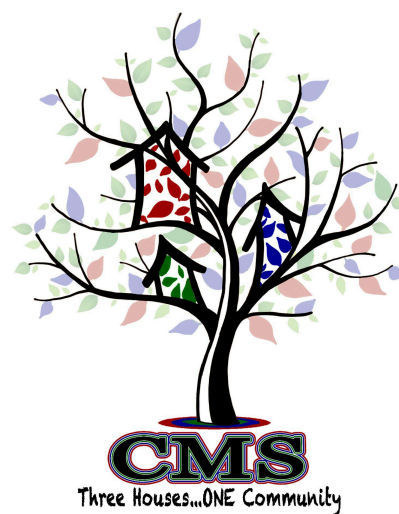


**CLARENCE MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2025-2026**

**Table of Contents**

<b>Page 1</b>	<b>Home Partnership and Student Responsibilities</b>
<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Common Questions and Phone Directory</b>
<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Attendance Policy and Procedures</b>
<b>Page 4</b>	<b>House Office and Guidance Services</b>
<b>Page 5</b>	<b>Grading Information and Portal Access</b>
<b>Page 5</b>	<b>Daily Time Schedule</b>
<b>Page 6</b>	<b>Academic Support</b>
<b>Page 7</b>	<b>Extracurricular Activities</b>
<b>Page 8</b>	<b>Transportation and Drop-Off/Pick-Up Expectations</b>
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Walkers or Bikers</b>
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Fire and Lock Down Drills</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>Electronic Devices and Personal Property</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>School Issued Chromebooks</b>
<b>Page 11</b>	<b>Dress Code</b>
<b>Page 12</b>	<b>Discipline (DASA, Plagiarism, Catch Up Cafe, Late to Class, Drink Policy)</b>



## **Home Partnership and Student Responsibilities**

### **For Parents/Guardians**

The education of children is the purpose of schools. It includes academic achievement, social, mental and emotional maturity, and physical fitness. If schools are to accomplish their purpose, cooperation between the school and home is necessary.

Parents may help by:

- Regularly checking Parent Portal for your student's current grades and attendance. The district calendar contains specific dates when each marking period ends. Report cards are posted about one week after the marking period ends. Progress Reports will be available on Parent Portal at the mid-marking point for each quarter.
- Contacting teachers with questions or concerns.
- Arranging a meeting with a teacher, guidance counselor, or administrator if a problem arises.
- Attending school functions.
- Being familiar with the information in this handbook, especially attendance, grading, and phone directory information.
- Supporting our electronic device policy by not texting your student during the school day.

The school will, to the best of its ability:

- Provide for individual differences of students.
- Emphasize quality rather than quantity of work.
- Generate electronic report cards every 10 weeks for students/parents to review on Parent Portal.
- Require behavior that is in the best interest of the student and entire student body.

### **For Students**

The Clarence Middle School program offers many experiences for you to prepare for the years ahead. Now is the time to develop attitudes of good citizenship, sportsmanship, study habits, and work habits so that you will be able to make the most of the opportunities in your future. We are here to support you and encourage you to seek out help when you need it. Please read this handbook carefully. You are expected to know its contents and are responsible for this information.

## What extension to call? (716) 407-9200

<u>Common Reasons for Contacting School:</u>	<u>Contact this Office:</u>	<u>Extension #:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Calling in Sick</li> <li>● Late to School</li> <li>● Early Pick-Up from School</li> <li>● Dropping Off Items</li> </ul>	Attendance Office  Lindsay Colby: <a href="mailto:LColby@clarenceschools.org">LColby@clarenceschools.org</a>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scheduling Questions</li> <li>● Student Concerns</li> <li>● Questions for Teachers</li> <li>● Parent Portal Issues</li> <li>● Questions for Principal</li> </ul>	Your Student's Grade Level House Office	<b>See Below</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bus Information &amp; Schedule</li> <li>● Any Bus Concerns</li> </ul>	Transportation Department	<b>9</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sports Related Questions and Issues</li> <li>● Sports Physicals</li> </ul>	Athletics Office	<b>4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Doctor's excuses for PE Class</li> <li>● Medications while at school</li> <li>● Physicals &amp; Immunizations</li> </ul>	Nurse's Office	<b>3</b>

*CMS is based on a house system. Each grade level is grouped into a house area wherein the academic classes take place. Students can go to his/her respective house for help or to call home. Each house has its own administrator and guidance counselor.*

