

Big Walnut Local Schools Student & Parent Handbook

Preschool-Grade 5

2026-2027



BIG WALNUT | **INSPIRE**
LOCAL SCHOOLS | **& GUIDE**

www.bwls.net

*Our Mission is to inspire and guide each student
to his or her maximum potential.*

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Letter from the Principals

Dear Parent/Guardian,

On behalf of the entire staff, welcome to the 2026/2027 school year. It is essential that parents read the Student Handbook and that students are made aware of its contents. We encourage your active involvement in your child's education. A strong partnership between home and school can greatly benefit your child as he/she grows and matures. We are looking forward to this school year as we inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential. Best wishes for a successful school year!

Sincerely,

Big Walnut Intermediate, Elementary, and Preschool Principals

Foreword

The Big Walnut Local School District (BWLSD) Student Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain board policies and procedures. Please take time to become familiar with the important information contained in this handbook and keep the handbook available for reference. Please note that the majority of information in our handbooks is standardized and applies to all students PreK-12. This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Big Walnut Local School District Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. The policies and administrative guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal. This handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current board policies and administrative guidelines are available and on the district's website.

Big Walnut Local Schools Mission and Vision Statement

Our Mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential. We will accomplish this through our vision of:

- **Staff:** student-focused, professional, and collaborative
- **Curriculum:** student-focused, challenging, and current
- **Environment:** safe, respectful, and welcoming
- **Community:** informed, involved, and supportive

Board of Education

Mr. Zach Duffey, Mr. Stephen Fujii, Mrs. Angela Graziosi, Ms. Jessica Parent, Mrs. Molly Snodgrass.

Your Board of Education is composed of five members, elected to a term of four (4) years by the residents of the school district. Dates, times, and locations of the regular meetings of the Board of Education are set at the Organizational Meeting in January. See the District's website, www.bwls.net, for dates, times, and locations of Board meetings. All community members are invited to attend.

Administrative Team

Mr. Ryan McLane	Superintendent
TBD	Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Scott Gooding	Interim Treasurer/CFO
Mr. Ross Linscott	Director of Student Services
Mr. Mike Robertson	Director of Academic Achievement
Mr. Jim Hall	Director of Facilities
Mr. Alan Feeman	Food Services Supervisor
Mr. Matt Cleland	Transportation Supervisor

School Information

Big Walnut Administrative Offices

110 Tippet Court
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-3010

Big Walnut Middle School

555 S. Old 3C Highway
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-3006
Principal: Josh Frame

Big Walnut Elementary

940 S. Old 3C Highway
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-3902
Principal: Sarah Sandrock

General Rosecrans Elementary

301 S. Miller Drive
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-8900
Principal: Ginna Crawford

Big Walnut Early Learning Center

105 Baughman Street
Sunbury, OH 43074
740-965-7862
Principal: Jessica Shelton

Big Walnut High School

713 N. Miller Drive
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-3766
Principal: Nicole Carter

Big Walnut Intermediate School

777 Cheshire Road
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-7800
Principal: Nick Powell

Prairie Run Elementary

701 N. Miller Drive
Sunbury, Ohio 43074
740-965-7850
Principal: Kim Castiglione

Hylan Souders Elementary

4121 Miller Paul Road
Galena, Ohio 43021
740-965-3200
Principal: Amanda Statler

School Hours

High School & Middle School

7:10 Students may enter buildings
 7:30 Classes begin
 2:10 Dismissal

Two-Hour Delay

9:10 Students may enter buildings
 9:30 Classes begin
 2:10 Dismissal

Intermediate

8:35 Students may enter buildings
 8:50 Classes begin
 3:35 Dismissal

Two-Hour Delay

10:35 Students may enter buildings
 10:50 Classes begin
 3:35 Dismissal

Elementary

8:25 Students may enter buildings
 8:35 Classes begin
 11:25 AM Kindergarten dismissal
 12:15 PM Kindergarten arrival
 3:20 Dismissal

Two-Hour Delay

10:25 Students may enter buildings
 10:35 Classes begin
 12:25 AM Kindergarten dismissal
 1:15 PM Kindergarten arrival
 3:20 Dismissal

Early Learning Center

8:45 Students may enter buildings
 9:00 Classes begin
 11:30 AM dismissal
 12:20 PM arrival
 3:05 PM dismissal

Two-Hour Delay

10:45 Students may enter buildings
 11:00 Classes begin
 12:30 AM dismissal
 1:20 PM arrival
 3:05 PM dismissal

District Information Sources

Big Walnut offers a variety of ways to keep up with important news and information on our school district: • Website: www.bwls.net • ParentSquare • Schoology/Email Notification System: Receive news, announcements and updates from Big Walnut straight to your email inbox when setting your notifications • Social Media: Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram.

School Closings

In the event of inclement weather, school delays and closings will be posted online at www.bwls.net. Delay and closing information will also be reported using the district's automated phone system, the email notification system, the local television stations, and the radio stations. There may be times when it is necessary to dismiss school during the day because of an emergency. In such instances, parents will be contacted using the district's automated phone system. Parents are urged to make arrangements with a neighbor or friend so that their child will have a place to go in case of an emergency if a parent/adult is not home.

Safer Schools Ohio

Big Walnut Local Schools uses the Safer Schools Ohio anonymous tip line for students and families to share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety -- whether that involves a threat of a mass incident or harm to a single student. To report a concern, call or text 1-844-SAFEROH (1-844-723-3764). The system will send your anonymous report to the appropriate people to address the concern.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

(Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADEA, Title II, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)

The Big Walnut Local School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding unlawful discrimination may be directed to the principal of the building or the district compliance officer:

District Compliance Officer
110 Tippet Court
Sunbury, Ohio 43074

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the rights to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education.

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

The Big Walnut Local School District will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The Big Walnut Local School District will directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually, at the start of each school year, and after any substantive changes. The Big Walnut Local School District will also notify parents and eligible students annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

1. Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
2. Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C, 20202-4650

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The following rights are afforded parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") under The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school received a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or the principal's designee) a written request that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and location where records may be inspected.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the school principal (or the principal's designee), 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 that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. 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 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; as 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 typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Big Walnut Local School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance Office
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4650

Big Walnut Local Schools will release standard student demographic data to non-profit organizations. If you do not wish to have data concerning your child released, in writing, notify the principal of your child's school.

Directory Information Notice

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Ohio law require that the District, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to disclosing personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the School may disclose "directory information" without written consent unless you have advised the School to the contrary.

The primary purpose of having directory information is to allow the School to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

The Board designates as student directory information: a student's name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially-recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; and/or awards received.

The Board designates school-assigned email accounts as directory information for the limited purpose of facilitating students' registration for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes and for inclusion in internal email address books.

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such directory information upon written notification to the Board within thirty (30) days after receipt of the Superintendent's annual public notice.

Equal Education Opportunity

Big Walnut Local Schools provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer: 740-965-3010.

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

Homeless Students (Board Policy 5111.01)

Children who meet the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the District. Homeless students are eligible to receive transportation services, participate in education programs for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, participate in gifted and talented programs, and receive meals under school nutrition programs. Homeless students will not be denied enrollment based on a lack of proof of residency. For additional information, see Policy 5111.01 (Homeless Students) or contact Ross Linscott, the liaison for Homeless Students, at 740-965-3010.

Foster Care

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of educational stability for children and youth in foster care. Further, the Board recognizes these children and youth as a vulnerable subgroup of students in need of safeguards and support in order to facilitate a successful transition through elementary and secondary education and into college and/or careers. To that end, the District will collaborate with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW), other schools and school districts, and the appropriate custodial agencies (child welfare agencies) to provide educational stability for children and youth in foster care.

Parents' Bill of Rights Notice

The District is required by Ohio law to notify the parents of Students of their right to file a written concern with the Principal or Assistant Principal regarding the topics addressed in either Board Policy 5780.01, the Parents' Bill of Rights, or R.C. 3313.473.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

The District has specific responsibilities under these two laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

Additionally, in accordance with State and Federal law, the District seeks out, assesses, and provides services to students with disabilities. Staff members use a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, evaluate, and, if appropriate, provide special education and related services. Students are entitled to a free, appropriate public education.

