Otsego Junior High School
2026-2027 Student Handbook

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https://juniorhigh.otsegoknights.org/

WELCOME TO OTSEGO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
Home of the Knights!

Welcome to another exciting school year. We are so pleased to have you here with us. This Board approved handbook has been prepared to help guide you through your school year. While certainly not all-inclusive, it is intended to cover the majority of the technicalities of our operation. If you have questions and/or suggestions, feel free to discuss them with us.

Principal	Assistant Principal	Athletic Director	School Counselor	Secretary
Jon Rife	Tom Ferdig	Denton Saunders	Jamie McCarty	Emily Diepenbruck

Approved by the Board of Education on: **Thursday, May 28, 2026**

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This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was ***last updated on Thursday, August 20, 2026.*** *If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal or superintendent. This handbook can also be accessed on the District's website:*
https://www.otsegoknights.org/families/handbooks

FOREWORD

This 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 frequent reference by you and your parents. 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. This Handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of **Thursday, May 28, 2026**. 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 from the building principal and on the District's website.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Otsego Local School District, unified with family and community, prepares all students to reach their highest potential by providing innovative programs in a rich environment, focused on student-centered learning. Otsego students will become contributing citizens in a global society while respecting individual differences.

VISION STATEMENT

A united community which inspires and challenges everyone to exceed their expectations.
A caring and positive environment that values and embraces all learners.
An innovative approach to instruction focused on student achievement today, tomorrow and beyond.

MOTTO

Our Students, Our Community, Our Success

BRANDING

Logo

Athletics Logo

Icon

Jet Black

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 100
RGB: 0, 0, 0
Hex#: 000000

Bright White

CMYK: 0, 0, 0, 0
RGB: 255, 255, 255
Hex#: FFFFFF

Otsego Orange

CMYK: 0, 66.3, 100, 0
RGB: 255, 86, 0
Hex#: FF5600

Alma Mater

Hail to thee Otsego High in our hearts so dear,
Mem'ries there will never die,
Through the coming years.
See the Knight charge forward,
onward, with his head held high.
We'll respect and honor you,
with unchallenged pride.

Fight Song

Fight the team across the field, Show them Otsego's here.
We're gonna set the stands reverberating with a mighty cheer,
Rah, Rah, Rah.
Hit them hard and see how they fall,
Never let that team get the ball.
Hail, Hail the Knights are here,
as we charge on to Victory.

Portrait of a Graduate

We are PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE

An Otsego Knight:

- Acts responsibly with the interest of the larger community in mind.
- Demonstrates moral integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior.
- Positively responds to various challenges and circumstances of life.

We are FLEXIBLE

An Otsego Knight:

- Expects change and views it as an opportunity for growth.
- Adapts effectively in a climate of uncertainty and changing priorities.
- Responds productively with praise, setbacks, and criticism.

We are EMPATHETIC

An Otsego Knight:

- Knows the world is full of diverse social and cultural backgrounds beyond their own.
- Listens with an open mind to understand others' perspectives and is willing to compromise to reach solutions.
- Acts with respect and compassion towards others.

We are COMMUNICATORS

An Otsego Knight:

- Recognizes effective communication is essential to share information and knowledge and develop positive relationships.
- Listens attentively, speaks effectively, and writes clearly.
- Inspires others through words to create a connection that is real, emotional, and personal.

We are DRIVEN

An Otsego Knight:

- Believes that continuous individual improvement is essential.
- Takes risks, accepts challenges, and values the learning that comes from failure.
- Goes above and beyond and has confidence in their own abilities.

We are PROBLEM SOLVERS

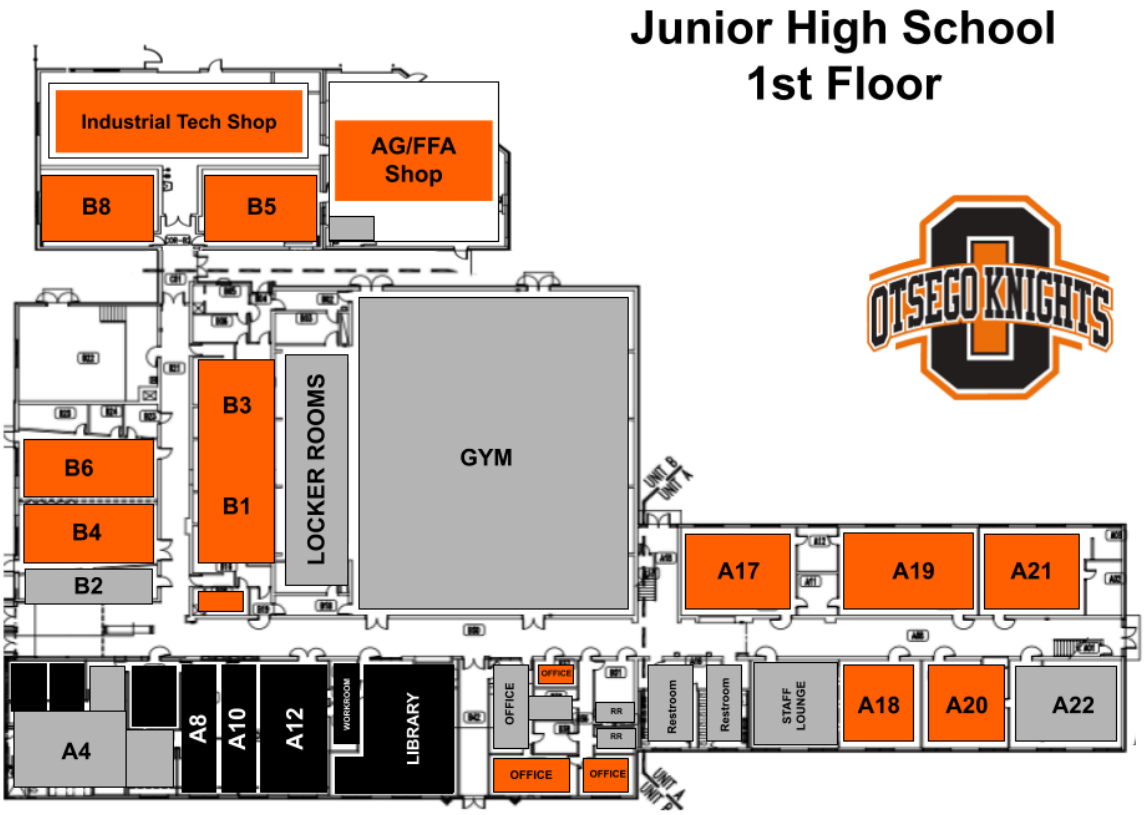
An Otsego Knight:

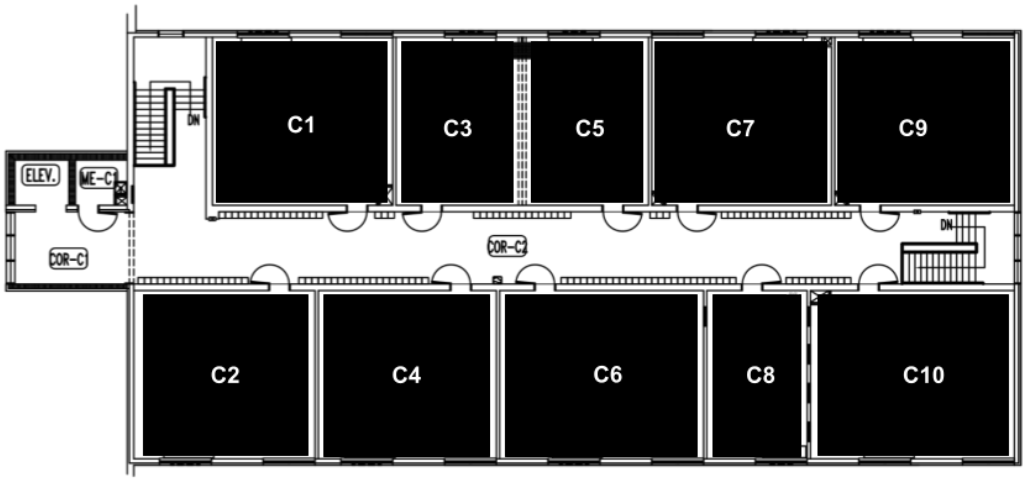
- Understands that identifying problems and thinking critically to develop unique solutions is essential.
- Analyzes information to define problems, create and implement solutions, and make improvements.
- Reflects on learning experiences, processes, and solutions.

School Calendar

[Click Here view the 2026-2027 District Calendar]

School Map





League information
Otsego Junior High School is a member of the Northern Buckeye Conference (NBC) and meets all guidelines established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) of which the school is a member. Schools in the Northern Buckeye Conference include Eastwood, Fostoria, Genoa, Lake, Oak Harbor, Maumee, and Rossford

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY
This District provides an equal educational opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer(s):

Kevin O'Shea Superintendent (419) 823-4381 ext. 1102 koshea@otsegoknights.org	- OR -	**Jessica Weatherwax** Student Services coordinator (419) 823-4381 ext. 2104 jweatherwax@otsegoknights.org

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures described in the student code of conduct section of this handbook under Title IX Sexual Harassment. 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.

SCHOOL DAY AND BUILDING ACCESS
To ensure a smooth and secure environment for everyone, please familiarize yourself with our building access times and policies.

Morning Access: The inner office foyer doors are unlocked early in the morning at 6:45 AM. This allows early arrivals to access necessary areas before school starts. Please note that these doors will lock at 7:30 AM to prevent anyone from gaining access to the building during the school day without checking into the office. Make sure to enter before this time if you need early access. **Afternoon Access:** After school, the inner office doors will reopen at 2:15 PM and remain accessible until 3:00 PM. This is designed to accommodate students who participate in after-school activities or need to meet with teachers. **Outer Doors:** The outer doors will be locked at 3:00 PM and will stay locked until 6:15 AM the following day. This policy is to ensure the safety and security of our school premises during off-hours. The exception to this will be the commons doors. After school the **commons doors** are open from 2:15 pm until 8:00pm for sports and other events in the commons and auditorium.

