

Locust Grove Middle School



2026 - 2027

Student Handbook

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This handbook is intended to guide our school based on current data and guidelines. As information is available and/or guidelines change this handbook is subject to change. You may find the most up to date handbook on our school's website.

Mission Statement

The students of Locust Grove Middle School will be safe, respectful, and responsible.

At Locust Grove Middle School we believe:

- All students can be life-long learners and achieve measurable growth.
- In our students and their potential for success.
- It is our responsibility to educate, support, encourage, and inspire students to their full potential in a safe and positive environment.
- We must challenge students and hold them accountable for reaching their potential.
- In our ability to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Learning is the focus at LGMS. To make it easy, here are 6 simple rules to follow:

1. Be to class on time.
2. Bring only appropriate materials to school and class.
3. Follow directions the first time they are given.
4. Be polite and kind to everyone.
5. Complete and turn in all assignments on time.
6. If you are absent, speak to your teacher to receive and make up the work missed.

Parents and students may reach teachers by email, the Canvas Learning Management System, or by calling 540-661-4480.

Structure of the Day

- Homeroom is held to allow for announcements, breakfast, the Pledge of Allegiance, moment of silence.
- Classes are 55 minutes long. Students will attend core classes daily including English, Math, Social Studies, and Science.
- There are two exploratory blocks each day: PE, Makerspace, English Readiness, Algebra Readiness, Science or Social Studies Enrichment, Ag. Science, Coding and Robotics, Art, Family and Consumer Sciences, Chorus, and Band.
- There is a 30-minute R&E period daily. This time will be focused on literacy and writing.

2026-2027 LGMS Bell Schedule

55 minute classes

Block	6th	7th	8th
arrival	7:10 - Buses unload/doors open, staff at door/duty locations		
HR	7:25 - 7:33	7:25 - 7:35	7:25 - 7:35
1	7:35 - 8:29 (54 m) 6th exploratory	7:35 - 8:29 (54 m)	7:35 - 8:29 (54 m)
R & E	8:32 - 9:02 30 minutes	8:32 - 9:02 30 minutes	8:32 - 9:02 30 minutes
2	9:05 - 9:59 (54 m)	9:05 - 9:59 (54 m) 7th exploratory	9:05 - 9:59 (54 m)
3	10:02 - 10:56 (54 m)	10:04 - 10:59	10:02 - 10:56 (54 m) 8th exploratory
4	10:59-11:57 (58 m) 6th exploratory 11:01-11:26 5 mins 11:31-11:56 5 mins 12:01-12:26 3rd lunch	10:59-11:29 first half (30 m) 11:31-11:56 (25 m) 2nd lunch 11:57-12:25 2nd half (28 m)	10:59-11:01 (drop-off) 11:01-11:26 (25 m) 1st lunch 11:27-12:25 (58 m)
5	12:28 - 1:22 (54 m)	12:28 - 1:22 (54 m) 7th exploratory	12:28 - 1:22 (54 m)
6	1:25 - 2:20 (55 m)	1:25 - 2:20 (55 m)	1:25 - 2:20 (55 m) 8th exploratory
dismissal	2:20 - announcements & early buses 2:25 - car riders and remaining buses <u>staff at door/duty locations</u>		

LEARNING

Classwork & Homework Online Access

Keeping up with your classwork and your homework assignments is essential for school success. When you are absent, students should check-in personally with their teacher to receive make-up work. Classwork is not excused for student absences.

Late Work

If a student does not complete an assignment by the assigned due date, a grade of zero will be earned. Students are expected to turn in work on time. Late work will be accepted by the teacher during the current or the prior three-week learning/interim cycle only. Late work will receive reduced credit.

Makeup Work (due to absences)

All students who are absent will have an extra day to turn in an assignment based on the number of days absent. 1 absence = 1 extra day to turn an assignment in. A missing assignment will be designated as a '0' until it is made up.

Grading

Report Cards are sent home four times per year at the end of each nine-week marking period. Interim reports are sent home every three (3) weeks to provide frequent updates on grades.