A student can access special education and related services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and may be required by Federal (IDEIA), A.D.A. Section 504) and State law. Contact the Student Services Director, 740-965-3010 to inquire about evaluation procedures, programs, and services.

Technology

Technology Acceptable Use & Internet Safety Policy (Board Policy 7540.03)

- The focus of this document is on Internet usage but applies to all computer usage at Big Walnut Local Schools.
- All students, faculty, staff, continuing education students, and support staff will be referred to as "USER" or "USERS".
- Internet access is available to users at the Big Walnut Local Schools.
- The goal of the Big Walnut Local School District is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.
- The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Users may have access to the following:
 - A. Electronic mail communications with people all over the world.

- B. Information and news from many educational institutions as well as scientific and governmental agencies.
- C. Public domain software and shareware of all types.
- D. Discussion groups on a broad range of topics.
- E. Access to University catalogs, the Library of Congress, and on-line public libraries.

With access to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Big Walnut Local Schools has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and users may discover controversial information. The District believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this network far outweighs the possibility that users may produce materials that are not consistent with the educational goals of our District.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies and regional and State networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources. If a user violates any of these provisions, his or her account may be terminated and future access could possibly be denied. All parties acknowledge that their signature on the Handbook Awareness statement is (are) legally binding and indicate the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully, understand(s) their significance, and agree to such terms and conditions.

Terms and Conditions

- A. **Acceptable Use** - The purpose of access to the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions in the U.S. by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the District. Use of another organization's network or computer resources must comply with the rules that are appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or State law is prohibited.
 - 1. This includes but is not limited to downloading copyrighted material; transmitting threatening or obscene material; or accessing, appropriating, and/or employing material that constitutes confidential or trade secret information. Use of Internet access for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.
- B. **Privileges** - The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right; and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. The system administrator can recommend removal of access until reviewed by school administration. The administration, faculty, and staff of the Big Walnut Local Schools may request the system administrator to investigate possible violations.
- C. **Network Etiquette** - You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
 - 2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
 - 3. Do not reveal your personal address or phone numbers to other users.
 - 4. Know that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do not have access to all mail. The systems administrator will monitor email. Any messages related to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
 - 5. Do not use the network in such a way that it would disrupt the use of the network by other users.

6. All communications (including e-mail) and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property, unless it is very clearly marked as being available for use or distribution.
 7. Illegal activities are strictly prohibited.
 8. Keep your password confidential. Do not give your password to anyone for any reason. You are responsible for it and will be held accountable.
 9. If you subscribe to a listserv, plan on checking your mail on a regular basis.
 10. The regular and routine use for private or personal for-profit business such as, for example, the advertising of goods or services for purchase or sale, is not an acceptable use.
- D. No user shall have any expectation of privacy with respect to any information transmitted through or stored on District computers and related equipment and storage media. The District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The District will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes, but is not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions no matter how caused. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. The District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. No user shall access any fee based system.
- E. Security - Security on any system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify the system administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account under any circumstance. Attempts to login to the network as a system administrator may result in cancellation of privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of misusing other computer systems may be denied access to the network.
- F. Vandalism - Vandalism may result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data or to intrude in the network or data of another user, Internet, or any other network, including the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes the Local Area Network at Big Walnut Local Schools and any computer owned by the District.

1:1 Device Loan Agreement

Each student, 4th grade through 5th grade has access to a school-issued device to improve and personalize his/her education. The school-issued mobile device is an important learning tool and is to be used for educational purposes. It is essential that the following guidelines be followed to ensure the safe, efficient, and ethical operation of this device. Violating any of the responsibilities below may result in disciplinary action.

- It is the student's responsibility to care for the equipment and ensure that it is retained in a safe environment.
 - Students/Parents will not be allowed to opt out of the 1:1 program to stay compliant with CIPA for E-Rate funding. This applies to all students, including students who attend DACC and/or CCP full time.
- This equipment is, and at all times remains, the property of Big Walnut Local Schools and is lent to the student for educational purposes.
- District identification labels have been placed on the device. These labels are not to be removed or modified. Additional stickers, labels, tags, or markings of any kind are not to be added to the device.
- Issued devices must remain in the building.

- A student shall not install, use, or modify any computer technology (hardware, software, peripherals, connections, etc.) provided by the school without authorization from school authorities.
- The student agrees to make no attempts to change or allow others to change the privileges and capabilities of this user account.
- The student will not lend the device to anyone, including friends or siblings; it will stay in the assigned student's possession at all times.
- The student will keep all assigned accounts and passwords secure and will not share these with any other individual.
- When using the device at home, at school, or anywhere else, the student will follow the policies of Big Walnut Local Schools, especially the Student Code of Conduct and the Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy (Board Policy 7540.03), and abide by all local, state, and federal laws. Inappropriate use of the device may result in disciplinary action.
- Email and/or other electronic communication within the school district is for appropriate, legitimate, and responsible purposes only. No student shall have the expectation of privacy. Network and school administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly.
- The Big Walnut network is provided for the academic use of all students and staff. The student agrees to take no action that would interfere with the efficient, academic use of the network. Big Walnut network administrators reserve the right to control and limit usage and bandwidth.
- Parents and/or guardians are responsible for the supervision of student usage outside of the school day.
- The equipment will be returned when requested by Big Walnut Local Schools, or sooner, if the student withdraws from Big Walnut Local School District prior to the end of the school year. In the event that a student does not return the device, Big Walnut Local School District, at its discretion, may bill the student or parent/guardian for the replacement cost of the device and/or initiate police investigative action.
- The student will report any issues associated with the device (damage, loss, etc.) IMMEDIATELY to the administration or teacher. No attempts by outside parties will be made to repair the device.
- Big Walnut Local Schools will cover all repairs to devices deemed faulty
- Access to the Big Walnut wireless network
- All repairs/replacements done by Big Walnut Local Schools

Special Considerations:

- Lost device
 - If a student has lost their assigned Chromebook, a loaner device will be issued for a period of (7) seven days. After that period, the student will be assigned a new device and charged for the replacement of the device. Should the student find their original device and return the new device to their building secretary, the charge will be removed from their account.
 - Student responsible for full replacement cost
 - Subject to administrative investigation
- Neglect
 - Student responsible for full repair/replacement cost
 - Subject to administrative investigation
- Replacement of a stolen device
 - Must have a copy of a filed police report
 - Subject to administrative investigation
- Repairs
 - Student responsible for full cost of all repairs, other than faulty parts

Device Care

Cleaning

Use only a clean, soft cloth to clean the screen. No cleansers of any type shall be used (i.e. window cleaners, household cleaners, aerosol sprays, solvents, alcohol, ammonia, or abrasive material).

Daily Use

- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the device to prevent damage.
- Students are responsible for keeping their device's battery charged for school each day.
- The device screen can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment.
- Careful placement in your backpack is important.
- Never place a device near food, liquids, heavy objects, or sharp objects.

Appearance

- The device must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels that are not applied by the district.

Safe Keeping

- When not in the assigned student's personal possession, the device should be in a secure, locked environment.
- Unattended devices will be collected and stored in the school's office.
- Devices are not to be lent to another person. Each device is assigned to an individual, and the responsibility for the care of the device solely rests with that individual.
- Never expose the device to long-term temperature extremes or direct sunlight. An automobile is not a good place to store a device.
- Do not attempt to gain access to the internal electronics or repair the device.
- If the device fails to work or is damaged, report the problem to the Tech Squad as soon as possible.

Device Repair

It is the sole responsibility of the student to report any damages to their assigned device immediately after becoming aware of the damage. This is true regardless of if the damage is due to a faulty part, or intentional damage by the student or someone else.