General Guidelines:
Students are not permitted to remain in the building after 3:00 PM unless they are officially involved in a scheduled activity and have direct permission from a teacher, coach, or administrator. Students who are in the building after hours must remain in the commons area and are not allowed to wander the hallways. Any student found loitering without permission may be subject to disciplinary action.

Please also be mindful of building access times to avoid being locked out. By following these expectations, we help maintain a safe, secure, and respectful school environment.

Bells Schedules

Regular Bell Schedule		
Period	**Time**	**Duration**
1st Period	7:30am - 8:14am	44 minutes
2nd Period	8:17am - 8:59am	42 minutes
3rd Period	9:02am - 9:44am	42 minutes
4th Period	9:47am - 10:29am	42 minutes
5th Period	10:32am - 11:14am	42 minutes
BLOCK A	11:17am - 11:47am	30 minutes
BLOCK B	11:50am - 12:20pm	30 minutes
BLOCK C	12:23pm - 12:53pm	30 minutes
6th Period	12:56pm - 1:38pm	42 minutes
7th Period	1:41pm - 2:25pm	44 minutes

Two-Hour Delay Bell Schedule		
Period	**Time**	**Duration**
1st Period	9:30am - 9:57am	27 minutes
2nd Period	10:00am - 10:25am	25 minutes
3rd Period	10:28am - 10:53am	25 minutes
4th Period	10:56am - 11:21am	25 minutes
BLOCK A	11:24am - 11:54am	30 minutes
BLOCK B	11:57am - 12:27pm	30 minutes
BLOCK C	12:30pm - 1:00pm	30 minutes
5th Period	1:03pm - 1:28pm	25 minutes
6th Period	1:31pm - 1:56pm	25 minutes
7th Period	1:59pm - 2:25pm	26 minutes

End of Day Assembly		
Period	**Time**	**Duration**
1st Period	7:30am - 8:14am	44 minutes
2nd Period	8:17am - 8:59am	42 minutes
3rd Period	9:02am - 9:44am	42 minutes
4th Period	9:47am - 10:29am	42 minutes
L: 6th-7th **SH:** 8th	10:32am - 11:02am	30 minutes
SH: 6th-7th **L:** 8th	11:05am - 11:35am	30 minutes
5th Period	11:38am - 12:20pm	42 minutes
6th Period	12:23pm - 1:05pm	42 minutes
7th Period	1:08pm - 1:50pm	42 minutes
ASSEMBLY	1:50pm - 2:25pm	35 minutes

BLOCK TIME SCHEDULE		
BLOCK	**LUNCH**	**STUDY HALL**
BLOCK A	Grades 6-7	Grade 8
BLOCK B	Grades 8-9	Grades 6, 7, 10-12
BLOCK C	Grades 10-12	Grade 9

Lockers

Everyone is assigned a hall locker and may be assigned a locker in the physical education department. In order to prevent theft, it is recommended for students to have a school-issued lock for each locker assigned. All locks used should be purchased from the school.

No tape, glue, putty, or any other adhesive is allowed to be used inside or outside the lockers. Students wishing to hang items on the inside of their locker(s) may do so by using magnets only. If you have any locker problems, report the situation to the office.

All lockers assigned to pupils are the property of Otsego Junior High School. In other words, lockers are not private property. At no time does the school relinquish the exclusive control of its lockers. Students can only store their own belongings and must keep the lockers assigned to them. They cannot move their belongings to any other locker to which they are not assigned. The storage of other student's belongings is prohibited. Lockers are to be used to store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. Lockers shall not be used to store items, which cause an interference with school purposes or that violate school rules. No food products are allowed in any locker overnight, to avoid rodent and insect infestation. Lockers are not burglar proof and students should not leave valuables such as money, and expensive personal property in the lockers. Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the school principal or his/her designee. Students should make sure the lock is secure after using lockers and report all incidents to school staff where locks and or lockers have been tampered with. Any lock found on a locker that has not been issued by the office will be removed immediately. Students are solely responsible for the contents of their lockers and should not give out the lock combination to other students. The school principal or his/her designee shall have custody of all combinations to all lockers or locks. Random searches of school lockers and their contents have a positive impact on deterring violations of school rules,

ensure proper maintenance of school property and provide great safety and security for pupils and personnel. Other reasons for a search of a student's locker would be a complaint or evidence of foul odors emanating from a locker or the leaking of any wet or dry substance. Accordingly, the principal or designee may search lockers and locker contents at any time, without notice, and without parent/guardianship or pupil consent. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the loss of locker privileges. (ORC. 3313.20)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The School's rules and procedures are designed to allow students to be educated in a safe and orderly environment. All students are expected to follow staff members' directions and to obey all school rules.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the Building Principal, Assistant Principal, or Social Worker. Adult students (age eighteen (18) or older) must follow all school rules.

In order to keep parents informed of their child's progress in school, parents will be provided information on a regular basis and whenever concerns arise. The primary mode of communication is through Final Forms, Instant Alerts, email and Google Classroom. It is critical that students check their school email regularly and that parents keep an accurate and updated email in FinalForms. There are also times when it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver the information. The School, however, may use the mail or hand delivery when appropriate. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish their educational goals.

STUDENT WELL BEING

Student safety is the responsibility of both students and staff. Staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as evacuation procedures, fire and tornado drills, safety drills in the event of a terrorist or other violent attack, and accident reporting procedures. If a student is aware of any dangerous situation or accident, the student must notify a staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students have an emergency medical authorization completed and signed by a parent or guardian on file in the School office.

Students with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs, along with physician documentation, to the School office.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If the injuries are minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parents.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. School personnelwill determine whether the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

STAFF DIRECTORY AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Staff contact information can be found on the district website or by using the links below.
High School Staff Directory - Click Here
Junior High Staff Directory - Click Here

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parents or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

1. a birth certificate or similar document
2. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
3. proof of residency
4. proof of immunizations

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about the documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. The building administrative assistant will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the District Liaison Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

In addition, if a new student resides in the District with a grandparent and is the subject of a: (1) power of attorney designating the grandparent as the attorney-if-fact; or (2) a caretaker authorization affidavit executed by the grandparent that provides the grandparent with authority over the care, physical custody, and control of the child, including the ability to enroll the child in school, consent in all school related matters, and discuss with the District the child's educational progress, the student's grandparent may enroll the child in school on a tuition-free basis. However, in addition to the above referenced documents that are typically required for enrollment, the grandparent must provide the District with a duly executed and notarized copy of a power of attorney or caretaker authorization affidavit.

A student suspended or expelled by another public school in Ohio may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

If a student has been recently discharged or released from the custody of the Department of Youth Services (DYS) and is seeking admittance or re-admittance into the District, the student will not be admitted until the following records, which are required to be released by DYS to the Superintendent, have been received:

1. an updated copy of the student's transcript;
2. a report of the student's behavior while in DYS custody;
3. the student's current IEP, if one has been developed for the child; and
4. a summary of the instructional record of the child's behavior.

Foreign students and foreign exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the student's school counselor. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need for the student to pass prerequisite courses. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation must be approved with a pass or schedule change.

EARLY DISMISSAL

No student may leave school prior to dismissal time without a parent or guardian either submitting a signed written request or coming to the School Office personally to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) or guardian without a written permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

WITHDRAWAL/TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL

No student under the age of eighteen (18) is allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of their parents and in compliance with State law. A student who otherwise withdraws from school shall be reported to the juvenile judge of the county and to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for suspension of their driver's license if they are under the age of eighteen (18).

Parents must notify the Principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. School records, including disciplinary records of suspension and expulsion, will be transferred to the new school within fourteen (14) days of the parents' notice or request. Students remain Otsego students until the new school formally requests records. This could mean truancy may be filed if a student stops attending Otsego and the office has not received a records request.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law, including, but not limited to, poliomyelitis, measles, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis, tetanus, and mumps, or have an authorized exemption from State immunization requirements. Kindergarten students must be immunized against Hepatitis B and chickenpox. For the safety of all students, the school principal may remove a student from school or establish a deadline for meeting State requirements if a student does not have the necessary immunizations or authorized exemption. In the event of a chicken pox epidemic, the Superintendent may temporarily deny admission to a student otherwise exempted from the chicken pox immunization requirement. Any questions about immunizations or exemptions should be directed to:

Kylee Euler
District Nurse
(419) 823-4381 ext. 4002
kyeuler@otsegoknights.org

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

A complete Emergency Medical Authorization Form must be on file with the School in order for a student to participate in any activity off school grounds, including field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities. The Emergency Medical Authorization form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each school year through FinalForms.

USE OF MEDICATIONS

Students who must take prescribed medication during the school day must comply with the following guidelines:

1. Parents should, with the counsel of their child's prescriber, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
2. The appropriate form must be digitally filled out through FinalForms before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours or to use an inhaler to self-administer asthma medication. Such forms must be filed annually and as necessary for any change in the medication.
3. All medications must be registered with the Principal's Office and must be delivered to the school in the original containers in which they were dispensed by the prescribing physician or licensed pharmacist, labeled with the date, the student's name, and the exact dosage to be administered.
4. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Except as noted below, medication must be delivered to the Principal's Office by the student's parent or guardian or by another responsible adult at the parent or guardian's request. Except as noted below, students may not bring medication to school. Students may carry emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions, or asthma inhalers during school hours provided the student has written permission from a parent or physician and has submitted the proper forms. In the case of epinephrine autoinjectors ("epi pens"), in addition to written permission and submission of proper forms, the parent or student must provide a backup dose to the school nurse. Students are strictly prohibited from transferring emergency medication, epi-pens, or inhalers to any other student for their use or possession.

5. Medication may be transported to school directly by the parent or by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance with the building principal.

6. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.

7. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time.

8. The office will maintain a log noting the personnel designated to administer medication, as well as the date and the time of day that administration is required. This log will be maintained along with the prescriber's written request and the parent's written release.

Non Prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications

No staff member will dispense non prescribed, over-the-counter (OTC) medication to any student without prior parent authorization. Parents may authorize the administration of a non prescribed medication on forms that are available in FinalForms. Physician authorization is not required in such cases.

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parental authorization, the student will be brought to the School office while the student's parents are contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received through Final Forms.