OCPS Grading Scale

The following scale is used for all subjects:

Orange County Public Schools - Secondary		
Grading Expectations and Gradebook Setup		
All grades must be calculated using percentages		
Grading Scale: A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = 0-59		
Powerschool Grades Updated Weekly by Sunday (midnight)		
Category 1 - 25% - Homework/Classwork	Category 2 - 30% - Formative Quizzes and other Assessments	Category 3 - 45% - Summative Assignments
9 Weeks (approx. grade range 15 - 30 Grades--several from each category)		
10-15 assignments from category 1.	5-12 assignments from category 2.	3-8 assignments from category 3.

Small or minor practice and formative assignments. Including assignments or checks that are not always accuracy based. Daily work including but not limited to the following: Homework Classwork Current Events PBL Checkpoints Outlines Rough/First Drafts Blog Posts Skill Checks Concept maps Daily Tasks Warm-ups	Formative assessments that lead to final products that will show mastery. Typically graded for accuracy. Including but not limited to the following: -Quizzes -Labs -Activities -Essay Papers -Minor Projects -Group Tasks	Major summative assessments that are aligned to standards and help show student mastery. Including but not limited to the following: Tests (Summative Assessments) Major Projects PBL Research Papers Performance Acts Final Products (written, oral and or performance) Benchmarks
Report card and interim dates (Note: Dates may change due to inclement weather)		
Q1 1st Interim Sent Home:	Q1 2nd Interim Sent Home:	1st Nine Weeks Ends:
August 27	September 17	October 8
Q2 1st Interim Sent Home:	Q2 2nd Interim Sent Home:	2nd Nine Weeks Ends:
October 29	November 19	December 18
Q3 1st Interim Sent Home:	Q3 2nd Interim Sent Home:	3rd Nine Weeks Ends:
January 27	February 17	March 10
Q4 1st Interim Sent Home:	Q4 2nd Interim Sent Home:	4th Nine Weeks Ends:
April 2	April 30	May 20
Makeup work (due to absences):	Missing/Late work:	Homework: IKBR
All students who are absent will be permitted to make up missed assignments and receive credit for graded work in accordance with regulations developed by the division superintendent. Students will have an extra day to turn in an assignment based on the number of days absent. 1 absence = 1 extra day to turn an assignment in.	Students are expected to turn in work on time. Late work will be accepted by the teacher in during the current or the prior three-week learning cycle only--except in extenuating circumstances--illness, death, other excused absence, etc. Late work will receive reduced credit. Work from more than one previous learning cycle will not be accepted.	If assigned, homework should be for review and practice of learned material.
Parent Communication:	Re-Learn - Re-Do - Re-Cover	Retaking Assessments:

When students do not turn in assignments as expected, teachers will communicate with parents to inform them of the concerns and ask for help in encouraging students to meet learning expectations.	In order for a student to recover a grade for an assignment, they must show that they have made attempts at relearning the material and then they can redo in order to recover the grade.	Students have the ability to retake summative assessments after sufficient remediation has occurred.
Due Dates for Assignments:	Parent Communication:	
Teachers will clearly post due dates for assignments in Canvas.	When students do not turn in assignments as expected, teachers will communicate with parents to inform them of the concerns and ask for help in encouraging students to meet learning expectations.	

*Teachers may assign a grade of “Incomplete” when work is missed due to illness or emergency at the end of a grading period. Failure to complete work in the specified time will result in the earned grade being posted.

Teachers are expected to use a variety of methods and assessments to evaluate student progress. The following percentage breakdown will be used to calculate a student’s quarterly grade:

45% = Major summative assessments that are aligned to standards and help show student mastery. Including but not limited to the following: tests (summative assessments), major projects, PBL, research papers, final products (written, oral, and or performance), and benchmark assessments.

30%= Quizzes and other assessments. Build-up and minor summative assignments that lead to final products that will show mastery. Typically graded for accuracy. Including but not limited to the following: quizzes, labs, activities, essay papers, minor projects, and group tasks.