Fee Structure

Starting for the 2023/2024 school year, fees will follow the following structure;

Tier I - \$30

- Replacement Charger
- Replacement (non-touch) Screen
- Replacement Component (WiFi Chip, Non-Soldered PCB, Hinges, etc.)
- Replacement Trackpad

Tier II - \$50

- Replacement Top Case
- Replacement Bottom Case
- Replacement Keyboard

Tier III - \$100

- Replacement Motherboard
- Replacement Touch Screen

Attendance

Attendance (Legal Authority & Purpose) (Board Policy 5200)

Section 3321.04 of the Ohio Revised Code provides that every parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child of compulsory school age must send such child to a school which conforms to the minimum standards prescribed by the State Board of Education for the full time the school attended is in session. Such attendance must begin within one week of the date on which the child begins to reside.

The State Department of Education, Sections 3321.191 and 3321.38 of the Ohio Revised Code, and House Bill 96 (HB 96) have established current statutory requirements for student absence policy, including the adoption of local absence policies addressing chronically absent students.

In addition, ORC 3321.38 establishes the statutory definition of habitual truancy and related enforcement procedures.

Attendance is required of all students of compulsory school age enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade during the days and hours that school is in session, or during the attendance sessions to which a student has been assigned.

Regular Attendance

Regular attendance is very important for all students in grades Preschool through 5th grade. Coming to school every day helps children learn new skills, stay on track with lessons, and participate in classroom activities. Students who attend regularly can complete assignments on time, work well with teachers and classmates, and develop good habits that will help them succeed in school and in life.

Arrival to School

Students' school hours are as follows:

- Preschool (ELC) AM Session – 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- Preschool (ELC) PM Session – 12:35 p.m. – 3:05 p.m.
- Kindergarten AM Session – 8:35 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.
- Kindergarten PM Session – 12:30 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.
- All Elementary Schools (Grades K–3) – 8:35 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
- Intermediate School (Grades 4–5) – 8:50 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.

Students leaving and returning within the same school day will have their absence calculated based on the time out.

Absence Reporting Procedure

If your child does miss school, parents need to notify the school by 9:30AM for elementary and Intermediate and 8:30AM for Middle School and High School of his/her absence. If the school is not notified, the school must attempt to contact you at home or work. Parents need to provide notification and reason for absence within ten school days, or the absence will be counted as unexcused.

Medical documentation is acceptable to verify an absence or tardy due to a personal, in-office, or hospital examination by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. Documentation must indicate the specific date(s) the student was under direct care and medically unable to attend school.

Any classroom assignment missed due to absence must be completed.

Parent/Guardian Excused Absenses

A maximum of 10 days (65 hours) may be excused by a parent or guardian according to the reasons listed below. All absences (without professional documentation) will be marked unexcused after the 65 hour threshold has been reached.

Attendance for Approved Activities

Students may be considered in attendance for approved instructional or school-sponsored activities once proper professional documentation has been submitted and approved by school administration.

Approved Activities That Count as Present

- School-sponsored field trips
- Athletic events or competitions
- Music, theater, or arts performances
- Academic competitions
- Remote or online instruction
- Attendance at school-approved tutoring sessions or alternative instruction programs

Note: Participation in the above activities counts as instructional attendance under state reporting requirements once all paperwork and professional documentation have been submitted and approved by school administration.

Pre-Approved Absences / Pre-Planned Absences

Parents must obtain a "[PRE-PLANNED ABSENCE REQUEST FORM](#)" at least two (2) school days prior to the absence for principal approval. Work may be provided in advance and is due upon return unless otherwise specified.

Please note that absences not authorized according to attendance policies and procedures will be counted as unexcused.

Extracurricular Participation

Guidelines for extracurricular participation as a result of illness or other absences are as follows:

1. If a student is ill and does not come to school, he/she should not attend extracurricular activities that evening.
2. If a student leaves school anytime during the day as a result of illness, he/she is not to return for the extracurricular activity that evening.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

EXCUSED Professional Documentation	EXCUSED Parental Absence	UNEXCUSED
• Medical appointment • Appointment with a health care provider • Quarantine of the home • Death in the family • Necessary work at home due to parent/guardian incapacity • Attendance at a driver's education course (limited to eight (8) total hours; not during core courses) • Religious expression days (up to three (3) per year with approval) • Such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent • Foster care placement or related court proceedings • Court appearances or legal obligations • Service as a precinct officer • College visitation (verification required) • Alternate Learning Experience • Approved out-of-state enrichment travel (limited to twenty-four (24) hours)	• Personal illness or injury • Illness in the family • Homelessness-related absences • Pre-Planned Absences • Vacation • 4-H Activities (formal documentation required) • Hunting (valid hunting license required)	The school administration will make the final decision whether an absence/tardy is excused or unexcused. In general, unexcused absences/tardies include (but are not limited to): • Missing the school bus • Experiencing transportation problems at home or on the way to school • Remaining at home to complete school assignments • Missing school without legitimate illness • Oversleeping, "alarm clock failed to work." • Not having suitable clothing to wear to school. • Babysitting • Any recreation (unless pre-planned absence days). • Personal business that can be done after school or on the weekends • "Helping at home" or "was needed at home" • "I had a game last night."

Early Attendance & Chronic Absenteeism

All absences—excused, unexcused, medical, or suspension—are counted and tracked from the first day of school for attendance monitoring purposes. Only unexcused absence hours are used when determining habitual truancy thresholds under Ohio law.

Early Attendance Support

Interventions begin before a student reaches 5% of missed instructional time to prevent chronic absenteeism.

Early Attendance Supports Include:

- Attendance messaging to students and families to reinforce daily attendance
- Engagement strategies to maintain consistent attendance
- Continuous monitoring throughout the school year
- Screening and early warning systems to identify at-risk students
- Parent/guardian notification via written letter and/or phone contact
- Convening the Absence Intervention Team (AIT) to review attendance and recommend supports
- Identifying barriers and providing supports

- Monitoring interventions
- Documenting all actions to ensure progress and accountability

Chronic Absenteeism (HB 96)

A student is considered chronically absent when they miss ten percent (10%) or more of the required instructional hours in a school year.

Interventions for Chronically Absent Students Include:

- Build on the supports used prior to becoming chronically absent
- Counseling or mentoring for the student
- Requests for parental participation in involvement or truancy prevention programs
- Assignment to additional supports or alternative school programs
- Medical documentation may be required for ongoing absences due to illness; without it, the absence may be counted as unexcused
- Attendance messaging to students and families
- Engagement strategies to maintain consistent attendance
- Continuous monitoring of attendance
- Screening and early warning systems to identify at-risk students
- Convening the Absence Intervention Team (AIT) to review attendance and recommend supports
- Documenting all actions to ensure progress and accountability

Goal: Address barriers, improve attendance, and support student success before absences further impact learning.

Habitual Truancy (ORC 2151.011; ORC 3321.38)

A student of compulsory school age will be considered habitually truant from school if absent without legitimate excuse for:

- 30 consecutive unexcused hours
- 42 unexcused hours in one school month
- 72 unexcused hours in one school year

When a student is habitually truant, the District will notify the parent or guardian in writing and may take appropriate intervention steps. The Building Administrator, in consultation with the Absence Intervention Team (AIT), will determine whether the student and family are making satisfactory progress in improving attendance. If progress is not being made, the attendance officer will file a complaint in juvenile court, and further court action may occur if prior adjudications are violated.

Filing procedures shall comply with all applicable requirements of Ohio Revised Code § 3321.38.

Arrival and Sign Out Times

Students leaving and returning within the same school day will have their absence calculated based on the time out.

Tardiness

Any students who are not in the school building when school officially begins for the day will be counted tardy. Habitual tardiness to school will be referred to the attendance officer for follow-up. Excessive violations may result in Juvenile Court proceedings.

Early Dismissal/Transportation Changes

For your child's safety and protection, students are not to leave the school or playground during the school day without special permission. Any students leaving during the school day will ONLY be dismissed from the office. If your child's transportation will change, please notify your child's office at

least an hour before dismissal. If a child will be accompanying another student on the bus or picked up with another student, notification must be received from BOTH sets of parents to the school by emailing the building secretary. Changes in bus transportation will be subject to approval based on availability.