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

Students may possess a drug prescribed to the student to prevent the onset of a seizure or to alleviate the symptoms of a seizure, provided that the student has prior written approval from the student's physician, and if the student is a minor, the written approval of the student's parent or guardian (Form 5330 F5 - Authorization for the Possession and Use of Seizure Medications). Copies of the written approvals must be provided to the Principal and any school nurse assigned to the building

Students shall be permitted to possess and self-administer over-the-counter topical sunscreen products while on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

A student may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or a dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms or before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms, at school or at any activity, event, or program sponsored by or in which the student's school is a participant if the appropriate form is completed and on file in the Principal's Office.

A student who is authorized to possess and use a metered dose or dry powder inhaler may not transfer possession of any inhaler or other medication to any other student.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The School's professional staff may remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly transient pest, such as lice.

Specific communicable diseases include diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will be limited to the contagious period as specified in the School's administrative guidelines.

CONTROL OF NON CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The School District has an obligation to protect staff and students from non casual-contact communicable diseases. When a non casual-contact communicable disease is suspected, the student's health will be reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the Wood County Health Department. The School will protect the privacy of the person affected and those in contact with the affected person. Students and staff will be permitted to remain in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non Casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, ARC-AIDS Related Complex, HIV, Hepatitis B, and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV and HBV when the child bleeds at school and students or staff members are exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

CONTROL OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

The School District seeks to provide a safe educational environment for students and take appropriate measures to protect those students who may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens in the school environment and/or during their participation in school-related activities. While the risks of students being exposed to blood-borne pathogens may be

low, students must assume that all body fluids are potentially infectious and must take precautions to follow universal procedures in order to reduce such risks and minimize and/or prevent the potential for accidental infection.

Students may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens in situations including but not limited to, the following:

1. Engaging in activities with other students in the school environment (e.g., physical education class) where physical injuries or other actions that can cause bleeding or exposure to saliva and other body fluids may occur.
2. Working with equipment in the school environment that can cause cuts or similar injuries that produce bleeding.
3. Participating in extracurricular activities (i.e., athletic activities) where physical injuries or other actions that can cause bleeding may occur.

Whenever a student has contact with blood or other potentially infectious material, the student must immediately notify their teacher, who will contact the office and assist the student in completing an exposure report form.

The parents of a student who is exposed will be contacted immediately regarding the exposure and encouraged to have the student's blood tested for Hepatitis B and HIV either by the student's physician or the Wood County Health Department. The student's parents are encouraged to consult with the student's physician concerning any necessary post-exposure treatment. The student's parent will also be asked to provide a copy of the test results and any post-exposure treatment for maintenance in the student's educational record in accordance with Federal and State laws concerning confidentiality.

The parents of the student who caused the exposure will also be contacted immediately and advised to have the student's blood tested for Hepatitis B and HIV virus either in cooperation with the student's physician or the Wood COunty Health Department. The student's parents will be asked to provide a copy of the test results for maintenance in the student's educational record in accordance with Federal and State laws concerning confidentiality. The student's parents will be encouraged to allow the District to release their child's name to the exposed student's parents, in the event serious health issues are presented as a result of the exposure.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 laws define a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one (1)one or more major life activities;
2. has a record of such an impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

The District has specific responsibilities under these two (2) 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 mandates, the District seeks out, assesses, and appropriately services students with disabilities. Staff members use a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, assess, and, if appropriate, place students in special education and related services. Students are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment."

A student can access special education and related services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEIA, A.D.A. Section 504) and State law. To inquire about evaluation procedures, programs, and services please contact either:

Stephen Bihary School Psychologist (419) 823-4381 ext. 4012 sbihary@otsegoknights.org	- OR -	**Lauri Dunham** Director of Special Education (419) 823-4381 ext. 4008 ldunham@otsegoknights.org

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Homeless students will be provided with a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as other students served by 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 lack of proof of residency. For additional information contact the liaison for Homeless Students:

Kevin O'Shea
Superintendent
(419) 823-4381 ext. 1102
koshea@otsegoknights.org

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Students who meet the Federal definition of "in foster care", including those who are awaiting foster care placement, will be provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the same manner as all other students of the District. For additional information, see Policy 5111.03.

PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Directory information includes: (see policy 8330).

1. a student's name; address; telephone number;
2. date and place of birth;
3. major field of study;
4. participation in officially-recognized activities and sports;
5. height and weight, if a member of an athletic team;
6. dates of attendance;
7. date of graduation; and/or awards received.
8. School assigned email, 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 e-mail address books.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release, you may consult the Board's annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notice which can be found on the district website: https://www.otsegoknights.org/

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by FERPA and Ohio law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the

parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age. The Board will provide access or release directory information to armed forces recruiters unless the parent or student requests that prior written consent be obtained. Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records, please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to:

Steve Carroll
Treasurer
(419) 823-4381 ext. 1101
scarroll@otsegoknights.org

You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, the student's parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents; or
8. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation. To inspect such materials, Please contact the building principal.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal.

The Superintendent will notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

1. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose); and
2. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one (1) or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or 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. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

FERPA@ED.Gov; and
PPRA@ED.Gov.

STUDENT FEES AND FINES

Students will be provided necessary textbooks for courses of instruction without cost. In accordance with State law, Otsego Local Schools charges specific fees used in the course of instruction:

6th Grade: $84.00 **7th Grade:** $84.00 **8th Grade:** $84.00

Charges may also be imposed for loss, damage, or destruction of school apparatus, equipment, musical instruments, library materials, and textbooks, and for damage to school buildings or property. Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment.

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students can avoid late fines by promptly returning borrowed materials.

Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of participation in the graduation ceremony..

STUDENT FUND-RAISING

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities may solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules apply to all fund-raisers:

1. Crowdfunding activities are governed by Policy and Administrative Guideline 6605.
2. Students involved in the fund-raiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.
3. Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members without the approval of the students' counselor.
4. Students may not participate in fund-raising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.
5. Students may not engage in house-to-house canvassing for any fundraising activity.

6. Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the Principal.

Students may not sell any item or service in school without the prior approval of the Principal. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students should not bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School is not liable for any loss or damage to personal valuables.

MEAL SERVICE

The School participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes breakfast and lunches available to students. The breakfast fee is $2.00 and the lunch fee is $3.25 Ala carte items are available for $3.00. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the School's cafeteria. No student may leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission from the Principal. For information regarding meal charging procedures, see policy 8500.

Applications for the School's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive an application form and believes they are eligible, contact:

Eva Vasher		**Emily Bires**
Director of Operations	- OR -	Food Service Director
(419) 823-4381 ext. 3156		(419) 823-4381 ext. 1104
evasher@otsegoknights.org		ebires@otsegoknights.org

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Otsego Junior High School takes student safety very seriously. Our number one priority is to ensure the safety and well being of each and every one of our students. We do regular drills and training with our staff and students throughout the year to address potential risks and threatening situations that may put our staff and students at risk. We have also implemented research-based strategies to address bullying and work to promote an inclusive friendly school culture and climate. Specific information regarding these and more are highlighted below you can also CLICK HERE.

A. All visitors must report to the office when they arrive at school.
B. All visitors are given and required to wear a building pass while they are in the building.
C. Staff are expected to question people in the building whom they do not recognize and who are not wearing a building pass, and to question people who are "hanging around" the building after hours.
D. Students and staff are expected to immediately report to a teacher or administrator any suspicious behavior or situation that makes them uncomfortable.
E. As many unneeded outside doors as possible are locked during the school day.
F. Portions of the building that will not be needed after the regular school days are closed off.
G. All District employees are to wear photo-identification badges while in District schools and offices or on District property.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The purpose of our PBIS system is to create a positive culture with clear expectations every day, everywhere. We are Otsego Citizens through our respectful actions, responsible behavior, accountability, and honesty. These along with our high achieving academic goals, will help mold our students into positive law abiding productive citizens. CLICK HERE.

Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills
The School complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. The School conducts tornado drills during the tornado season following procedures prescribed by the State. The alarm system for tornadoes consists of announcements over the PA system and alerts through the Navigate app. Teachers will provide specific instructions on how to proceed in the case of fire or tornado and will oversee the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building in such cases.

Safety drills will be conducted during the school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedures to follow in situations where students must be secured in their building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

Emergency Closings and Delays
If the School must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will provide notice of such closing or delay through:

A. Parentsquare Alert System - pre-recorded telephone message delivered to the phone number on file.
B. Email
C. Text Messaging
D. Social Media
E. News Stations

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards
The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students 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. A copy of the School District's Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy and asbestos management plan is available for inspection at the Board office upon request.

VISITORS
Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the School. Visitors must report to the office upon entering the School to sign in and obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without signing in and having an authorized pass shall be reported to the Principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, the person(s) should call for an appointment prior to coming to the School in order to schedule a mutually convenient meeting time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the Principal.

USE OF THE LIBRARY
The library is available to students throughout the school day. Passes may be obtained from a student's teacher or from the librarian. Books may be checked out for a period of four (4) weeks. To check out any other materials, contact:

Danelle Langley
Paraprofressional
(419) 823-4381 ext. 2120
dlangley@otsegoknights.org

In order to avoid late fees, all materials checked out of the library must be returned to the school library it was checked out from within four (4) weeks.

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Students must receive teacher permission before using any equipment or materials in the classroom. Students must seek permission from the Principal prior to using any other school equipment or facility. Students are responsible for the proper use and protection of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

RESTROOMS, LOCKER ROOMS, SHOWER ROOMS, AND CHANGING ROOMS

Restrooms, locker rooms, shower rooms, and changing rooms are for the exclusive use of the male or female biological sex of each student in a school building or facility used by the school for a school-sponsored activity.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is located in the hallway outside the main office. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be emptied out on a monthly basis and donated out or disposed of.

USE OF OFFICE TELEPHONES

Office telephones are primarily for school business and may not be used for personal calls by staff or students except in emergency situations. Students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call unless it is an emergency.

Students may use the office phone with permission from office staff. They must ask for approval before making any calls, and use will be granted at the discretion of the office personnel. This practice is encouraged as a substitute for personal cell phone use, which is prohibited during the school day.