<b>HOUSE OFFICE PHONE EXTENSION (after dialing 407-9200):</b>		
6th Grade House	<b>6</b>	Ms. Chelus, Asst. Principal Mr. Fox, Guidance Counselor Mrs. Hales, Secretary
7th Grade House	<b>7</b>	Mr. Kilmartin, Asst. Principal Mrs. Tudor, Guidance Counselor Mrs. O'Brien, Secretary
8th Grade House	<b>8</b>	Mrs. Dreibelbis, Principal Mrs. Elvin, Guidance Counselor Mrs. Englert, Secretary
Main Business Office	<b>0</b>	Ms. Klemann, Secretary Mrs. Lincoln, Secretary

**HELPFUL TIP FOR ALL PARENTS AND GUARDIANS:** We suggest to all parents & guardians to store these important numbers, especially the Attendance Office and your House Office, in your cell phones. These will be your most used and needed phone numbers during your child's middle school years.

## **Attendance Policy and Procedures**

### **Attendance Policy**

The Clarence Central School District has determined that absences, tardiness and early dismissals will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards:

- *EXCUSED*: An absence, tardy or early dismissal may be excused due to personal illness, death in the family, impassable roads, religious observance, quarantine, required court or legal obligation, appointment at a health clinic or suspension.
- *UNEXCUSED*: Absences not mentioned above include, but are not limited to, vacation, shopping, babysitting, oversleeping, cold weather or missing the bus. Any reason not listed as excused shall be deemed unexcused unless the Building Principal determines otherwise.

### **Reporting Absences**

1. If your child is going to be absent, call or email ([LColby@clarenceschools.org](mailto:LColby@clarenceschools.org)) the Attendance Office at 407-9200 Ext. #2 before 8:45 am each day your student is absent. Please leave your child's first and last name and the reason for his/her absence on the voicemail.
2. Students are required to submit a written excuse to the Attendance Office upon your return.

### **Physical Education Excuses**

There will be no excuses from PE class except by written permission from your parent/guardian. Excuses from parents/guardians are for up to two classes. A doctor's note is necessary for a longer time out of PE. Excuses should be given to the nurse. Students unable to participate in PE class for a medical reason are also ineligible to participate in any school sport for the same period of time.

### **Early Dismissal**

Any request to leave school early should be submitted to the Attendance office before 8:58 am. The student will be given a pass to leave class and should report to the Attendance Office. A parent must come in to the Attendance Office and sign their child out. If the child returns the same day, the parent does not need to come into the building. Parents should be prepared with identification to enter CMS.

### **Late Arrival**

Students reporting to school after the late bell must report to the Attendance Office. Students should have a written excuse for tardiness. A student arriving on a late bus, regardless of how late, is not marked tardy. Students are expected to wait at their normal bus stop for at least 10 minutes past the time of their normal pick up.

### **Student Items**

Items brought in for students should be dropped off with the front door monitor. Students are expected to go to the front foyer to pick up their item. Food dropoff for groups is not permitted.

## **House Office and Guidance Services**

### **Homework Requests**

After **two days** of absence, parents may call their student's house office by 10:00 am to request homework. In most cases, work will be accessible on Schoology and students can keep up with missed work on Schoology by checking current folders, the calendar, and teacher agendas.

### **Guidance Information**

The guidance counselor's job is to help students get the most out of their years in middle school. If at any time during the school year students have a problem or question, they are invited to see their counselor. They may see their counselor before or after school or during a study hall. In case of an emergency, students should ask their teacher to see their counselor. Students and parents/guardians are invited to confer with counselors at any time about any personal concerns, school experiences, abilities, interests or future plans. Parents should call their student's house office or email the counselor to schedule an appointment. Please see the phone directory in this handbook for guidance counselor contact information. Students should refer to their counselor's Schoology page for important information. Guidance counselors will also connect students with school social workers, psychologists, and/or Family Support Center as needed.

### **Lost and Found**

There is a lost and found in the Attendance Office and in each House Office. Students are encouraged to label their belongings and check the lost and found for misplaced items.

### **Student Illness During School**

*Students are not to call or text home because of illness. This is the responsibility of the nurse.* Students should let teachers know if they need to see the nurse. It is not appropriate to come to the Health Office between classes without permission from the next period's teacher. The nurse will assess the students and determine if she will call a parent/guardian to say they may be taken home.