Make-Up Work

Students are given the same number of days as the length of the illness to complete and turn in make-up work. For example, a child absent three days from school would be given three days upon his/her return to complete and turn in the missed work.

If your child is absent and you would like to receive missed work, prior to your student's return, please contact your child's school office regarding this possibility.

Withdrawal from School (Board Policy 5130)

Parents/Guardians are required to complete the BWLS Student Withdrawal Notice Form in the office of attendance to initiate the withdrawal process in Big Walnut. This signed form may be used to begin the process until at least one of the following preferred documentation methods are provided:

- A signed withdrawal form from a responsible party outside the district that includes the last date attended in the district and the name of the new district/school
- Documentation of notification from an ODEW system that the student has enrolled in another Ohio district
- A hard copy or electronic records request from the new district/school with the date enrolled in the new school and/or the date the request was received. Parents/Guardians need to provide their new mailing address and contact information.

Academic Achievement

School Fees and Instructional Materials (Board Policy 6152)

Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, and in accordance with Board of Education action on July 21, 2025 (Agenda Item 5.14 – Student Fees), Big Walnut Local Schools has eliminated all general student fees. This decision will be reviewed annually by the Board.

Students will still be responsible for any costs related to lost or damaged school property, optional purchases (such as spirit wear), and other non-required items.

Note: For Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students, tuition remains unchanged. Only the general student fee has been eliminated.

Students enrolled in our preschool program will have a tuition of \$225 per month. Students enrolled in our Full Day Kindergarten program will have a tuition fee of \$225 per month. Fees are due at the beginning of the school year. Payments may be made using our online payment system on the district website: www.bwls.net (select "PaySchools Central" under the "Parent/Community" menu), a credit card transaction at school, or by sending a check to school. Invoices will be sent on a monthly basis. Until fees are paid, students may not participate in Eagle Extensions.

Students are responsible for instructional materials loaned to him or her, and are expected to return instructional materials at the end of the course. Students will be responsible for paying for any instructional materials that are damaged, lost, or stolen.

Field Trips (Board Policy 2340)

Field trips are an opportunity to participate in educational experiences beyond the regular classroom. Only classroom students and adult chaperones are permitted on field trips. Adult chaperones are subject to Policy 8120 (Volunteers) and are required to have a successful background check prior to supervising any students on the trip. Permission slips signed by a parent or guardian must be on file in the office prior to the date of the trip. A telephone call giving permission is not a signed permission slip. Field trips are a privilege, not a right. A student's attendance and attitude are key factors in determining his/her participation in these educational opportunities. Students on all District-sponsored trips remain under the supervision of this Board and are subject to the District's administrative guidelines.

Reporting Student Progress (Board Policy 5420)

Student academic progress will be reported to parents on consistent intervals throughout the year. Parent conferences and PowerSchool will be provided to keep parents informed of student progress. *PowerSchool* is the online tool that may be used by Big Walnut Local Schools to report grade information. This allows parents access to their child's academic progress.

Big Walnut implements a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model to meet the needs of all students. Each student is universally screened in the areas of literacy and math three times per year. Data teams that are comprised of various professionals including but not limited to classroom teachers, intervention staff, and the school principal look at student data to determine the needs of students to receive support in academics and/or behavior. Throughout these interventions, the student's progress is monitored and will be communicated to the parents. If the educational team, which also includes the parents, has a concern about a lack of or stalled progress, a switch in intervention may be made or further conversation of meeting the student's needs may occur.

Gifted Identification and Services (Board Policy 2464)

The State of Ohio requires gifted identification, however, it does not mandate comprehensive services for children identified as gifted. Big Walnut Local Schools defines "gifted" as students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified following procedures and criteria established by the Ohio Revised Code, Section 3324.03.

If you wish to find out more about the "Big Walnut Policy and Plan for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted" or "Gifted Education Services and Eligibility Criteria", please contact your child's school or the Big Walnut District office to obtain additional information.

Academic Promotion & Retention (Board Policy 5410)

The promotion/retention of a student in any grade level should always be in the best interest of the student. The first consideration for student retention is the inability to meet at least minimum levels of knowledge and skills at his or her grade level. However, academics will not be the sole factor in the determination of retention. The student's age, maturity level, emotional and social development, and attendance will also be considered. Retention shall occur only if it is viewed as an opportunity for student growth. If deemed necessary, it should occur as early as possible in a student's educational program.

Student Assessment (Board Policy 2623)

Big Walnut Local Schools follow requirements for all state mandated testing and assessments. Additional group tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests help the staff determine instructional needs. Classroom tests are given to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected or prepared by teachers to assess student achievement on specific objectives.

Parent/Teacher Conferences (Board Policy 5420)

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled multiple times throughout the year. Conference times will be arranged through your child's teacher. Conferences may be arranged at other times throughout the year by request of the parent, teacher, or building principal.

Health & Medical Needs

Immunization Requirements (Board Policy 5320)

Your child must meet county and state health regulations for entrance to school, which include compliance with immunization laws. Each school year, the district nurse reviews health records and reminders will be sent if your child is out of compliance. **Students will be excluded from school if the immunization requirements are not completed within 14 calendar days after the student's first day of school.** Written statements of objection to immunizations due to parent/guardian philosophical or religious reasons must be provided to the school and are kept on file in the student record. An exemption from immunizations related to medical reasons must be signed by the child's physician and will be kept in the student file.

Listed below are the immunizations your child must have according to the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Education for the 2026/2027 School Year.

Ohio School Immunization Requirement Details K-12	
DTaP Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis	Grades K-12 Four or more doses of DTaP or DT vaccine, or any combination. If all four doses were given before the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is required. If the fourth dose was administered at least six months after the third dose, and on or after the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is not required. Recommended DTaP or DT minimum intervals for kindergarten students are four weeks between the first and second doses, and the second and third doses; and six months between the third and fourth doses and the fourth and fifth doses. If a fifth dose is administered prior to the fourth birthday, a sixth dose is recommended but not required.
Hep B Hepatitis B	Grades K-12 Three doses of hepatitis B vaccine. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose. The third dose must be given at least 16 weeks after the first dose and at least eight weeks after the second dose. The last dose in the series (third or fourth dose) must not be administered before age 24 weeks.
MMR Measles, Mumps, Rubella	Grades K-12 Two doses of MMR vaccine. The first dose must be administered on or after the first birthday. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose.

Polio	Grades K-12 Three or more doses of IPV vaccine. The FINAL dose must be administered on or after the fourth birthday with at least six months between the final and previous dose, regardless of the number of previous doses. If any combination of IPV and OPV was received, four doses of either vaccine are required. Only trivalent OPV (tOPV) counts toward the U.S. vaccination requirements. Doses of OPV administered before April 1, 2016, should be counted (unless specifically noted as administered during a campaign). Doses of OPV administered on or after April 1, 2016, should not be counted.
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Grades K-12 Two doses of varicella vaccine must be administered prior to entry. The first dose must be administered on or after the first birthday. The second dose should be administered at least three months after the first dose; however, if the second dose is administered at least 28 days after the first dose, it is considered valid.

Immunizations for Child Care, Head Start and Pre-School Attendance:

Please follow the following link to the ACIP Easy-to-read Immunization Schedule for Infants and Children.
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules/child-easyread.html>

Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division B: Each child's caretaker parent shall provide to the center, home, or in-home aide a medical statement, as described in division (D) of this section, indicating that the child has been immunized against or is in the process of being immunized against all of the following diseases:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken pox; • Diphtheria; • Haemophilus influenzae type b; • Hepatitis A; • Hepatitis B; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influenza; • Measles; • Mumps; • Pertussis; • Pneumococcal disease; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poliomyelitis; • Rotavirus; • Rubella; • Tetanus. |
|---|---|--|

Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division C:

A child is not required to be immunized against a disease specified in Division (B) of this section if any of the following is the case:

1. Immunization against the disease is medically contraindicated for the child;
2. The child's parent or guardian has declined to have the child immunized against the disease for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions;
3. Immunization against the disease is not medically appropriate for the child's age. In the case of influenza, a child is not required to be immunized against the disease if the seasonal vaccine is not available.

Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division D:

The medical statement shall include all of the following information:

1. The dates that a child received immunizations against each of the diseases specified in division (B) of this section;
2. Whether a child is subject to any of the exceptions specified in division (C) of this section.
3. The medical statement shall include a component where a parent or guardian may indicate that the parent or guardian has declined to have the child immunized.

Follow the link below to the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services' Child Medical Statement:
<https://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/num/DCY01305/pdf/>

Emergency Medical Authorization Form (Board Policy 5341)

Parents/Guardians are required by state law to complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form. These are kept on file in the school office. This form must be on file in order for a student to participate in an activity off school grounds, including field trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities. The Emergency Medical Authorization is provided at the time of enrollment or each school year and must be completed every school year thereafter. Please note when listing person(s) as emergency contacts, it is recommended that those contacts are in close vicinity of the school building in the event that the student would need to be picked up from school if you are unable to be reached.

Dispensing Medication (Board Policy 5330)

With the exception of diabetes care covered under Policy 5336, the administration of prescribed medication and/or medically-prescribed treatments to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to do so would jeopardize the health of the student, the student would not be able to attend school if the medication or treatment were not made available during school hours, or if the child is disabled and requires medication to benefit from the educational program. Parents and students should review Policy 5330 to understand the Board's policy related to medication.

Guidelines have been established to ensure to maintain the control of authorized drugs within the schools and to ensure the health and welfare of the student.

A "[MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM](#)" must be on file in the office for any **prescribed** or **over the counter medication (OTC)** to be dispensed to your child. OTCs include but are not limited to pain medication (Tylenol, Advil, etc.), cold medication (Mucinex, Sudafed, etc.), and cough drops. Medication brought to school must be in the original container and must be brought to school by a parent or parent designee. Medication cannot be sent to school with the student. Prescription medications must be kept in a pharmacy container with the student's name and match the physician's written orders on the Medication Administration Form. For over the counter medications, the dosing must match manufacturer's suggested dosing. All medication will be stored in a secure location in the office and dispensed by the principal or his/her designee. A medication log is maintained in the office including student name, type of medication, date and time medication is administered, amount provided and the expiration date of the medication.

In some instances, students may be authorized to carry and use, as necessary, medications such as epinephrine, asthma inhalers, or over-the-counter topical sunscreen. For further information regarding such authorization and forms for such authorization, see Board Policy 5330 (Use of Medications). If the student requires emergency medication to be kept at school, the appropriate Emergency Action Plan is to be completed and signed by the physician and parent/guardian. If the student is found to use the emergency medication in an inappropriate manner, Administration has the authority to confiscate the medication and notify parents and the physician to arrange for alternative means of administration.

Medical Plans must be provided to school every year or anytime a change has occurred. The plan must be signed by a physician.

Any medication that is not picked up by the parent/guardian at the end of the school year, will be appropriately destroyed by the district nurse.

Medical forms are available in the school office or on our district website at www.bwls.net, expire at the end of the school year.

Any student who distributes medication of any kind or who is found in possession of unauthorized medication is in violation of the Big Walnut Local School's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

Student Illness

Your child needs to be free of vomiting, diarrhea and/or fever-free (less than 100.0) without medications for 24 hours before they can come or return to school. Students with an unexplained rash will need a note from a physician stating that they are not contagious and may attend school. Students requiring the use of an antibiotic, should be on the antibiotic 24 hrs before returning to school. Students will be sent home with any of these symptoms, in order to prevent spreading illness among our students and staff. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact District Nurse, Megan Truax.

Communicable Diseases (Board Policy 8450)

Following is a list of common Communicable Diseases from the Delaware County Health Department. Should your child contract a communicable disease, please notify the office.

Disease:	Exclusion from School:
Strep Throat	24 hours on antibiotic
Chicken Pox	Until the 6th day or all lesions are dry
COVID-19	Remain home. BWLS will follow the current guidelines from the Delaware Public Health District
Mumps	Until 5 days after the onset of parotid swelling
Impetigo	24 hours on antibiotic and lesions are no longer draining
Pink Eye	Until discharge from eye(s) cease; 24 hours on medication
Head Lice	Until treated and cleared by school personnel
Scabies	Until adequately treated
Ringworm	Until 24 hours after being adequately treated
Whooping Cough	24 hours after 5th dose of Zithromax is given
MRSA	Exclusion if wound is draining and cannot be covered

Allergies and/or Medical Plans

If your child has an allergy or has specialized medical needs, please notify the district nurse, Megan Truax, your child's teacher, or school office. If your student is transported to school by bus, the bus drivers should also be provided with this information. Each year each school building and the Food Service must have an updated statement from your physician documenting the specific food allergy and acceptable substitutes in order to make accommodations within the National School Breakfast and/or Lunch Program.

Food Brought to School

Safety of our students is a top priority each day. Non food treats are a safer, healthier alternative. In an effort to further promote the safety of all students, **there will be no food treats allowed in Big Walnut Schools, unless it is part of a school celebration (harvest/valentines) and/or approved by the building Principal.** Food items being brought/sent in for school celebrations must be nut-free (no peanuts, tree nuts, etc.), and cannot be processed in facilities that process nut products (as noted on any labels). Food labels must be present on all food items, this is to include ingredients and nutritional content.

Latex Free Environment

Big Walnut Local Schools are a latex free environment. This means that no student is to bring balloons, gloves, rubber bands, or any other materials that contain latex. This is for the safety of all of our students and staff.

Student Code of Conduct (Board Policy 5500)

Code of Conduct Rules

The purpose of discipline is teaching students to control their own behavior in accordance with socially accepted standards.

As students progress from preschool to 5th grade, they become increasingly responsible for their behavior. The following behaviors are considered serious in nature and may result in disciplinary action. The principal considers many factors including age, previous discipline reports, disability and severity of behavior when considering disciplinary action.

- Fighting/Assault/Unauthorized touching
- Threats
- Leaving school without permission
- Damage of property
- Disruption of the learning environment
- Insubordination
- False Alarms
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, drugs or tobacco (Board Policy 5512, 5530)
- Possession of dangerous weapons or look-alikes (Board Policy 5772)
- Theft
- Sexual harassment
- Non school time violations toward school personnel, school property, or an event that disrupts the learning environment
- Lying/Cheating/Forgery
- Behaviors disruptive to the learning environment or use of objects causing disruption
- Behaviors that may cause injury to self or others (running in halls, shoving, playground actions, etc.)
- Violation of the BWLSD Technology Policy

Bullying, Harassment and/or Hazing:

BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR (Policy 5517.01)

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while enroute to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school- approved or school-related activity or function, such as field

trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education's Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means: (A) any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s); or (B) violence within a dating relationship.

"Electronic act" means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means cyberbullying through electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, email, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Any student or student's parent/guardian who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The building principal or appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact,

a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official

position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

If during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the Principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517- Anti-Harassment.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Deliberately making false reports about harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or other aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Deliberately making false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

The District shall implement intervention strategies (AG 5517.01) to protect a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying and from retaliation following such a report.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the custodial parent/guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review, investigation, and action.

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such complaints shall be reasonably specific including

person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the building principal for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

Individuals who make informal complaints as provided above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action shall be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

When an individual making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous. If the complaint becomes a criminal matter, the court may require the district to report the victim or complaints.

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

At least semi-annually, the Superintendent shall provide to the President of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District web site (if one exists). The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

Allegations of criminal misconduct and suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or to Child Protective Services in accordance with statute. District personnel shall cooperate with investigations by such agencies.

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R.C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. At least once each school year a written statement describing the policy and consequences for violations of the policy shall be sent to each student's custodial parent or guardian.

State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedures.

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of aggressive behavior, including bullying and violence within a dating relationship. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines about aggressive behavior and bullying, in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Annually, the District shall provide all students enrolled in the District with age-appropriate instruction regarding the Board's policy, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations of the policy.