USE OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The Otsego Local School District works to create an uplifting environment that fosters academic excellence, personal growth, and social development. We recognize that constant access to technology and social media detracts from a students' ability to concentrate on their studies and interact meaningfully with their peers and teachers. We are committed to creating a focused and nurturing learning environment that uplifts students, frees them from distractions, reduces bullying, and focuses their attention on their learning experiences. By instilling responsible digital citizenship, promoting self-discipline, and fostering a sense of community, we aim to create a space where students can thrive academically and socially, build meaningful relationships, and develop important social skills. The Student Use of Personal Communication Devices policy is written in a way that supports these efforts. Therefore:

"Personal communication device" includes **computers, tablets** (e.g., iPads and similar devices), **electronic readers** ("e-readers"; e.g., Kindles and similar devices), **cell phones** (e.g. mobile/cellular telephones, smartphones [e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Android devices, Windows Mobile devices, etc.], **telephone paging devices** [e.g., beepers or pagers]), **Smart Watches**, and/or **other web-enabled devices** of any type.

1. Unless approved by a supervising teacher or an administrator **students are prohibited from being in possession of or using PCDs or having them "On"** (i.e., the device must be powered completely off and not just placed into vibrate or silent mode; a device will be considered "On" if it is ready to receive, send, capture or record any communication, visual image, sound, text message or other information) **during the regularly scheduled school day** (i.e. from the moment school begins until the last class of the day has ended for all students). **This includes lunch periods, passing periods, as well as on school-sponsored trips and "behind-the-wheel" driver education classes or in school vehicles.**
2. Students also may not use PCDs on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view Internet Web sites that are otherwise blocked to students at school.

3. Students may use PCDs while riding to and from school on a school bus or other Board-provided vehicle or on a school bus or Board-provided vehicle during school-sponsored activities, at the discretion of the bus driver, classroom teacher sponsor/advisor/coach. Distracting behavior that creates an unsafe environment will not be tolerated.

Possession and/or use of a personal communication device (PCD) by a student while at school during the school day is a privilege that may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of Policy 5136 or this guideline, or otherwise engages in abuse of this privilege. Strict adherence to Policy 5136 and this guideline is required.

PCDs, including but not limited to devices with cameras, may not be activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to gymnasiums, locker rooms, shower facilities, rest/bathrooms, swimming pool, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes, whether here or at another school district where a school activity or athletic event is occurring. The building principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where use of a PCD is absolutely prohibited.

Students participating in extracurricular activities and athletics must contact their coach, advisor, or sponsor for their rules involving the use of PCDs after school hours or on after-school bus trips. Coaches and sponsors will set their rules and enforce consequences involving the use and/or misuse of these devices.

The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse or unauthorized use of, PCDs brought onto its property. Students and parents are strongly encouraged to take appropriate precautions, if students possess PCDs at school, to make sure the devices are not left unattended or unsecured.

Using a PCD in an unauthorized manner or in violation of Policy 5136 or this guideline may result in loss of this privilege, additional disciplinary action (e.g., warnings, parental notification and conferences, suspension, expulsion), confiscation of the PCD (in which case, the device will only be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed, unless the violation involves potentially illegal activity in which case the PCD may be turned over to law enforcement), and/or referral to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g. child pornography).

Under certain circumstances, a student may keep his/her PCD "On" with prior approval from the Principal.

Students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one or two-way audio communication technology (i.e. technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag or on the student's person without express written consent of the Superintendent.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property.

Students may not use a PCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. See Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior. In particular, students are prohibited from using PCDs to: (1) transmit material that is threatening, obscene, disruptive, or sexually explicit or that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based upon their race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation/transgender identity), disability, age, religion, ancestry, or political beliefs; and (2) engage in "sexting" - i.e., sending, receiving, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, e-mails or other materials of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form.

Violation of these prohibitions shall result in disciplinary action. Furthermore, such actions will be reported to local law enforcement and child services as required by law.

Students are also prohibited from using a PCD to capture, record, and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating, or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using PCDs to receive such information.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD. The Principal will also refer the matter to law enforcement or child services if the violation involves an illegal activity (e.g., child pornography, sexting). Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to an expulsion based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the PCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed, unless the violation involves potentially illegal activity in which case the PCD may be turned-over to law enforcement. A confiscated device will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the building's central office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian or turned-over to law enforcement. School officials will not search or otherwise tamper with PCDs in District custody unless they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of the law or other school rules. Any search will be conducted in accordance with Policy 5771 – Search and Seizure. If multiple offenses occur, a student may lose his/her privilege to bring a PCD to school for a designated length of time or on a permanent basis.

If a school teacher or administrator observes a violation of this guideline, they are required to confiscate the device and bring it to the building principal's office and provide the name of the student from whom the PCD was taken. Any confiscated device will be held in a secure location in the building's central office until the item is retrieved by the student's parent/guardian or turned over to law enforcement. Students whose PCDs are confiscated may be required to contact their parents/guardians to inform them that the item was confiscated and that it will only be returned to the parents/guardians.

Parents/Guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office.

ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Students and student organizations must obtain prior approval from the Principal before posting any announcements or advertisements for non-school-sponsored activities or events, including fundraisers for outside causes or organizations. The Principal will make every effort to respond to requests for approval within one (1) school day of receipt.

To ensure fairness and avoid over-solicitation, requests for fundraising or promotional activities benefiting outside causes may be limited in frequency and scope. The school reserves the right to limit the number of events or postings by any individual or group to prevent disruption, avoid duplication, and maintain a positive school environment.

Repeated requests or extensive activities by the same group may be denied or restricted to ensure all students and organizations have equitable opportunities and that the school community is not overwhelmed by fundraising efforts.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

COURSE OFFERINGS

Click Here to view the current Program of Studies.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the School's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No minor student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent and a current emergency medical form on file in the office. Medications normally administered at school will be administered while on field trips. Also:

1. The Student Code of Conduct applies to all field trips.
2. Attendance rules apply to all field trips.
3. While the District encourages students to participate in field trips, alternative assignments will be provided for any student whose parent does not give permission for the student to attend.
4. Students who violate school rules may lose the privilege to go on field trips.

GRADES

Otsego Junior High School has a standard grading procedure, as well as additional notations that indicate work in progress or incomplete work. Grades indicate the extent to which the student has acquired and demonstrated the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. Each teacher may place a different emphasis on these areas when determining a grade and will inform the students at the beginning of the course. If a student is not sure how their grade will be determined, the student should ask the teacher.

The School applies the following grading system:

Standard Grading Scale		
Letter Grade	Percent Range	Point Value
A	91-100	4
B	81-90	3
C	71-80	2
D	61-70	1
F	0-60	0

Standard Grading Values
A = Excellent achievement
B = Good achievement
C = Satisfactory achievement
D = Minimum-Acceptable achievement
F = Failure

* I = Incomplete

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

For students taking high school courses in junior high school. To calculate a grade point average (G.P.A.), assign a weighted point value to each course grade and divide by the total number of credits. For partial-credit courses use the fractional value of the grade. For example, a half (.5) credit course with an earned grade of a C would be .5 x 2 = 1. Then add this to the other grades earned for total points earned. This total is then divided by the total credits earned to determine the G.P.A. This can be done by grading period, semester, year, or for a series of school years.

GRADING PERIODS

Students will receive a report card at the end of each nine (9) week period indicating their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term.

When a student appears to be at risk of failure, reasonable efforts will be made to notify the parents so they can talk with the teacher about what actions can be taken to improve poor grades.

PROMOTION, ACCELERATION, AND RETENTION

Promotion to the next grade (or level) is based on the following criteria:

1. current level of achievement based on instructional objectives and mandated requirements for the current grade;
2. potential for success at the next level;
3. emotional, physical, and/or social maturity necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade.

A student may be accelerated (either by whole-grade or by subject area) when the student's performance and measured ability significantly exceeds that of their grade level peers. Students can be nominated for acceleration by teachers, administrators, parents, and the student requesting acceleration. Decisions regarding acceleration are based on the following criteria:

1. achievement of grade/course objective and any applicable State-mandated requirements for the grade/course in which the student is currently in and any grade(s)/course(s) in the student will skip
2. achievement of instructional objectives for the present grade/course as well as the succeeding one(s)
3. potential for success in the accelerated placement based on sufficient proficiency at current level
4. social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for success in an accelerated placement

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

The Otsego Local School District provides alternative means by which a student can achieve the goals of the District, as well as the student's personal educational goals.

The following are the approved Educational Options for this school year that may include, but not be limited to:

1. Distance Learning
2. On-line Coursework
3. Tutorial Programs
4. Independent Study
5. Correspondence Courses
6. Educational Travel
7. Project Portfolios
8. Internships
9. Mentorship Programs
10. Summer Credit Recovery
11. College Credit Plus (CCP)

Credit will be granted upon the successful completion of an approved program and will be assigned according to student performance relative to stated objectives of the approved instructional and performance plan and in accordance with District policy and established administrative guidelines.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS PROGRAM

Any student in grades seven (7) through twelve (12) may enroll in a College Credit Plus Program postsecondary program provided the student meets the requirements established by law and by the participating college or university. A student will be denied junior high school credit for any portions of or for the entire class if taken during a period of expulsion. Student participation requires written consent of the Superintendent and, for students under eighteen (18), written consent of the parents or attendance in counseling services offered with this educational option. Any interested student should contact their school counselor to obtain the necessary information.

Only students in grades 12 will be given the opportunity to come in late to school or leave campus early for their assigned CCP periods each semester, if a student decides to stay on campus for their CCP periods they will be placed in a CCP study hall . CCP students in grades 7-11 will be given a CCP study hall for each CCP course they are enrolled in per semester.

CAREER ADVISING PROGRAM

Career advising is an integrated process that helps students understand how their personal interests, strengths, and values might predict satisfaction and success in school and related career fields, as well as how to tie these interests and strengths to their academic and career goals. Students need to have access to comprehensive resources and support to prepare for their future success. Through relevant classroom instruction, career-related learning experiences, and a program of counseling and advising, students can discover their interests and explore academic and career pathway options. (See Policy 2413)

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Students who display significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include, but are not limited to, academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism. Recognition for such activities is initiated by the staff and coordinated by the building principal.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the assessment tests and graduation.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

The District provides Internet services to its students. The District's Internet system has a limited educational purpose and has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Student use of the District's computers, network, and Internet services/connection ("Network") are governed by the following principles and guidelines, and the Student Code of Conduct. Users have a limited privacy expectation in the content of their personal files and records of their online activity while on the Network.