25%= Homework/Classwork: Small or minor practice and formative assignments. Including assignments or checks that are not always accuracy-based. Daily work including but not limited to the following: homework, classwork, current events, PBL checkpoints, outlines, rough/first drafts, blog posts, skill checks, concept maps, daily tasks, and warm-ups.

Honors/Awards

Every nine weeks, the following awards are presented to students for exceptional academic work:

- All A’s Honor Roll Award
- A/B Honor Roll.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Choices

At LGMS, we believe that students have control over their actions and that each student must take responsibility for his/her behaviors and the choices that they make. We provide students with opportunities to work out differences with their peers, teachers, and other people with whom a student may have a conflict by using school counselors and/or principals. Students should alert a staff member when they need assistance with peers, choices, or schoolwork.

Dress Code

In order to ensure that our students' education is conducted in an environment where safety risks, disruptions, and distractions are minimized, all students will adhere to the standards set forth in the Orange County School Board Policies JFCAA and JFCAA-R, Student Dress Code. These policies may be found online in the OCPS Policy Manual. [OCPS Policy Manual](#).

The Orange County Public Schools dress regulation states that students shall not wear the following items:

1. Clothing, pins, jewelry, accessories or other items of adornment displaying obscene, profane, derogatory, violent or gang-related messages, themes, designs or pictures.
2. Clothing, pins, jewelry accessories or other items of adornment conveying messages related to or promoting the use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or messages that promote illegal activities.
3. Clothing, pins, jewelry, accessories or other items of adornment depicting bawdy, salacious or sexually suggestive messages.
4. Clothing that is transparent or exposes the midriff, navel or cleavage.
5. Pants, skirts and/or shorts that sag below the waistline or must be held in place with the hands.
6. Underwear worn as outer garments or clothing that exposes underwear; and items not appropriate for a classroom setting including, but not limited to, biker shorts, bathing suits.
7. Tank tops, halter tops, garments with spaghetti straps, tube tops, fishnet tops, strapless dresses, or other clothing that is not appropriate because of slits, rips or holes in the garment.
8. Accessories which could in some way pose a danger to the wearer or others and/or could be used as weapons including, but not limited to, two-or-three finger rings, chains hanging from clothes, picks, hair chopsticks.
9. Clothing that is too tight and/or is inappropriate in length as measured by any of the following measuring methods, as determined by the building principal/designee:
 - a. Shorter than six (6) inches above the student's mid-knee; or
 - b. Fingertip length is determined when both of the student's hands are at his or her side.
10. Inappropriate footwear including, but not limited to, shower shoes and beach shoes, bedroom slippers, and unfastened shoes or shoes missing appropriate closures.

11. Head coverings that are not related to or required by student's bona fide religious practices including, but not limited to, hats, caps, hoodies, stocking caps, doo rags, wave caps, scarves or bandanas.

In addition to the items in the school board policy manual, the administrators and teachers at LGMS have determined that the items below are also important in maintaining a safe, secure, and productive learning environment:

- Students may not use blankets or pillows during the school day.
- Sunglasses are not allowed inside the school building unless medically necessary or approved by the principal.

If a student arrives at school inappropriately dressed based on the above criteria, he or she will be asked to change into something appropriate. If they have gym clothes or extra clothes in their locker, then they will change. If they do not have anything at school, parents will be notified to bring in appropriate clothing. If parents cannot provide clothing for the day, the student may be asked to spend the remainder of the school day in ISS.

Cell phones and wearable electronic devices

To ensure that students have a focused and healthy learning environment, Orange County Public Schools will implement and enforce the following procedures at all schools.

- **Upon entering the school building, students must keep cell phones and other personal electronic devices turned off and in their backpacks until they exit the building at the end of the instructional day.**
- No headphones/earbuds will be worn at school. Headphone/earbud use will only be permitted for specific learning activities as directed by school staff.
- For instructional purposes, only school-issued electronic devices will be allowed.
- Parents who need to reach their child during the school day should call the main office.
- Students who need to reach a parent should ask a teacher or other staff member and will be able to do so using a school phone.