Students in grades seven (7) through twelve (12) shall receive age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education, including instruction in recognizing dating violence warning signs and characteristics of healthy relationships. Parents, who submit a written request to the building principal to examine the dating violence prevention instruction materials used in the school, will be afforded an opportunity to review the materials within a reasonable period of time.

The District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students. Time spent by school staff in these training programs shall apply toward mandated continuing education requirements.

In accordance with Board Policy 8462, the Superintendent shall include a review of this policy on bullying and other forms of harassment in the required training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed. The complaint procedure established by the Superintendent shall be followed.

Bullying Reports are made available in the office. In addition, anonymous reports can be made by dialing the Safer Schools Ohio tip line via call or text at 1-844-SAFEROH (1-844-723-3764).

[Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior Form](#)

HAZING POLICY (Board Policy 5516)

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with and disruptive to the educational process, and prohibited at any time in school facilities, on school property, and/or off school property if the misconduct is connected to or associated with Board-sponsored activities (e.g., extracurricular teams, clubs, or groups) or incidents that have occurred on school property. No administrator, employee, faculty member, teacher, coach, consultant, alumnus, or volunteer of the District shall encourage, permit, authorize, condone, or tolerate any hazing activities. The preceding prohibition includes recklessly permitting the hazing of any person associated with the District. Additionally, no student shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any class, team, or organization or any act to continue or reinstate membership in or affiliation with any class, team, or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person, including coercing another to consume alcohol or a drug of abuse. No person shall recklessly participate in the hazing of another. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Administrators, employees, faculty members, teachers, coaches, consultants, alumni, or volunteers of the District shall be alerted to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed by the discoverer of the prohibitions contained in this policy and shall be ordered to end all hazing activities or planned activities immediately. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Additionally, no administrator, employee, faculty member, teacher, coach, consultant, alumnus, or volunteer of the District who is acting in an official and professional capacity shall recklessly fail to immediately report the knowledge of hazing to a law enforcement agency in the county in which the victim of hazing resides or in which the hazing is occurring or has occurred. Students, administrators, employees, faculty members, teachers, and coaches who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with law. Likewise, consultants, alumni, and volunteers associated with the District who fail to abide by this policy may be prohibited from continuing their involvement and/or participation in activities associated with the District and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with law.

Administrators, staff members, and volunteers shall not intentionally remain ignorant of hazing or potential hazing activities.

Likewise, consultants, alumni, and volunteers associated with the District who fail to abide by this policy may be prohibited from continuing their involvement and/or participation in activities associated with the District and may be held personally liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with law.

Anti-Harassment Policy: Title VI (Board Policy 5517)

The Board's policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, job applicants, the general public and individuals with whom it does business and applies to race, color, national origin, citizenship status, religion, sex, economic status, age or disability.

The Board does not permit discriminatory practices and views harassment as a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that 1) places a student or employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; 2) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or an employee's work performance; or 3) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school. Employees or students who engage in discrimination/harassment of another employee or student shall be subject to disciplinary action. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to discrimination/harassment does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. No one shall retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance; assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of discrimination of an individual; or because he/she has opposed language or conduct that violates policy.

On the Basis of Gender: Title IX

The U.S. Department of Education has published regulations for implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits gender discrimination in federally assisted education programs. Title IX states, in part, that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

The Board hereby states its intention to ensure compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as affected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the regulations promulgated through the U.S. Department of Education.

Student/Person, Personal Property and Locker Searches (Board Policy 5771)

The Board acknowledges the need for in-school storage of student possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Such spaces remain the property of the Board and, in accordance with law, may be the subject of random search. Where locks are provided for such places, students may lock them against incursion by other students, but in no such places shall students have such an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. The Board directs the school principals to conduct a routine inspection at least annually of all such storage places.

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search the person or property, including vehicles, of a student, with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction and the student's age.

This authorization to search shall also apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board.

The Board also authorizes the use of canines, trained in detecting the presence of drugs or devices, when the Superintendent has reasonable suspicion that illegal drugs or devices may be present in a school. This means of detection shall be used only to determine the presence of drugs in locker areas and other places on school property where such substances could be concealed. Canine detection must be conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities or with organizations certified in canine detection and is not to be used to search individual students unless a warrant has been obtained prior to the search.

Board policy regarding search and seizure may be reviewed at Policy 5771.

Video Surveillance (Board Policy 7440.01)

The Board of Education authorizes the use of video surveillance and electronic monitoring equipment at various school sites throughout the District and on school buses. The video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment shall be used to protect Board property and assets from theft and vandalism through deterrence and video documentation. The system is not designed nor intended to protect individuals from being victims of violent or property crimes, nor to detect other potentially illegal and undesirable activities that may occur, although information may be used as evidence in such cases.

Student Discipline (Board Policy 5600)

The Superintendent, principals, and other administrators shall have the authority to assign discipline to students, subject to the Student Code of Conduct and, where required by law, to the student's due process right to notice, hearing, and appeal.

In-School Intervention (Board Policy 5610.02)

In-school Intervention (ISI) will provide a practical alternative to out-of-school suspension for less serious infractions as determined by the administration. This program will remove disruptive students from the classroom while providing a continuing educational program and an opportunity to change inappropriate behavior. They will be marked as present for school for the days they are in ISI. They are required to complete their regular school work and will receive up to 100% credit for work completed while in ISI.

Emergency Removal (Board Policy 5610.03)

1. If a pupil's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, then:
 - a. The superintendent, principal, assistant principal or dean of students may remove the student from curricular or extracurricular activity, or from the premises.
 - b. A teacher may remove a student from a curricular or extracurricular activity under his supervision, but not from the premises. If a teacher makes a removal their reasons must be submitted to the principal in writing as soon after the removal as possible.
2. No prior notice or hearing is required for any emergency removal. In all cases of normal disciplinary procedures where a student is removed from a curricular activity for less than one (1) school day and is not subject to further suspension or expulsion, the following due process requirements do not apply.
3. If the emergency removal exceeds one (1) school day, then a due process hearing will be held within three (3) school days after the removal is ordered in accordance with Board Policy 5610.03 (Emergency Removal of Students).
4. If the superintendent or principal reinstates a pupil prior to the hearing for emergency removal, the teacher may demand and shall be given written reason for the reinstatement.

Suspension (Board Policy 5610)

No suspension will be for more than ten (10) school days. When a student is being considered for an out-of-school suspension by the Superintendent, Principal, or another administrator:

1. The student will be informed in writing of the potential suspension and the reasons for the proposed action
2. The student will be provided an opportunity for an informal hearing to challenge the reason for the intended suspension and to explain his/her actions.
3. Within one (1) school day of the suspension the Superintendent, Principal, or another administrator will notify the parents, guardians, or custodians of the student. The notice will include the reasons for the suspension and the right of the student, parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal to the Board or its designee; the right to be represented at the appeal; and the right to request the hearing be held in executive session if before the Board.
4. The student is not permitted to participate in any school function during the period of suspension. Students are to remain at home during school hours during the duration of the suspension.

Expulsion (Board Policy 5610)

When a student is being considered for expulsion by the Superintendent:

1. The Superintendent will give the student and parent, guardian, or custodian written notice of the intended expulsion, including reasons for the intended expulsion.
2. The student and parent or representative have the opportunity to appear before the Superintendent or designee to challenge the proposed action or to otherwise explain the student's actions. The written notice will state the time and place to appear, which must not be earlier than three (3) school days nor later than five (5) school days after the notice is given unless the Superintendent grants an extension upon request of the student or parent.
3. Except when permitted for a longer duration by Board policy, no expulsion may be for a period exceeding the greater of eighty (80) school days or the number of school days remaining in the semester or term in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place or for one (1) year as specifically provided in this policy and the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code.
4. Within one (1) school day of the expulsion, the Superintendent will notify the parents, guardians, or custodians of the student and Treasurer of the Board. The notice will include the reasons for the expulsion and the right of the student, parent, guardian, or custodian to appeal to the Board or its

designee; the right to be represented at the appeal; and the right to request the hearing be held in executive session if before the Board. The notice shall also specify that if the student, parent, guardian, or custodian intends to appeal the expulsion to the Board or its designee, such notice of appeal shall be filed, in writing, with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the notice of expulsion. . If the offense is one for which the District may seek permanent exclusion, then the notice will contain that information.