Parents and students are advised that the Board may not be able to technologically limit access through the Board's Internet connection to only those services that have been authorized for the purpose of instruction, study, and research related to the curriculum. Because it serves as a gateway to any publicly available file server in the world, the Internet opens classrooms and students to electronic information resources that have not been screened by educators for use by students of various ages. The District utilizes a Technology Protection Measure, which is a specific technology that will protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions that are obscene, pornographic, and materials that are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act. At the discretion of the Board or the Superintendent, the Technology Protection Measure may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access.

The District further utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor the online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate, and/or harmful to minors. Nevertheless, parents and guardians are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to services on the Internet that are not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to information and communications that their parents/guardians may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable, or controversial. Parents/Guardians assume risks by consenting to allow their child to participate in the use of the Internet. Parents/Guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet. The District supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to apply for independent student access to the Internet.

Students are expected to use the "Network" for educational purposes. Use of the Network is a privilege, not a right. When using the Network, students must conduct themselves in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Students are responsible for good behavior on the District's computers/network and the Internet just as they are in classrooms, school hallways, and other school premises and school- sponsored events. Communications on the Internet are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Network, including any violation of these rules, may result in cancellation of the privilege, disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and/or civil or criminal liability. Prior to accessing the Network, students must sign the Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Agreement. Parent permission is required for minors. Parents are encouraged to discuss their values with their children so that students can make decisions regarding their use of the Network that is in accord with their personal and family values, in addition to the Board's standards.

Students must complete a mandatory training session/program regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified in Policy 7540.03 – Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety before being permitted to access the Network.

The smooth operation of the Network relies upon users adhering to the following guidelines. The guidelines outlined below are not exhaustive but are provided so that users are aware of their general responsibilities.

A. Students are responsible for their behavior and communication on the Network.
B. Students may only access the Network by using their assigned Network account. Use of another person's account/address/password is prohibited. Students may not allow other users to utilize their account/address/password. Students may not go beyond their authorized access.
C. Students may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the Network.
D. Students may not use the Network to engage in "hacking" or other illegal activities (e.g., software pirating; intellectual property violations; engaging in slander, libel, or harassment; threatening the life or safety of another; stalking; transmission of obscene materials or child pornography; fraud; sale of illegal substances and goods).
E. Transmission of any material in violation of any State or Federal law or regulation, or Board policy, is prohibited.
F. Any use of the Network for commercial purposes (e.g., purchasing or offering for sale personal products or services by students), advertising, or political lobbying is prohibited.

G. Use of the Network to engage in cyberbullying is prohibited. "Cyberbullying" involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal Websites or MySpace accounts, and defamatory online personal polling Websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others." For further information on cyberbullying, visit http://www.cyberbullying.ca

   Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following:

   1. posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about a student or school staff member on a website or weblog;
   2. sending e-mail or instant messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to drive up the victim's cell phone bill;
   3. using a camera phone to take and send embarrassing photographs/recordings of students or school staff members or post these images on video-sharing sites such as YouTube;

4. posting misleading or fake photographs of students or school staff members on websites.

To the extent permitted by the First Amendment, instances of cyberbullying off school grounds that disrupt the school environment or interfere with the learning process will be considered violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

H. Students are expected to abide by the following generally-accepted rules of network etiquette:
   1. Be polite, courteous, and respectful in your messages to others. Use language appropriate to school situations in any communications made through the Network. Do not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, sexually explicit, defamatory, threatening, abusive, or disrespectful language in communications through the Network (including, but not limited to, public messages, private messages, and material posted on web pages).
   2. Do not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
   3. Do not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is told by a person to stop sending the person messages, the student must stop.
   4. Do not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
   5. Never reveal names, addresses, phone numbers, or passwords of yourself or other students, family members, teachers, administrators, or other staff members while communicating on the Internet. This prohibition includes but is not limited to, disclosing personal identification information on commercial websites.
   6. Do not transmit pictures or other information that could be used to establish your identity without prior approval from a teacher.
   7. Never agree to get together with someone you "meet" online without parent approval and participation.
   8. Check email frequently and diligently delete old mail on a regular basis from the personal mail directory to avoid excessive use of the electronic mail disk space.
   9. Students should promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable, especially any email that contains pornography. Students should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a staff member.

I. Malicious use of the Network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited. Students may not use the Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others. Students must avoid intentionally wasting limited resources. Students may not bypass or attempt to bypass the District's Technology Protection Measures. Students must immediately notify the teacher, principal, or Director of Technology if they identify a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an unlawful attempt to gain access.

J. All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property (i.e. copyrighted and/or trademarked). All copyright issues regarding software, information, and attributions/acknowledgement of authorship must be respected. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced.

K. Downloading of information onto the Board's hard drives is prohibited, without prior approval from the Director of Technology. If a student transfers files from information services and electronic bulletin board services, the student must check the file with a virus detection program before opening the file for use. Only public domain software may be downloaded. If a student transfers a file or software program that infects the Network with a virus and causes damage, the student will be liable for any and all repair costs to make the

Network once again fully operational.

L. Students must secure prior approval from a teacher or the District Technology Director before joining a Listserv (electronic mailing lists) and should not post personal messages on bulletin boards or "Listservs."

M. Students are prohibited from accessing or participating in online "chat rooms" or other forms of direct electronic communication (e.g., instant messaging) (other than e-mail) without prior approval from a school administrator. All such authorized communications must comply with these guidelines.

N. Users have limited expectation of privacy in the contents of their personal files, communication files, and record of web research activities on the Network. Routine maintenance and monitoring, utilizing both technical monitoring systems and staff monitoring, may lead to discovery that a user has violated Board policy and/or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated Board policy and/or law. Students' parents have the right to request to see the contents of their children's files and records.

O. Use of the Internet and any information procured from the Internet is at the student's own risk. The Board makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Network will be error-free or without defect. The Board is not responsible for any damage a user may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data, service interruptions, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The Board is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet. Information (including text, graphics, audio, video, etc.) from Internet sources used in student papers, reports, and projects should be cited the same as references to printed materials. The Board will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the Network. Students or parents of students will indemnify and hold the Board harmless from any losses sustained as the result of misuse of the Network by the student. Use of the Network by students will be limited to those students whose parents have signed a release of claims for damages against the Board.

P. File-sharing is strictly prohibited. Students are prohibited from downloading and/or installing file-sharing software or programs on the Network.

Q. Since there is no central authority on the Internet, each site is responsible for its own users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of the District's users will be fully investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Unless exempted, each student will attempt all portions of the State-mandated assessment test(s). The test(s) will be administered once a year. While the School District does schedule make-up dates for testing, students should avoid unnecessary absences. The testing window is typically April/May.

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. Career and interest surveys may be given to identify particular areas of student interests or talent. College entrance testing information can be obtained from the School Counselor's Office.

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS

If a school within the District has been designated as “persistently dangerous” as defined by State law, students have the right to transfer to another “safe” school in the District. If there is not another “safe” school in the District

providing instruction at the student's grade level(s), the Superintendent shall contact neighboring districts and request that they permit students to transfer to a school in one of those districts. Further, if a student is a victim of a violent crime on school property, the student also has the right to transfer to another school in the District. If there is not another school in the District providing instruction at the student's grade level, the Superintendent shall contact neighboring districts and request that they permit that student to transfer to a school in one of those districts providing instruction at the student's grade level.

SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

No student is allowed to participate in an after-school club or activity, including band practice or cheerleading practice or tryouts, or athletic practice, unless the student is in attendance at school by 10:50 am and remains at school the rest of the day. Students who leave school are not permitted to participate in an afterschool activity unless their absence is excused by a doctor's note or given approval by an administrator. If a student misses school on a Friday they are ineligible for that weekend. Exception:

1. An official school function,
2. the student has official documentation for the absence or late arrival or;
3. special arrangements have been made with the administration.

At the end of each school day, students are expected to leave the school grounds unless they are involved in a school-related activity or under the direct supervision of school personnel. Loitering is not permitted and consequences will be given if warranted.

Curricular-related Activities

The Otsego Local School District provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. The purpose of curricular-related activities shall be to enable students to explore a wider range of individual interests than may be available in the District's courses of study but are still directly related to accomplishing the educational outcomes for students as adopted by the Board in Policy 2131. Curricular-related activities are defined as one (1) or more of the following activities:

1. the subject matter is actually taught or will be taught in a regularly offered course;
2. the subject matter concerns the District's composite courses of study;
3. participation is required for a particular course; or
4. participation results in academic credit.

Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities do not reflect the School curriculum but are made available to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

Interscholastic Sports	
Boys Basketball	Football
Girls Basketball	Boys Track
Cheerleading	Girls Track
Boys Cross Country	Volleyball
Girls Cross Country	Wrestling

Clubs and Activities	
FCCLA	National Junior Honor Society
Mentor Groups	Speech and Debate
Mock Trial	Student Council

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements. Participation in these activities is a privilege and not a right, and students may be prohibited from all or part of their participation in such activities by authorized school personnel without further notice, hearing and/or appeal rights in accordance with Board Policy 5610.05.

NON SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non School-sponsored student groups may meet in the school building during non instructional hours. The application for permission to use school facilities can be obtained from the Principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved

in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities, and that nonschool persons do not play a regular role in the meeting. All school rules relating to student conduct and equal opportunity to participate apply to such activities.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or other secret society as prescribed by law is not permitted. All groups must comply with School rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

No non district-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot on any materials or information.

ATHLETICS

The Otsego Local School District provides a variety of athletic activities in which students may participate provided they meet eligibility requirements established by the Board and by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). Participation in these activities is a privilege and not a right, and students may be prohibited from all or part of their participation in such activities by authorized school personnel without further notice, hearing and/or appeal rights in accordance with Board Policy 5610.05.