Graffiti and/or damaging school property

It is not acceptable to vandalize property that belongs to OCPS, staff, or students. Students causing damage to property belonging to OCPS or other individuals will be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged property and will receive a referral for disciplinary action.

Permanent markers are not allowed in school. If these items are required for class projects, teachers will provide them. **Students may not bring Sharpies to school.**

Harassment and Bullying

Bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at LGMS. Adults in the building have been trained on what to look for in students who are being bullied and who are doing the bullying. They have also been trained to know what to say to both students involved – the bullied and the one who is bullying. If a student sees or hears someone being bullied or harassed, he/she needs to report it to an adult immediately. Bullying will be addressed when it is reported to the staff at LGMS.

Appropriate Language

Students should always use appropriate language with adults and students everywhere in the building and on school grounds, including the bus and bus stop. Students must **not** use profanity, hurtful or unkind words, derogatory words, or phrases. Locust Grove Middle School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, disability, or any other characteristics protected by law in its employment practices or educational program and activities.

Buses

It is a privilege to ride the school bus. It is important to remember ALL school rules apply to school bus transportation. The bus AND the bus stop are still within the jurisdiction of the school. The same behaviors and discipline apply. Consequences are the same for the same behaviors, including, but not limited to, bus suspension.

Bus expectations

- **Be on-time**
 - Please be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before your scheduled pickup time
 - We can only pick up students who are physically at the bus stop—if you are not at the bus stop, we will not wait for you
 - Be sure to have all of your items with you
 - Please be sure you are visible to the driver
- **Save Snacks for Later**
 - Please refrain from chewing gum and eating food on the bus
 - With the exception of water, please refrain from consuming drinks on the bus
- **Keep the Bus Clean**
 - Keeping our buses clean is a high priority
 - Please pick up trash and place it in the trash can in the front of the bus

Use Respect

- **To the driver, attendant, and other students**
 - Follow directions given by the driver and bus attendant
 - Ask questions if you do not understand directions
 - Be considerate of the other students when sharing space
 - Keep your belongings in your space
- **Use kind words**

- Use appropriate language
- Use your words to solve problems
- Use please and thank you
- Give compliments when possible
- Use a positive attitude when talking with others
- **Use headphones with electronic devices**
 - Keep your personal devices to yourself
 - Please refrain from sharing photo and video memories on the bus

Stay Safe

- **Stay in your seat**
 - Sit in your assigned seat assigned by the driver—switching seats is not allowed
 - No standing up while the bus is moving
 - Face forward in your seat
- **Use inside voice**
 - Refrain from screaming and yelling
 - Talk to the people next to you
- **Respect other riders' personal space**
 - Throwing objects on a bus is not allowed
 - Keep hands and feet to yourself
 - Touching other students or their property is not allowed
- **Support safe driving**
 - Keep the aisle clear
 - Distracting the driver is not safe

Scented Sprays

Students may not bring scented sprays such as cologne to school. These items may cause students/staff with asthma or allergies to be adversely affected.

The following are violations of the Orange County Standards of Student Conduct JFC-R and are not acceptable at Locust Grove Middle School:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| ● Alcohol Violation | ● Gang Activity | ● Weapons |
| ● Assault | ● Harassing | ● Sharing of items, materials, or supplies. |
| ● Attendance | ● Horseplay | ● Misuse of technology equipment |
| ● Bullying | ● Laser Pointers | ● Other Actions as determined by an administrator. |
| ● Bus Related Offenses | ● Patterns of Misbehavior | |
| ● Cheating | ● Profanity | |
| ● Classroom Disruption | ● Skipping Class: | |
| ● Defiance | ● Theft | |
| ● Drug Violation | ● Threatening Behavior | |
| ● Electronic Cigarettes | ● Vandalism of School Property, including bus | |
| ● Fighting | | |
| ● Gambling | | |

The following are possible consequences for misbehavior:

Teachers may

- Document the incident
- Conference with the student and/or parent
- Assign a time out from the classroom
- Write a discipline referral
- Assign lunch detention