Student Due Process (Board Policy 5611)

Parents have the right to appeal suspension or expulsion decisions as set forth below.

Appeal Procedure for Suspensions

The student who is eighteen (18) or older or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the suspension to the Board or its designee. They may be represented in all such appeal proceedings. A verbatim record will be kept of the hearing which may be held in executive session at the request of the student, parent, or guardian if held before the Board. The procedure to pursue such appeal will be provided in regulations approved by the Superintendent. Notice of appeal must be filed, in writing, with the Treasurer or the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days after the date of the notice to suspend. While a hearing before the Board may occur in an executive session, the Board must act in public.

Appeal Procedure for Expulsions

A student who is eighteen (18) or older or a student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may appeal the expulsion by the Superintendent to the Board or its designee. They may be represented in all such appeal proceedings and will be granted a hearing before the Board or its designee. A verbatim record will be kept of the hearing which may be held in executive session at the request of the student, parent, or guardian if it is held before the Board. The procedure to pursue such appeal will be in accordance with regulations approved by the Superintendent. Notice of appeal must be filed, in writing, within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the Superintendent's decision to expel with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent. While a hearing before the Board may occur in an executive session, the Board must act in public.

Dress Code and Appearance (Board Policy 5511)

Dress is the responsibility of the student and parent. When dress and grooming disrupt the learning process for the individual student, other students, or the learning climate of the school, it becomes a matter of administrative action involving the student and/or parent. Big Walnut Local School District students are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior, and each student is encouraged to dress in a manner that is appropriate. The building administrator or designee may exclude any student, when, in his/her judgment, apparel is not consistent with the standards established below:

1. Hats, hoods, head coverings, bandanas, sweatbands, and sunglasses should only be worn outside the building unless approved by the building principal or designee.
2. Appropriate footwear must be worn for safety and sanitation reasons. Examples of unacceptable footwear include flip flops, slippers, and loose fitting footwear that cannot safely and securely remain on the student's feet. Shoes must cover heels.
3. Clothing must be safe for school activities. Examples of inappropriate apparel include but are not limited to: halters, midriff tops, crop tops, spaghetti strap tops, strapless tops, revealing and/or see through tops, open mesh garments, garments with open sides which expose skin or undergarments.
4. Lower garments are to be worn at the appropriate level and cannot drag the floor. Lower garments should not allow any portion of the undergarments to be exposed when the student sits, stands, raises

his/her hand, or bends over. No form fitting shorts of any kind may be worn unless worn completely under a skirt/dress.

5. Patches, insignias, buttons, jewelry, clothing, or other items that include obscene, violent, gang, tobacco, drug or alcohol related writing or images are not acceptable. Items of clothing that belittle others may not be worn (i.e., race, religion, gender, etc.)
6. Coats and jackets are meant for outdoor wear and must be kept in school lockers or other designated areas during the day.
7. Jewelry or articles judged potentially harmful to students are not acceptable.
8. Excessive make-up, which causes disruption, is not permitted.
9. Distracting hair is not acceptable.

Electronic Devices:

Students are not permitted to use personal cell phones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches or any other electronic devices/related devices in school and/or classrooms. Exceptions will be made for accommodations listed in a student's IEP, 504 plan, or to monitor or address a health concern.

Disruptions caused by electronic devices may result in disciplinary action. In addition, any applications for cell phones or other devices that would allow that device to be used as a remote are strictly prohibited. The use of any remote by a student, in the school without permission from an administrator or teacher is prohibited.

School Transportation (Board Policy 8600)

The Big Walnut transportation system is operated as a convenience and service for the students of the Big Walnut School District. The primary purpose of the system is to transport students safely to and from school. Safety is the key concept around which the system operates. Safety is the motivating force behind the operational policies, rules, and regulations. Efficiency is also a basis for rules and regulations. Some of the following rules and regulations have grown from policies of the Big Walnut Board of Education. Others are state laws as found in the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3301-83-08, and still others formulated by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

School Bus Rules

1. Students shall arrive at the bus stop 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive and must be standing at their "Designated Place of Safety," before the bus arrives. Students cannot wait in a house or car and then arrive at their "Designated Place of Safety," after the bus has arrived.
2. Behavior at bus stops must not threaten life, limb, or property.
3. Students must go directly to an available or assigned seat so the bus may resume motion.
4. Students must remain seated, keeping aisles and exits clear at all times.
5. Students must listen for directions or instructions and obey the driver, promptly and respectfully.
6. Students must not use profane language.
7. Students must not eat or drink on the bus, except as required for medical conditions.
8. Alcohol, vaping devices, tobacco and drugs are prohibited on the bus, with the exception of medication for medical reasons.
9. Students must not throw or pass objects on, from, or into the bus.
10. Students may carry onto the bus only objects that can be held in their laps, this includes instruments or sporting equipment.
11. Students must leave or board the bus at their designated bus stop unless they have parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise.
12. Students must not put their head or arms out of the bus window.
13. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct.

While the Board does not prohibit the use of Personal Communication Devices (PCD) while riding in school vehicles, the Driver, teacher, and/or sponsor/advisor/coach may, at their discretion, prohibit their use. Furthermore, other distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment, a failure to follow instructions, or any other violation of the Student Code of Conduct related to PCD use will not be tolerated and will result in the loss of the use of the PCD while in a school vehicle as well as discipline when appropriate. See Board Policy 5136 (Personal Communication Devices).

Drivers and bus aides must have access to appropriate information about the child to the degree that such information might affect the safe transportation and medical well-being. This information must be available in the vehicle or readily accessible in the transportation office.

Suspension of Transportation Privileges (Board Policy 5610.04)

A student may be suspended from school bus/vehicle riding privileges for all or part of a school year for any violation of established regulations for bus conduct and/or for conduct occurring on the bus/vehicle in violation of the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code. Before a suspension from bus/vehicle riding privileges is imposed, the Superintendent or other designated District personnel will provide a student with notice of an intended suspension and an opportunity to appear before the Superintendent or other designated District personnel. Disciplinary suspension periods will be commensurate with the infraction(s) committed as determined by the Superintendent or designated District personnel.

Bus Passes

Due to the fact that the buses are operating at capacity load, the school may not be able to honor notes requesting that students ride a different bus. Students will only be transported to and from their place of residence or if arrangements have been made with the Transportation Department to a second permanent address within the district. The District does not transport students to commercial addresses. Bus drivers will work with students, parents and administrators to ensure safety.

General Information

Animals in School and on District Property (Board Policy 8390)

Animals permitted in schools and elsewhere on District property must comply with Policy 8390 (Animals on District Property) and are limited to those necessary to support specific curriculum-related projects and activities with administrative approval, service animals as required by federal and state law, approved therapy dogs, and dogs that conduct random searches. The student's need for and use of a service animal must be documented in the student's individual education plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. A service animal is the personal property of the student and/or parents. The Board of Education does not assume responsibility for training, daily care, health care, or supervision of service animals. The Board of Education does not assume responsibility for personal injury or property damage arising out of or relating to the presence or use of service animals on District property or at District-sponsored events.

District Safety Plan (Board Policy 8400)

In case of an emergency, district personnel will follow the District Emergency Operations Plan. This plan specifies steps to be followed should an emergency arise that threatens the well-being of students, staff and the public while utilizing school property. In addition to the steps outlined in the District Emergency Operations Plan, our staff routinely trains on many of these procedures. The drills include fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. In the event of a lockdown, parents will be notified via email, text, phone, and/or the district website. If the situation causes a delay in the start of the school day or a change in release time, parents will be notified using the district's automated calling system.