Denton Saunders
Athletic Director
(419) 823-4381 ext. 2165
dsaunders@otsegoknights.org

ATHLETIC FEES

Pay to Participate Fees

1st Sport: **$55**	1st Club: **$35**
2nd Sport: **$35**	2nd Club: **$10**
Junior High Student Max: **$90**	Family Max: **$200**

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in any club or activity at Otsego a student must have passing grades in a minimum of four (4) courses, or the equivalent unless the student has just been promoted to the ninth grade. Incoming ninth graders need to have passed four (4) courses in the previous grading period in order to be eligible to participate. Eligibility or ineligibility would remain until the beginning of the 5th school day after the next grading report period. Online school, summer school, special examinations, etc., may not be used to regain eligibility. A letter grade of "I" (Incomplete) is considered to be an "F" when determining eligibility. The "F" grade for an incomplete may be changed within 5 school days of the quarter ending for eligibility purposes. School days include regular instruction days, calamity days, teacher in-service or work days. Holidays and school breaks are not considered school days. Only the administration and/or Athletic Director can approve any changes in eligibility. To participate in a contest or practice on a regularly scheduled school day, the student must be in attendance by 10:50 am and remain at school the rest of the day. Students who leave school are not permitted to participate in an afterschool activity unless their absence is excused by a doctor's note or given approval by an administrator. If a student misses school on a Friday they are ineligible for that weekend. Exceptions:

1. Missed school due to an official school function;
2. the student has official documentation for the absence or late arrival;
3. special arrangements have been made with the administration.
4. Doctor appointments are allowed as long as a doctor's note is turned in when the student returns. In the case of a late weeknight contest or practice, a student is expected to be in attendance at the beginning of the following school day. This also includes cheerleaders.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

It is recommended that students not take jobs outside of school that could interfere with their success in school. If a student elects to maintain a job in addition to going to school, the student must first contact their counselor to discuss any legal requirements and to obtain any required documents.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

Students are encouraged to attend as many after-school events as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students participating in the event.

It is strongly advised that students attending evening events as nonparticipants be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone. The Board is not responsible for supervising unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is a significant student responsibility at all grade levels. Many studies correlate regular attendance with success in school. Regular attendance means that the academic learning process is not interrupted, less time is spent on make-up assignments, and students benefit from participation and interaction with others in class. Many important lessons are learned through active participation in the classroom and other school activities that cannot be replaced by individual study.

When a parent, guardian, or other person having care of a student has failed to initiate a telephone call or other communication notifying the school or building administration of the student's excused or unexcused absence within 120 minutes after the beginning of the school day, the attendance officer or designee for each school building shall make at least one (1) attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or other person having care of any student who is recorded as absent without legitimate excuse within 120 minutes after the beginning of each school day.

After 38 hours (6 school days) of absences in a school year, a doctor's note or court documents is required in order for those absences to be excused.

If a student under the age of eighteen (18), has ten (10) or more consecutive or fifteen (15) total days of unexcused absence during a semester, the student will be considered habitually absent and will be reported to the Judge of the Juvenile Court and to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for suspension of their driver's license, if appropriate, as a result of this excessive absence.

Establishing a pattern of good attendance will benefit the student in school and in the workplace. Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic, which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a person is the person's dependability in coming to work every day on time. This is a habit the School wants to help students develop as early as possible.

Truancy

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant will receive no credit for school work that is missed. A student will be considered habitually truant if the student is absent without a legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, for forty-two (42) or more hours in one (1) month, or for seventy-two (72) or more hours in one (1) school year.

If a student is habitually truant and the student's parent fails to cause the student's attendance, a complaint will be filed with the Judge of the Juvenile Court in compliance with State law and Board Policy 5200. Habitual truancy can also result in:

1. School Discipline
2. notifying the Registrar of Motor Vehicles of the student's absences.
3. Loss of attendance privileges and participation in school related activities and or parking privileges.

Excused Absences

Parents are only permitted to call off their student 38 hours or six (6) days in a school year. After 38 hours or six (6) days a doctors note or court documentation is required in order for the absence to be counted as excused. Students may be excused from school for one or more of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make up missed school work and/or tests:

1. personal illness (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required)
2. appointment with a health care provider
    a. Parents are to be encouraged to schedule medical, dental, legal, and other necessary appointments other than during the school day. Since this is not always possible, when a student is to be absent for part of the day:
        i. the student shall have a statement to that effect from his/her parents;
        ii. the student should bring a signed statement from the doctor, dentist, lawyer, counselor, etc. to the effect that s/he reported promptly for the appointment;
        iii. the student shall report back to school immediately after his/her appointment if the school is still in session.
3. illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
4. quarantine of the home
5. death in the family
6. necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s)
7. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
8. out-of-state travel (up to a maximum twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction) to participate in a District-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity
    a. Any classroom assignment missed due to the absence shall be completed by the student.
    b. If the student will be absent for twenty-four (24) or more consecutive hours when the student's school is open for instruction, a classroom teacher shall accompany the student during the travel period to provide the student with instructional assistance.
9. such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
10. medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751.
11. service as a precinct officer at a primary, special or general election in accordance with the program set forth in Policy 5725.
12. college visitation
    a. this must be pre-approved by school office
13. absences due to a student's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to their foster care status
14. absences due to a student being homeless

Religious Expression Days

To receive accommodations for religious expression days, parents or guardians must submit written requests to the Principal within fourteen (14) days after the start of the school year or fourteen (14) days after a student is enrolled in the District. The requests must specify the religious expression day(s) to be approved. The Principal will approve the days without inquiring into the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system.

Students who are absent on approved religious expression days will not face any academic penalties and will be provided with academic accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements that are missed.

Unexcused Absences

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant and the student and their parents shall be subject to the truancy laws of the State. (Please refer also to "Truancy" on **page 29 of this handbook.**)

Tardiness

Each student is expected to be in their assigned location throughout the school day. If a student is late to school, they will need official documentation from a parent/guardian or doctor/court. Upon arriving the student must report

to the School office before going to their first assigned location. Any other tardies to class will be subject to discipline by the teacher.
After the third unexcused tardy to school, the junior high office will assign progressive discipline. After the third tardy to school students must have a note from a doctor/court to be marked tardy excused.

Tardies to class throughout the day will be subject to discipline.

Notification of Absence
If a student will be absent, the parents must notify the Junior High School Office by 7:30am and provide an explanation. Absence falls under two categories: excused and unexcused. All student attendance issues must be handled by the student's parent/guardian even if the student is 18 years old or older. Students are not permitted to write their own absences or to sign themselves in or out of school. The only exception to this is if the student has a legal emancipation agreement on file.

Otsego Junior High School Office
Attendance Reporting
(419) 823-4381 Press, 6 Then press 2

If prior contact is not possible, the student upon returning to school, shall present a written note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason and date of the absence or the parent/guardian should provide official documentation for the absence. If the written note or official documentation is not received within two school days of the absence, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. A note is not necessary if the parent/guardian comes into the school office and signs the student in or out. Student drivers are not permitted to just leave sick or for an appointment if the office was not made aware.

When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be identified as truant for that school day. If the offered excuse for a student's absence is questionable or if the number of student absences is excessive, the school staff will notify the parents of the need for improvement in the student's attendance.

A skipped class or part of the school day will be identified as an unexcused absence and students will not be permitted to make up missed class work. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action.

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absences must provide the administration with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

Otsego Junior High School is required by law to take action and make interventions that help and encourage regular and consistent attendance. We use the following guidelines to determine our course of action which includes but is not limited to, written notification, mediation, and criminal charges.

As a general rule, a student that has been absent 30 hours but less than 60 hours (excused or unexcused) will be sent a letter notifying them that all future absences will require official documentation before the absences can be excused. The student may also be referred to the Wood County prosecutor's juvenile mediation program. A student that has been absent 60 or more hours (excused or unexcused) will receive written notification that all future absences will require official documentation before the absences can be excused.

Absence Intervention Plan
A student that has been absent 60 or more hours (excused or unexcused) along with their parent/guardian shall be required by the school to attend an Absence Intervention Meeting with school personnel to identify specific causes of the student's absences and ways in which we can improve the student's attendance at school.

Students with 60 hours of consecutive unexcused absences in a semester may also have their temporary instruction permit or driver's license suspended. Under current law, a student's temporary instruction permit or driver's license will be suspended for withdrawing from school for excessive absences (Ohio Revised Code Section 3365.041(A)).

Homebound Instruction
The School may arrange for individual instruction at home for students who are unable to attend school because of an accident, illness, or disability. Such instruction may be arranged upon receipt of documentation of the student's condition from a physician. For more information, contact the building principal.

Make-up of Tests and Other School Work
Students who are absent from school with an excuse shall be given the opportunity to make up missed work. The student should contact their classroom teacher as soon as possible to obtain assignments. The number of days for completion of make-up work will be equivalent to the number of excused days of absence.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to an excused absence, the student should make arrangements with the teacher to take the test at another time. If the student misses a State mandated assessment test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the building principal or their school counselor to arrange for administration of the test at another time.

Suspension from School
Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work missed due to suspension. Assignments may be obtained from their teacher beginning with the first day of suspension. Make-up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns from school. The student must complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in by the time the student returns to school.

Vacations During the School Year
It is recommended that parents not take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the Principal to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that may be completed during the trip.

Released Time For Religious Instruction
Students shall be provided "released time" during the school day to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a private entity off District property, in accordance with the requirements of Policy 5223.

CODE OF CONDUCT
A major component of the educational program (at the school) is to prepare students to become responsible citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards. Students are expected to behave in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws and rules and Board policies and Administrative Guidelines, and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Staff will take corrective action to discipline a student and/or to modify the student's behavior when a student's behavior does not fall within these parameters.

School staff may report suspected criminal misconduct by a student to law enforcement. Law enforcement officers will be permitted to carry out necessary law enforcement functions in the schools, including the removal of a student from school grounds in appropriate circumstances.

Expected Behaviors
Students are expected to:

A. act courteously to adults and fellow students;
B. be prompt to school and attentive in class;
C. work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, or ethnic background;
D. complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
E. help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
F. act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the School.

Classroom Environment
It is the responsibility of students, teachers, and administrators to maintain a classroom environment that allows:

A. a teacher to communicate effectively with all students in the class; and
B. all students in the class have the opportunity to learn.

Dress and Grooming
Students are expected to dress appropriately at all times. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Student dress choices should respect the District's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of individuals. (see policy 5511).