Administrators may assign

- A time out from the classroom
- Lunch detention
- After school detention
- ISS (in-school suspension)
- OSS (out of school suspension)
- Other consequences as allowed by OCPS Code of Student Conduct

Dangerous Behaviors

Dangerous behaviors are unacceptable and will result in out-of-school suspension. These offenses may also result in action by local law enforcement agencies and the School Board. Examples include:

- Possession of weapons (or knowledge of someone possessing a weapon)
- Destroying the school's or other's property
- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Threatening notes, calls or social media posts

Students who have knowledge of someone involved in these types of situations must report it to an adult at school immediately.

Attendance

As required by law, each parent/guardian is responsible for regular and punctual attendance of any child in his or her charge within the compulsory age for school attendance. The faculty and staff at Locust Grove Middle School expect students to be in school every day, ready to learn. Sometimes absences are necessary. In those instances, students must make up any missed assignments during the absence or upon return to school. If your child is going to be absent, please contact the school.

LGMS Quick Attendance Reference List

Report all absences to the Attendance Secretary, Ms. Bowles by emailing cbowles@ocss-va.org or calling 540-661-4480 select #1. When students are absent, parents must provide a valid note, send an email, or call the school and state the reason for the absence upon returning or at least within 5 days of the first day being absent. Parents must notify LGMS on the day of the absence and follow up with the note as needed. Please see [OCPS policy JED](#).

- [Attendance One Page Reference Guide](#)

Excused Absences

The parent/guardian has communicated, with supporting documentation if required, to school officials the reason for their child's absence and school officials consider the reason valid. Excused absences include but are not limited to: student illness, death or serious illness of a family member, doctor, dentist or therapist appointments, subpoenas for court, and religious observances.

Unexcused Absences

If the parent has not communicated to school officials the reason for their child's absence, or if school officials consider the reason invalid, the absence will be recorded as 'unexcused' in Powerschool. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to the following: missed school buses, oversleeping, recreational activities, child care issues, and transportation issues. Absences caused by the bus not operating for the day will be listed as Principal Excused Absences.

- 5 Absences will result in a letter sent home to schedule an attendance meeting with the student and parent. At the meeting, the team will likely develop an attendance plan.
- The next Unexcused Absence after the attendance plan is developed will result in another letter sent home to warn that the attendance plan has been violated.
- Additional absences may result in a referral to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for truancy.

Tardies to School:

A tardy is defined as the student not being in his/her designated area (homeroom) when attendance is taken or the last tardy bell rings in the morning. Excessive tardies will result in an attendance plan. If a student misses $\frac{1}{3}$ of a class, they are considered absent from that class.

Tardies to Class:

- First Tardy--warning from teacher
- Second Tardy--warning from teacher and parent contact (email is fine)
- Third Tardy-1 lunch detention with grade level designee (this rotate)--must contact parent to notify them of the lunch detention
- Meeting with the team--inform the administrator. Complete minor incident report
- Reset at the end of the quarter
- *Grace given for the first week of school*

Early Dismissals: Students are expected to be in school for the full day unless illness, medical/dental appointment, or an emergency that makes it necessary to leave. If early dismissals become excessive, LGMS will schedule an attendance meeting to develop a plan for the future.

Attendance Awards

Attendance awards are given at the beginning of each month for perfect attendance for the preceding month. Perfect attendance does not allow for late arrivals, early dismissals or time spent in ISS or OSS.

School Counseling Services

School counseling services are available to students in all Orange County Public Schools. Through these services, students are encouraged to make decisions that will lead to effective functioning in school and society. The services include the following: Academic/Educational Counseling, Career Counseling, and Personal/Social Counseling.

The LGMS school counselors are:

- Brandi Dubey: 6th grade
 - bdubey@ocss-va.org
- Briana Hall: 7th grade
 - bhall@ocss-va.org
- Sarah Mellinger: 8th grade
 - smellinger@ocss-va.org

If a parent or guardian does not wish for his or her son or daughter to participate in any of the counseling services available, he or she must complete an opt-out form available from the school counselor.

