

A student who is to be excused due to a lengthy illness must have a physician's note. Written assignments will be provided by the physical education teacher in lieu of class participation and will become the basis for the student's grade. Missed classes that are not excused by a physician need to be made up in order to receive credit for the class. Classes that are missed due to a student being unprepared may **not** be made up and the student will receive a zero. Students who are continuously unprepared for class will be deemed insubordinate and can receive discipline consequences.

HEALTH

- A parent/guardian may only excuse his/her child from physical education class for one day. A note from a physician, clinic or ER is necessary to be excused from physical education for more than one day.

All students and parents/guardians should make note of the following:

- All students need to obtain a pass from the teacher whose class they are attending in order to go to the Health Office that period. If the nurse is not available in her office, report to the Main Office. No one is to go to the Health Office without a pass except in an emergency.
- All medications are to be brought to the nurse in their original container with the medication request signed by the physician and parent/guardian. This includes any over-the-counter medications. The only medications that students may carry are inhalers and epi pens, if prescribed by doctors' orders.
- All 7th graders and students new to the district are required to obtain a physical according to New York State education law. If proof of a physical is not submitted to the nurse, the district health care provider will provide one during school hours.
- Students interested in participating in interscholastic sports must have had a sports physical within the last year. Announcements are made regarding sign up procedures in the nurse's office.
- Students must have permission to use crutches and the elevator from a physician, clinic or ER.
- JV and Varsity level sports begin practicing in mid-August. Modified football begins practice in August. All other modified sports teams begin practices in September.
- A student must have a sports physical within the last calendar year to try out for a sport. Middle School students trying out for a JV or Varsity level team **MUST** pass classification testing which is arranged through Mr. Matt Cook Athletic Director. He can be reached at **807-3647**.

LOCKERS

Lockers will be issued to students for the start of the school year. Combination locks will be issued to all students for use during the school year and returned at the end of the school year.

All lockers at NTMS are the property of the North Tonawanda City School District. Each student is assigned a hallway locker for personal clothing, school supplies, lunches, etc. **Lockers and other storage spaces are considered school property and therefore may be opened and searched by school officials without consent.** To make sure your personal belongings are safe, please follow these rules:

- Keep any personal belongings, coats, hats, and book bag in your locker.
- Do not share your locker with anyone for any reason.
- The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Property of great value should always be left at home.
- Students are not permitted to use their own personal locks from home at school.

SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS AND BIKES

Skateboards and roller blades are to be placed inside your locker immediately upon entering the school building and may only be removed at dismissal. Bikes and scooters should be locked in the bike racks outside. The School District is not responsible for any damage done to bikes which are locked on school grounds. Please walk your bike, skateboard or scooter once you arrive on school property in the morning, and do not ride them again until you are off school property when you leave.

STUDENT USE OF COMPUTERS/IPADS

Student use of the District's Computer System (DCS) is conditioned upon written agreement by all students and their parents/guardians that student use of the DCS will conform to the requirements of this policy and any regulations adopted to insure acceptable use of the DCS. A full explanation of this policy and a 'Computer Usage' form is provided to each NTMS student in this handbook. After thoroughly reading these documents, the student and parent(s) should sign the consent form. This should be retained by the student and kept in a binder where it is readily available. Students will be expected to have it in their possession whenever they plan to use a NTMS district computer.