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

Basic Principle:
Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times. Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with opaque fabric. However, cleavage should not have coverage requirements. All items listed in the "MUST wear" and "MAY wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

Students MUST Wear *while following the basic principle above:
1. A Shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
2. Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
3. Shoes which include flip-flops and sandals.
4. Finally, courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular way or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (for example, athletic shoes for PE).

Students MAY Wear, *as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:
1. Religious headwear
2. Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing the hood overhead is NOT allowed).
3. Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans"
4. Pajamas

5. Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed.
6. Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops as long as the bra is not showing.
7. Athletic attire
8. Visible waistbands on undergarments or visible straps on undergarments worn under other clothing (as long as this is done in a way that does not violate Section 1 above).

Students CAN NOT Wear:

1. Hats, visors, or head covering including handkerchiefs/bandannas
2. Violent language or images.
3. Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity).
4. Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
5. Images or language that create a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups.
6. Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments
7. Swimsuits (except as required in class or athletic practice).
8. Tube Tops
9. Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
10. Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance).

Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have the discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 1 and 4 above. Students in violation of Section 1 and/or 4 will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day:

1. Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
2. Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
3. If necessary, students' parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the students to wear for the remainder of the day.

No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.

Students should not be shamed or required to display their bodies in front of others (students, parents, or staff) in school. "Shaming" includes, but is not limited to:

1. kneeling or bending over to check attire fit;
2. measuring straps or skirt length;
3. asking students to account for their attire in the classroom or hallways in front of others; calling out students in spaces, in hallways, or classrooms about perceived dress code violations in front of others; in particular, directing students to correct sagged pants that do not expose the entire undergarment, or confronting students about visible bra straps, since visible waistbands and straps on undergarments are permitted; and, accusing students of "distracting" other students with their clothing.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any

school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances, and prom.
Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact the principal, assistant principal, or school counselor.

Students who are representing The Otsego Local School District at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

Gangs
Gangs that initiate, advocate, or promote activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or that are disruptive to the school environment will not be tolerated. Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations, or related activities that are likely to cause harm or personal degradation are prohibited.

Students wearing, carrying, or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures that symbolize gang membership, or causing and/or participating in activities that are designed to intimidate another student, will be disciplined. Prohibited gang paraphernalia will be specifically identified and posted by the Principal.

Care of Property
Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The School is not responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student and/or their parents will be required to pay for the replacement or repair. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation
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.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

1. 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
2. violence within a dating relationship.
3. "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, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistant (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 they have 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 a 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 a student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

Complaints

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.

Protection of Individual Beliefs

The Board shall not solicit or require current or prospective students who seek enrollment in the District to affirmatively ascribe to specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movement or ideology,

nor will the District use any statements of commitment to specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements or ideology to evaluate the student's academic performance. (See Policy 2265)

Title IX Sexual Harassment

This District provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer(s): See Policy 2266

Kevin O'Shea Superintendent (419) 823-4381 ext. 1102 koshea@otsegoknights.org	- OR -	**Jessica Weatherwax** Student Services Coordinator (419) 823-4381 ext. 2104 jweatherwax@otsegoknights.org

Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

A Formal Complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth above. If a Formal Complaint involves allegations of Sexual Harassment by or involving the Title IX Coordinator, the Complainant should submit the Formal Complaint to the Board President, who will designate another person to serve in place of the Title IX Coordinator for the limited purpose of implementing the grievance process and procedures with respect to that Formal Complaint.

When the Title IX Coordinator receives a Formal Complaint, the District will undertake an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and provide that credibility determinations will not be based on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.

Timeline

The District will seek to conclude the grievance process, including resolving any appeals, within sixty (60) days of receipt of the Formal Complaint. Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the following to the parties who are known:

1. Notice of the Board's grievance process, including any informal resolution processes;
2. Notice of the allegations of misconduct that potentially constitutes Sexual Harassment as defined in this policy, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting Sexual Harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. The written notice must:
    a. include a statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
    b. inform the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence.
    c. inform the parties of any provision in the Student Code of Conduct and this policy, that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint

The District shall investigate the allegations in a Formal Complaint, unless the conduct alleged in the Formal Complaint:

1. would not constitute Sexual Harassment (as defined in this policy) even if proved;
2. did not occur in the District's education program or activity; or

3. did not occur against a person in the United States.
4. a Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegations therein;
5. the Respondent is no longer enrolled in the District or employed by the Board; or
6. specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or allegations therein.

The Title IX Coordinator may consolidate Formal Complaints as to allegations of Sexual Harassment against more than one Respondent, or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of Sexual Harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Informal Resolution Process

No party shall be required to participate in an informal resolution process. If a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator may offer to the parties an informal resolution process. If the parties mutually agree to participate in the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall designate a trained individual to facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. The informal resolution process may be used at any time prior to the decision-maker(s) reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

If the Title IX Coordinator is going to propose an informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide to the parties a written notice disclosing:

1. the allegations;
2. the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a Formal Complaint arising from the same allegations; and
3. any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

Any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the Formal Complaint. Before commencing the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall obtain from the parties their voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

During the pendency of the informal resolution process, the investigation and adjudication processes that would otherwise occur have stayed and all related deadlines are suspended. The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that a Board employee or another adult member of the School District community or Third Party sexually harassed a student. The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations involving a sexual assault involving a student Complainant and a student Respondent.

Investigation of a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

In conducting the investigation of a Formal Complaint and throughout the grievance process, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility is on the District, not the parties. In making the determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) is(are) directed to use the preponderance of the evidence standard. The decision-maker(s) is charged with considering the totality of all available evidence, from all relevant sources.

As part of the investigation, the parties have the right to:

1. present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence; and

2. have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney. The District may not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the Complainant or Respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding.

Neither party shall be restricted in their ability to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

The District will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate. The investigator(s) and decision-maker(s) must provide a minimum of one (1) days' notice with respect to investigative interviews and other meetings.

Both parties shall have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including the evidence upon which the District does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the Title IX Coordinator will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties will have at least ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, for their review and written response. The investigator will send the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the decision-maker(s) issuing a determination regarding responsibility.

The decision-maker(s) will issue a written determination regarding responsibility. To reach this determination, the decision-maker(s) must apply the preponderance of the evidence standard.

The written determination will include the following content:

1. identification of the allegations potentially constituting Sexual Harassment pursuant to this policy;
2. a description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the Formal Complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, [and] methods used to gather other evidence;
3. findings of fact supporting the determination;
4. conclusions regarding the application of the applicable code of conduct to the facts;
5. a statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the decision-maker(s) is recommending that the District impose on the Respondent(s), and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity should be provided by the District to the Complainant(s); and
6. the procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) to appeal.

Appeal

Both parties have the right to file an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility, or from the Title IX Coordinators dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter (e.g., material deviation from established procedures);
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant(s) or Respondent(s) that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Complainant(s) may not challenge the ultimate disciplinary sanction/consequence that is imposed.

Any party wishing to appeal the decision-maker(s)'s determination of responsibility, or the Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein, must submit a written appeal to the Title IX Coordinator within three (3) days after receipt of the decision-maker(s)'s determination of responsibility or the Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein.

Confidentiality

The District will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment, any Complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any Respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of 34 CFR part 106, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder (i.e., the District's obligation to maintain confidentiality shall not impair or otherwise affect the Complainant's and Respondent's receipt of the information to which they are entitled related to the investigative record and determination of responsibility).

Zero Tolerance

No form of violent, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior, including excessive truancy, will be tolerated.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

Each of the behaviors and/or types of misconduct described below are prohibited and may subject the student to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, student conference, parent/guardian notification, parent/guardian conference, denial of participation in school-related events/activities, detention, in-school discipline, suspension, and/or expulsion from school. Furthermore, any criminal acts committed at or related to the School will be reported to law enforcement officials, as well as disciplined at school. Certain criminal acts may result in permanent exclusion from school.

Scope of Jurisdiction: This code of conduct is in effect while students are under the authority of school personnel or involved in any school activity. This includes but is not limited to school buses and property under the control of school authorities, and while at interscholastic competitions, extracurricular events, or other school activities or programs. In addition, this Code of Conduct includes:

1. Misconduct by a student that occurs off school district property but is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school district property.
2. Misconduct by a student that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee.
3. Or the property of an official or employee.

Rule 1. Possession/Use of drugs and/or alcohol

Possessing, using, transmitting, concealing, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or controlled substance including, but not limited to, narcotics, mood-altering drugs, counterfeit controlled substances, lookalikes, over-the-counter stimulants or depressants, anabolic steroids, or drug-related paraphernalia.

If a building principal has a reasonable individualized suspicion of drug or alcohol use, the building principal may request the student in question to submit to any appropriate testing, including, but not limited to, a breathalyzer test or urinalysis. In such circumstances, the student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property for such testing with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test. If a student refuses to take the test, the student will be advised that such denial leaves the observed evidence of alcohol or drug use unrefuted thus leading to possible disciplinary action. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

Rule 2. Possession/Use of tobacco

Possession, consumption, distribution, concealing, purchase or attempt to purchase, and/or use of tobacco products or electronic cigarettes or similar devices in school, on school grounds, on school buses, in Board-owned vehicles, within any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, and at any interscholastic competition, extracurricular event, or other school-sponsored event. Tobacco products include, but are not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco.

The term “tobacco” includes any product containing, made of, or derived from tobacco or nicotine (including synthetic nicotine) that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether inhaled, absorbed, or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, a cigarette, a cigar, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus; any electronic smoking device and any substances that may be aerosolized or vaporized by such device, whether or not the substance contains nicotine; an e-cigarette (including, but not limited to, “JUUL”, “NJOY,” “BREEZE,” “Puff Bar,” etc.), e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen, or e-hookah; but does not include any cessation product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for use as a medical treatment to reduce or eliminate nicotine or tobacco dependence.

Rule 3. Use and/or possession of a firearm

Bringing a firearm (as defined in the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994) onto school property or to any school-sponsored activity, competition, program, or event, regardless of where it occurs, will result in a mandatory one (1) year expulsion under Ohio law. This expulsion may be reduced on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent using the guideline(s) set forth in Board Policy 5610. A firearm is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) that will or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any destructive device (as defined in the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994). Firearms include any unloaded firearm and any firearm that is inoperable but that can be readily operated.