Medications

Because of the dangers of misuse of medications, the administration of medications during school hours is discouraged. If this is not possible, school officials will cooperate in the administration of medication that must be given during school hours. Medications will be administered according to the written order(s) of a physician or licensed nurse practitioner. This order must contain the name of the medication, the dosage to be administered, the times to be administered and the duration of the order. No herbal products will be administered at school. No medications will be administered above the suggested dosage guidelines. Children with inhalers need a completed medication order. *If a student is to carry the inhalers with him/her, it should state so on the form.* Students may take medications at school only under the supervision of the school nurse or main office personnel. Any medication (prescription or non-prescription) must be brought to school by an adult. Students cannot transport medications to and from school.

One student may not give any medication to another student. This can be dangerous, and for some medications can be a serious violation of the law. A medical form will be given to your child to bring home the first day of school, along with the other forms and information.

Again, please follow these simple safety rules below:

- Medications must be brought to the nurse's office by the parent or guardian;
- They must be accompanied by specific written directions;
- They must be in the original labeled container;
- They must be kept in the locked medicine drawer/cabinet in the nurse's office; and
- They must be dispensed by school personnel.

Health & Physical Education

Physical Education - Students in grades 6th, 7th and 8th grades are required to dress out in a t-shirt, shorts, socks, tennis shoes. PE uniforms are available for purchase for \$20. Combination locks are provided for the student's gym locker. If the lock assigned to the student is lost or damaged, the student may be charged \$5.00 to replace it. It is important that all items of value be secured in the locker to avoid theft.

Activities and Athletics

We know that our students have widely varied interests. There are a number of clubs and sports for students to join, i.e. girls/boys basketball, football, cheerleading, girls/boys track, softball, baseball, wrestling, National Junior Honor Society, 4-H, volleyball club, and Student Council. Please see the appropriate coach and/or sponsor for eligibility requirements.

Bus Changes/Notes

- Students are only allowed to ride the bus they are assigned to by the OCPS Transportation Department.
- Requests to ride a different bus will only be allowed if there is space on the desired bus and the student brings a note to the office at the start of the day so office staff can make the necessary arrangements. The note must include the parent's name/signature, parent's phone number, the student's first/last name, and information about what changes are desired. If approved, the students will be given a bus pass at the end of the day. Bus passes are only valid on the day issued unless otherwise specified on the note.
- We realize that from time to time, situations arise that require changes in a student's regular transportation plans. If an *emergency* transportation change is needed, please call the school office by 1:30 pm. This will allow time for our staff to verify that the change is possible and notify the student before dismissal.

Emergency Information

We need emergency information in case of student illness or injury during the school day. Students' addresses and telephone numbers should be kept current so that we may reach the appropriate person quickly if an emergency situation occurs.

Arrival to School

- **By bus** - Students will enter through the door labeled for their grade and report to homeroom. Buses begin unloading at 7:10 am.
- **By car** - Students will enter the front doors and report to their homeroom. Arrival time is from 7:10 am - 7:25 am. The bell rings at 7:25 am. Students that arrive after 7:25 am must check into the front office to receive a pass to class.
- Homeroom begins at 7:25.

Breakfast

- Free breakfast is offered to all students.
- Upon arrival students may visit the cafeteria to pick up breakfast on the way to homeroom.
- Breakfast will be eaten in the homeroom classroom.

Lunch

- Free lunch is offered to all students.
- Snacks can be purchased in the cafeteria during lunch.
- Visitors are not allowed during lunch.
- Teachers may assign students to specific tables during the 25 minute lunch period.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Students will be led by teachers to
 - the buses loading area, or
 - to areas designated for car riders to wait until their parents arrive.

Emergency Drills

Locust Grove Middle School has a detailed plan for emergency situations. Our staff is trained on how to handle emergency situations. Fire drills, Code Red lockdown drills, tornado drills, and earthquake drills will take place from time to time, so students and staff can practice what to do in the event of a real emergency.