### **Student Lockers**

Each student is assigned a hall locker for the storage of personal belongings and a gym locker for the storage of gym clothes. Lockers are not to be shared. Students are responsible for keeping their lockers and locker doors clean and free of decals. Your locker should be kept locked at all times. Students may not reveal their combination to peers. If a student has difficulty closing or locking a locker, please report it to your house office so the problem can be corrected. Under no circumstance should students kick the locker or force it closed. Students must provide their own locks.

## Grading Information and Portal Access

### Report Cards

Report cards are posted to Powerschool/Parent Portal approximately one week after the end of each quarter. Students with an average of 95-100 qualify for High Honor Roll; students with an average between 90-94.9 qualify for Honor Roll; and students with an average between 85-89.9 qualify for Merit Roll. Passing is 65 and above. Marking period end dates can be found on the website.

### What is Parent Portal?

Parent Portal/Powerschool is a web-based program that shows a student's current grade in each class, their attendance, report cards, and many other things. All parents should have a Parent Portal account. Please contact your student's house office if you do not have an account. All students are also provided their own accounts through Headquarters and should be encouraged to regularly check their own grades.

### CLARENCE MIDDLE SCHOOL DAILY TIME SCHEDULE

6 <sup>TH</sup>		7 <sup>TH</sup>		8 <sup>TH</sup>	
PER 1	8:58 – 9:38	PER 1	8:58 – 9:38	PER 1	8:58 – 9:38
HEADQUARTERS (HQ)	9:41 – 10:01	HEADQUARTERS (HQ)	9:41 – 10:01	HEADQUARTERS (HQ)	9:41 – 10:01
PER 2	10:04 – 10:44	PER 2	10:04 – 10:44	PER 2	10:04 – 10:44
PER 3	10:47 – 11:27	PER 3	10:47 – 11:27	PER 3	10:47 – 11:27
LUNCH	11:30 – 12:00	PER 4	11:30– 12:10	PER 4	11:30– 12:10
PER 4	12:03 – 12:43	LUNCH	12:13 – 12:43	PER 5	12:13 – 12:53
PER 5	12:46 – 1:26	PER 5	12:46 – 1:26	LUNCH	12:56 – 1:26
PER 6	1:29 – 2:09	PER 6	1:29 – 2:09	PER 6	1:29 – 2:09
PER 7	2:12 – 2:52	PER 7	2:12 – 2:52	PER 7	2:12 – 2:52
PER 8	2:55 – 3:35	PER 8	2:55 – 3:35	PER 8	2:55 – 3:35

## **Academic Support**

### **The Treehouse**

The Treehouse is located in room #709 and run by Mrs. Zoeller. This is a place students can come to for academic support. Tutoring will also be provided based on teacher availability. Please see your counselor's Schoology page for the tutor schedule and updates on The Treehouse offerings.

### **The Library**

Students may use the Library Media Center during a study hall with a pass from their teacher. Due to space limitations, homework that does not require the use of library resources should be done in study hall. While in the LMC, students are expected to be productive, respectful of others, and to use the library materials appropriately. The LMC has a variety of materials that can be loaned for a period of two weeks. Our School Librarian is Mrs. Bork. She is available to assist students and staff with the use of library resources.

### **Headquarters Programming**

Students will be assigned to a Headquarters (HQ) with a teacher of record. CMS Headquarters program is designed to foster student organizational and leadership skills while building our school community. Students will participate in various activities such as goal setting, checking Powerschool, school-wide "drop everything and read," and character development lessons. Headquarters time will also be utilized to enjoy our CMS Newscast.

### **Success Lunch**

Success Lunch is a time for students to be productive during lunch. Each grade level runs Success Lunch differently based on teacher availability and student needs. See your counselor's Schoology group or House Office for your grade level's Success Lunch schedule.

## **Extracurricular Activities**

### **Student Council**

The Middle School Student Council helps to make your school a better place. The officers, representatives and alternates are elected at the beginning of each school year. These students assist with the planning of dances, social events and fundraising campaigns. They are often called upon to serve as guides for guests and visitors and to represent the student body in after-school functions. During Student Council meetings, grade level problems are discussed, and improvements are suggested for the welfare of our school community. Please see the advisors for more information.

### **Clubs**

Students are encouraged to try out new interests during their middle school years. Please listen to school announcements for club and intramural information. Students will be required to sign a contract to participate in clubs. Members of our school community can also find information about clubs on our school website (under “Academics” → “[Clubs](#)”) and contact the advisor(s) directly.