Food Service (Board Policy 8500)

Students in full-day kindergarten and grades 1-5 may purchase lunch from the cafeteria. Student breakfast for K-5 is \$1.75 and lunch for K-5 is \$3.25. Payments may be made using our online payment system on the district website: www.bwls.net, a credit card transaction at school, or by sending a check to school. Students are permitted up to three (3) school lunch charges once their accounts are depleted. Lunch charges do not include ala carte items. Once a student has charged a school lunch three (3) times, he/she will be provided with a sandwich and drink for lunch.

Students gain access to their personal account with a Personal Identification Number (PIN). This system is used for all purchases including full meals, ala carte and milk. Accounts remain active until graduation or withdrawal from the district. Students who fraudulently use a debit account or deny payment for food items will be responsible for repayment, disciplined and may be prosecuted. The school lunch includes a main entrée, milk, choice of fruits and vegetables, and often a dessert. A variety of ala carte items are always available.

Applications for the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program are distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year. If you would like an application to this program, please contact your child's school.

Fundraising Activities (Board Policy 5830)

Student fundraising by approved school organizations, those whose funds are managed by the Treasurer, may be permitted in school by the principal. Student fundraising by approved school organizations off school grounds may be permitted under administrative guidelines of the Superintendent. Student fundraising on behalf of school-related organizations whose funds are not managed by the Treasurer may be permitted on school grounds in accordance with the Superintendent's administrative guidelines.

Crowdfunding activities aimed at raising funds for a specific classroom or school activity, including extracurricular activity, or to obtain supplemental resources (e.g., supplies or equipment) that are not required to provide a free appropriate public education to any students in the classroom require the written approval of the Superintendent.

For the Board's full policy regarding fundraising see Policy 5830 (Student Fundraising) and Policy 6605 (Crowdfunding). Contact your building principal with any questions.

Lockers (Intermediate School Only)

Each student is responsible for his or her hallway locker. Lockers must be cleaned every nine weeks. Lockers should be kept clean inside and out. Gummed labels; stickers, and/or pictures are not to be displayed inside or outside of the locker. Markers (including dry erase markers) may not be used on lockers. Damage caused by misuse will be charged to the student responsible. If a school supported (e.g. team spirit poster) locker display is placed on the locker, it must have prior administrative approval and only masking tape must be used.

Lost and Found

Found items are kept in a lost and found location. Found items that are identified with the child's name will be returned. With this in mind, please remember to label your child's clothing. Parents and students are encouraged to check the Lost and Found for missing items. Items not claimed will be given to a charitable organization.

Classroom Celebrations

Various school celebrations are planned during the year by classroom teachers and the PTO. Delivery of flowers, balloons, and/or clowns is prohibited during the school day.

*Please refer to the section titled “Food Brought to School” for guidelines on what food is appropriate for these events.

Birthday Celebrations

In order to promote healthy choices, support a culture of wellness in our schools, and our concern for children with food allergies, diabetes, and other dietary restrictions, Big Walnut will not allow birthday treats in the form of food items in grades PK-5. If you would like the classroom teacher to acknowledge your child’s birthday, we ask that you choose an alternative way to celebrate. Some suggestions include; volunteer to be a guest reader in your child’s classroom, donate a book to the class library and dedicate it to your child, or send in non-edible items such as pencils or bookmarks. In addition, the distribution of birthday invitations may take place in the classroom as long as each student in the classroom is receiving an invitation. If not, birthday invitations should be distributed outside of school.

Playground Safety

All items brought from home need to be approved by the classroom teacher and/or recess aide for safety and appropriateness (e.g., balls, jump ropes, etc.). Children should be properly clothed for daily outside play. Children are sent outside for recess when the temperature is 25° Fahrenheit or above, including the wind chill, and playground conditions permit safe play. Additionally, when the heat index is above the “Danger” threshold as determined by the National Weather Service Heat Index chart, students will not have outdoor recess. We encourage all students to go outside for recess on outside recess days. We understand that children with asthma or those returning after a serious illness may need to occasionally stay in. If your child needs to stay inside, please send a note from home. If the need to stay in is longer than two days, you will need to provide us with a doctor’s note specifying the reason.

Staff Gifts (Board Policy 3214)

It is the policy of the Board that staff members may accept gifts of nominal value (generally considered a value of \$25 or less) from students or parents. The Superintendent may approve acts of generosity to individual staff members in unusual situations. However, at no time may a staff member accept compensation from any other source, other than the Board, for the performance of his/her official duties, any other act or service in his/her public capacity, for the general performance of the duties of his/her public employment, or as a supplement to his/her public compensation.

Student Transportation to School via Bicycle or Skateboard (Board Policy 5514)

Students riding bikes to school must have safety reflectors, adequate brakes, and a strong lock. Bikes must be parked where assigned. Skateboards and skates may be used to get to school, but may not be carried around during the school day.

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (Board Policy 5350)

The Board of Education recognizes that depression and self-destruction are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. A student who suffers the psychological disability of depression cannot benefit fully from the educational program of the schools, and a student who has attempted self-destruction poses a danger both to himself/herself and to other students.

All school personnel should be alert to the student who exhibits signs of unusual depression or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member should be taken with the utmost seriousness.

The 988 Lifeline is available as a suicide and crisis lifeline. <https://988lifeline.org/>

Toys & Novelties

Toys and novelties should stay at home except with principal or designee permission. Any item that resembles or can be used as a weapon may not be brought to school.

Toxic Hazards and Asbestos Notice (Board Policy 8431)

Big Walnut Local Schools is concerned for the safety of the students and staff members and will attempt to comply with all federal and state statutes and regulations to protect them from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. Toxic hazards exist in chemicals and other substances used in the school setting such as in laboratories, science classrooms, kitchens, and in the cleaning of rooms and equipment. In its efforts to comply with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), the Ohio Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and the Ohio Public Employment Risk Reduction Act (PERRA) the Board has developed a District Asbestos Management Program. Pesticides are applied on school grounds as part of regularly scheduled lawn maintenance. If you wish to receive information in regards to the district's preparedness for toxic hazards of asbestos program please contact the Director of Facilities at 740-965-3010.

Vacationing Parents

Each year some of our parents go on trips or vacations, leaving their children with friends or family. The school needs certain information in case of an emergency.

Before parents leave on vacation, the school must have a **notarized** medical consent form including:

1. Child's name
2. Name, address and telephone number of responsible adult
3. Length of time the responsible person is in charge
4. Parent's signature and date
5. Any pertinent medical history or allergies not already included in required paperwork

Visitors (Board Policy 9150)

In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the school office upon entering the school to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. Visitors will be required to provide a driver's license or other form of identification. Any visitor found in the building without a visitor badge will be asked to return to the office. As part of our commitment to safety and security, we utilize Raptor as our trusted visitor management system. Raptor is a state-of-the-art technology designed to enhance our building's overall security measures. This system allows us to efficiently screen and track all visitors entering our premises, ensuring a secure environment for everyone. By implementing Raptor, we prioritize the well-being of our community members and maintain a vigilant approach to safety.

In order to protect our educational process and promote the safety of our students, we ask that visitors respect our learning environment and minimize the disruption of learning by remaining in scheduled areas. If parents wish to meet with a member of the staff, they should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to prevent any inconvenience to parents/staff or disruption of the learning process. Students may not bring visitors to school without first obtaining permission from the building principal.

Student Night Out is an opportunity for Intermediate School students only. Any and all students who do not attend Big Walnut Intermediate at the time of the Student Night Out event will not be granted access to these events.

Volunteers (Board Policy 8120)

The Board of Education recognizes that certain programs and activities can be enhanced through the use of volunteers who have particular knowledge or skills that will be helpful to members of the professional staff responsible for the conduct of those programs and activities. The District shall not be obligated to make use of volunteers whose abilities are not in accord with District needs.

All volunteers who work with children on a regular basis need to display appropriate behavior at all times and will have to provide a set of fingerprints so that a criminal records check can be conducted. Volunteers will have to pay the costs associated with the criminal records check either before they can begin their duties or as a condition of continued service as a volunteer at the discretion of the Board.

Additional information about school volunteering can be found on the district website and in Policy 8120 (Volunteers).