### **Athletics**

Students should see the district [athletics website](#) for sports information. Physicals must be current to participate in athletics. Students also need to register for sports through Parent Portal. All athletes should report to designated practice areas in a prompt manner. Students may not roam the building before or after school hours. Additionally, students should not cross parking lots nor bus loops to arrive at practice until traffic and buses have disbursed.

## **Transportation and Drop-Off/Pick-Up Expectations**

### **Bus Expectations**

Students are expected to behave in a responsible manner and follow the directions of the bus driver. Students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior may have their bus riding privileges suspended. Students are expected to adhere to the following bus rules:

1. Students should be at their bus stop 10 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time and should wait for 10 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time in the event the bus is late.
2. Students should watch for the approach of the bus and be at the bus stop ready to board the bus immediately when it stops.
3. Students are not allowed to move about or change seats, etc. while the bus is in motion.
4. Objects are never to be thrown. Nothing, including objects or body parts, is to go outside of the bus window.
5. Students will be picked up and discharged only at their regularly scheduled point unless they have a written note approved by the Transportation Dept. or their house office. Bus notes should be submitted to their house office for approval by Headquarters.
6. Students should pass 10 feet in front of the bus when crossing the road and wait for the bus driver to give them the signal that it is safe to cross.
7. Students who carry band instruments must place them in a safe and convenient manner, not blocking aisles or the driver's view.
8. Students may not eat or drink anything on the bus. Glass containers of any type are not allowed on the bus.
9. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or other devices inappropriately. This includes, but is not limited to: videoing peers or adults, airdropping items, playing music, harassing peers, or other actions that distract the driver.

### **Early Drop-Off**

First period begins at 8:58 am. Students should only enter the building using the door to the left of the main entrance (at the second crosswalk) beginning at 8:00 am and they must report to the South Cafeteria. At 8:45 am, students are released from the South Cafeteria. The school day ends at 3:35 pm. Students should be picked up by 4:00 pm if they are not riding a bus home or participating in a supervised after school activity.

### **Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

Parents who choose to drop off or pick up their child from school are asked to abide by New York State traffic laws with respect to stop signs, crosswalks and school buses. Please comply with the requests of school employees assigned to traffic control in the parking lots. Use patience and care at drop-off and pick-up times to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Cars are restricted from the back bus loop.

## **Walkers or Bikers**

Students who walk or ride their bike to school must have a note signed by their parent/guardian on file in their house office. The use of motor-drive vehicles including cars, snow mobiles, mini-bikes, motorcycles, all terrain vehicles, and other like vehicles is prohibited on any school grounds or areas except for authorized school functions or purposes. Students are not allowed to ride their E-Bikes or dirt bikes on school property.

## **Fire and Lock-Down Drills**

Fire drills and lock-down drills are an important safety measure and are required by law. They are held to prepare you to keep safe in the event of an actual emergency. Your full cooperation is needed in making the drills as effective as possible. This can be accomplished only when everyone follows proper procedure.

*When the fire alarm rings:*

1. At all times, pay attention to adult directions.
2. Await the signal from your teacher to proceed.
3. Walk orderly and silently toward your designated exit.
4. Student use of cell phones during an emergency evacuation is prohibited, unless otherwise directed by a faculty or staff member.

*When a lock-down is announced:*

1. At all times, pay attention to adult directions.
2. Move to the designated location in the room and be silent.
3. Stay in lock-down until an officer or district representative announces a hold-in-place.
4. Student use of cell phones is strictly prohibited.

## **Electronic Devices and Personal Property**

All personal technology use, regardless of its purpose, must follow the guidelines outlined in the District Code of Conduct and the Dignity for All Students Act. Earbuds should only be worn in classrooms, not hallways, and only when directed by a teacher.

A new state law, passed as part of the 2025–2026 New York State Budget, requires all school districts to prohibit students from using internet-enabled devices during the school day. The “school day” includes all time from the beginning to the end of the school day—even lunch, recess, study halls, and hallway passing time. This law was signed by the Governor on May 9, 2025. The goal is to help students stay focused on learning and to reduce distractions during the school day. The law applies to devices that can connect to the Internet, including smartphones, tablets, smartwatches, and any other device that can access online content or apps like social media. Exceptions for medical conditions will be communicated to appropriate staff. Faculty or staff must get House Principal permission if they have a specific purpose where they would like to use internet enabled devices.

Devices must be turned off and stored in a locked locker during the school day. Students may not access or check their phones during passing times or when stopping at their lockers, as these spaces are designated for secure storage—not unsupervised use—throughout the entire day. All adults must work collectively to make sure there is consistency throughout the building. Students who have their electronic device taken during the day will receive the following progressive discipline:

- 1st Offense: Device to the House Office; student picks it up at the end of the day.
- 2nd Offense: Device to the House Office; student conference with principal.
- 3rd+ Offense: Device held in House Office; may require parent/guardian pick up at the end of the day. Student may be required to leave the device in the House Office each morning for an identified number of days or weeks.
- Further Offenses: Considered insubordination—additional school consequences/interventions assigned.

Students requiring the use of a telephone may only use the phone in the House Office.

### **School Issued Chromebooks**

Each CMS student is provided a school owned Chromebook. It is the responsibility of students to take good care of their device and keep it charged. Students agree to the district acceptable use policy each time they log on to their devices. Families are held responsible for damages as outlined in the district device policy.

If a student device malfunctions, students should report issues to their classroom teacher. If the issue cannot easily be resolved, students will be directed to the library and a loaner device will be issued. At no time should a student have two devices.

## District Dress Code

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents/caregivers have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other District personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

A student's dress and appearance, including accessories, shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Extremely brief garments and see-through garments are not appropriate.
2. Ensure that underwear is covered with outer clothing.
3. Footwear is required at all times. Footwear that may be a safety hazard will not be allowed.
4. Specific dress requirements may be required by the District for students participating in activities in which clothing and accessories (i.e. jewelry) may be a safety or health concern, such as science laboratories, physical education and interscholastic athletics.
5. Not include items that present a threat to the student's, or another student's, health or safety.
6. Not include the wearing of hats in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose or unless otherwise authorized by the school.
7. Not include items that are lewd, vulgar, obscene, suggestive (of a sexual nature), libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or any other protected class under federal, state, or local law.
8. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco, smoking paraphernalia or illegal drugs/substances and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any staff member who believes a student to be in violation of the dress code should report the student to a building administrator. The determination as to whether a student is in violation of any portion of the dress code will be at the sole discretion of building administration. Building administrators have the authority to require a student to change, cover, remove, replace or modify their attire should the administrator deem the attire to violate the dress code. Any student who refuses an administrator's directive relating to his/her/their attire, or who repeatedly violates the dress code, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including out-of-school suspension.

Each building principal or their designee shall be responsible for informing all students and parents of the student dress code at the beginning of the school year and whenever a revision to the dress code is made during the school year.

## **Discipline**

CMS utilizes the [District's Code of Conduct](#) to address disciplinary incidents, support student behavior, and impose consequences.

### **Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)**

In reference to the [Dignity for All Students Act](#) (DASA), Clarence Middle School will require and 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 or sex.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents to their guidance counselor or a trusted adult. Reports will be investigated and violations will be addressed as appropriate. The DASA coordinators at CMS are Ms. Dreibelbis and Mr. Fox.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. This includes AI generated material, images, and any portion of someone else's published or unpublished work product or intellectual property. Any instance of plagiarism will result in disciplinary action. This may include, but is not limited to, earning a zero on an assignment.

### **Catch Up Cafe**

Our goal is to help students find academic success. To achieve this, middle school students need support around task completion and organization. Teachers may assign students to Catch Up Cafe to complete missing assignments. Students who do not comply with these requests will be referred to administration. Teachers will contact home if lunchtime supports are not enough or becoming too regular. When the above steps do not work, students will be referred to the house office to be connected with higher tiers of intervention and support.

### **Late to Class Policy**

Students who are late to class three times in a five-week period without a signed pass from a staff member will receive lunch detention or alternative intervention.

### **Drink Policy**

There are drinking fountains throughout the school for student use. In addition, there are water bottle filling stations. Students may carry a water bottle with them to maintain proper hydration throughout the day. Only water may be carried by students between 7:50 am - 3:35 pm. Drinks purchased in the cafeteria must be consumed there and not taken out of the cafeteria.

## The Fine Print

The Clarence School District has an established grievance procedure for the prompt and equitable resolution of all complaints alleging discrimination based on gender (Title IX) or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act). For information regarding the District's grievance procedure or questions about the District's policy on equal access to educational programs, please contact Dr. Matt Frahm, Superintendent of Schools, at 716-407-9102.