Rule 4. Use and/or possession of a weapon or object as a weapon

The term "weapon" includes any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, incendiary devices, explosives, and other objects defined as dangerous ordinances under State law. A weapon is any device that may be used for offensive or defensive purposes, including but not limited to conventional objects such as guns, pellet guns, knives, or club-type implements. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Possession and/or use of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion.

A knife is defined as any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle, a razor blade or any similar device that is used for or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes, but is not limited to, padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, and jewelry.

Rule 5. Knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the Principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

Rule 6. Arson

Intentional or purposeful destruction or damage to school or district buildings or property by means of fire. Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony.

Rule 7. Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District.

Acting with intent to cause fear in another person of immediate bodily harm or death, or intentionally bullying, inflicting, or attempting to inflict bodily harm upon another person. Physical assault of a staff member, student, or other person associated with the District, regardless of whether it causes injury, will not be tolerated. Any intentional, harmful, or potentially harmful physical contact or bullying initiated by a student against a staff member will be considered to be assault. Assault may result in criminal charges and may subject the student to expulsion.

Rule 8. Verbally threatening (either orally, in writing or otherwise expressed) a staff member/student/person associated with the District.

Any oral or written statement or otherwise expressed action that a staff member, student, or other person associated with the District reasonably feels to be a threat will be considered a verbal assault. Profanity directed toward a staff member in a threatening tone may also be considered a verbal assault. Confrontation with a student or staff member that bullies, intimidates, or causes fear of bodily harm or death is also prohibited.

Rule 9. Misconduct against a school official or employee, or the property of such a person, regardless of where it occurs.

The Board prohibits misconduct committed by a student against a school official or employee including, but not limited to, harassment (of any type), vandalization, assault (verbal and/or physical), and destruction of property.

Rule 10. Misconduct off school grounds

Students may be subject to discipline for their misconduct even when it occurs off school property when the misconduct is connected to school activities or incidents.

Rule 11. Extortion

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law.

Rule 12. Gambling

Gambling (i.e., playing a game of chance for stakes) includes casual betting, betting pools, organized sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on any school activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that school activity.

Rule 13. Falsification of school work, identification, forgery

Falsifying signatures or data, or refusing to give proper identification, or giving false information to a staff member. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses, as well as use of false IDs.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and will subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action.

Rule 14. Bomb Threats, and other false alarms and reports

Making a bomb threat (i.e., intentionally giving a false alarm of a bomb) against a school building or any premises at which a school activity is being held at the time the threat is made may result in expulsion for a period of up to one (1) school year. Additionally, intentionally giving a false alarm of a fire, or tampering or interfering with any fire alarm, is prohibited. It should be remembered that false emergency alarms or reports endanger the safety forces that are responding to the alarm/report, the citizens of the community, and the persons in the building. What may seem like a prank, is a dangerous stunt that is against the law and will subject the student to disciplinary action.

Rule 15. Terroristic Threat

Threatening, directly or indirectly, to commit a crime of violence with the purpose of terrorizing another or with reckless disregard for the risk of causing terror in another.

Rule 16. Possession and/or use of explosives and/or fireworks

Possessing or using any compound or mixture, the primary or common purpose of which is to function by explosion, with substantially instantaneous release of gas and heat (including, but not limited to, explosives and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs and poppers). Additionally, possessing or offering for sale any substance, combination of substances, or article prepared to produce a visible and/or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration, or detonation.

Rule 17. Trespassing/Unauthorized use of school or private property

Students must obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use of school property, or private property located on school premises, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Although schools are public facilities, the law allows the Board to restrict access to school property. Being present in any Board-owned facility or portion of a Board-owned facility when it is closed to the public or when the student does not have the authorization to be there, or unauthorized presence in a Boardowned vehicle; or unauthorized access or activity in a Board-owned computer, into district, school, or staff computer files, into a school or district file server, or into the Network. When a student has been removed, suspended, expelled, or permanently excluded from school, the student is prohibited from being present on school property without the authorization of the Principal.

Rule 18. Theft, or knowingly receiving or possessing stolen property

Unauthorized taking of property of another person or receiving or possessing such property. Students caught stealing will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students should not bring anything of value to school without prior authorization from the building principal. The School is not responsible for personal property. Entering a building or a specific area of a building without consent and with intent to commit a crime, or entering a building without consent and committing a crime.

Rule 19. Insubordination

Students are expected to comply with the reasonable directions of staff. Willful refusal or failure to follow or comply with an appropriate direction given by a staff member, or acting in defiance of staff members.

Rule 20. Damaging property (Vandalism)

Defacing, cutting, or otherwise damaging property that belongs to the school, district, other students, employees, or others and disregard for school property.

Rule 21. Persistent absence or tardiness

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or to have a legitimate excuse for their absence. Penalties for unexcused absences can range from detention to a referral to court and/or revocation of the student's driver's license.

Rule 22. Refusing to accept discipline

Students failing to comply with disciplinary penalties may face enhanced penalties for such action.

Rule 23. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules

Assisting other students in the violation of any school rule. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision making regarding their behavior.

Rule 24. Displays of affection/sexual activities

Affection between students is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Sexual activity of any nature is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Rule 25. Possession of electronic equipment

The School will supply any electronic equipment or devices necessary for participation in the educational program. Students shall not use or possess any electronic equipment on school property or at any school-sponsored activity without the permission of the District Director of Technology. Examples of prohibited devices include, but are not limited to, radios, "boom-boxes", headphones, CD/MP3 players, portable TV's, electronic games/toys, pagers, cellular telephones, smart watches, smart glasses, beepers, other paging devices and other electronic communication devices, and the like. Unauthorized electronic equipment will be confiscated from the student by school personnel and disciplinary action will be taken.

Rule 26. Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. These rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules within each learning environment, all of which will be consistent with this Code.

Rule 27. Violation of bus rules (see Section V – Transportation)

Rule 28. Interference, disruption, or obstruction of the educational process

Any actions or manner of dress that materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with school activities or the educational process, or which threaten to do so, are unacceptable. Such disruptions include, but are not limited to, delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

Rule 29. Harassment and/or Aggressive Behavior (including Bullying/Cyberbullying)

The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Harassment and/or aggressive behavior (including bullying/cyberbullying) toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and any speech or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive learning environment. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. Individuals engaging in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

Conduct constituting sexual harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

A. verbal harassment or abuse;
B. pressure for sexual activity;
C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
D. unwelcome touching;
E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades or safety;
G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
H. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

Note: An inappropriate boundary invasion by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life is sexual harassment. Further, any administrator, teacher, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State law.

Conduct constituting harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or disability may take different forms including, but not limited to, the following:

A. Verbal:
   The making of offensive written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

B. Nonverbal:
   Placing offensive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures based upon a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

C. Physical:
   Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, pushing, shoving, hissing, or spitting, on or by a fellow staff member, students, or other person associated with the District, or third parties, based upon the person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, or disability.

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, 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.

Any student who believes that they ares/he is the victim of any of the above actions or has observed such actions by another student, staff member, or other person associated with the District, or by third parties, should contact the District's Anti-Harassment Complaint Coordinator(s): [list from page 3 of Administrative Guideline 5517]

The Complaint Coordinators are available during regular school hours to discuss a student's concerns related to harassment and/or bullying/cyberbullying, to assist a student who seeks support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the student.

The student may report their concerns to the Anti-Harassment Complaint Coordinators either by a written report, telephone, or personal visit. In reporting their concerns, the student should provide the name of the person(s) whom the student believes to be responsible for the harassment and/or bullying/cyberbullying and the nature of the harassing and/or bullying/cyberbullying incident(s). The AntiHarassment Complaint Coordinators will promptly compile a written summary of each such report that will be forwarded to the Principal.

Each report will be investigated in a timely manner and as confidentially as possible. The 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. While a charge is under investigation, no information will be released to anyone who is not involved with the investigation, except as may be required by law or in the context of a legal or administrative proceeding. All records generated under the terms of this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. All individuals involved in an investigation as either a witness, victim, or alleged harasser and/or bully/cyberbully will be instructed not to discuss the subject outside of the investigation.

If an investigation reveals that a harassment and/or bullying/cyberbullying complaint is valid, appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action will be taken promptly to prevent the continuance of the harassment and/or bullying/cyberbullying or its recurrence.

Given the nature of harassing and/or bullying/cyberbullying behavior, the School recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, all students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment and/or bullying/cyberbullying allegations or charges.

Some forms of sexual harassment of a student may reasonably be considered child abuse that must be reported to the proper authorities.

These guidelines 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 and/or Federal law).

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 harassment and/or aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment and aggressive behavior. Making intentionally false reports about harassment or aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Any one having further questions concerning prohibited behaviors and/or the complaint process should request a copy of Board policies and administrative guidelines 5517 and 5517.01.

Rule 30. Hazing

Performing any act, or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act, of initiation into any class, team, or organization, that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption or risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this rule.

Hazing by any individual, school group, club, or team is not permitted. This includes any form of initiation that causes or creates a risk of causing mental or physical harm, no matter how willing the participant may be. Hazing activities are prohibited at any time in school facilities, on school property, and/or off school property but connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school property.

All incidents of hazing must be reported immediately to any of the following individuals: the building principal or other administrator; teacher; coach; student club advisor/supervisor, and/or Superintendent.

Students who engage in hazing may also be liable for civil and criminal penalties.

Rule 31. Violent Conduct

Students may be expelled for up to one (1) school year for committing an act at school, on other school property, at an interscholastic competition, extracurricular event, or any other school program, or directing an act at a Board official or employee, regardless of where or when that act may occur, or their property that would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult and results in serious physical harm to person(s) or property.

Rule 32. Improper Dress

Clothing may not include words or visuals that are lewd, obscene, disruptive, abusive, or discriminatory, or that advertise drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Dress or grooming that is disruptive of the classroom or school atmosphere is not allowed. Shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons.

Rule 33. Careless or Reckless Driving

Driving on school property in such a manner as to endanger persons or property.

Rule 34. Fighting

Engaging in adversarial physical contact (differentiated from poking, pushing, shoving or scuffling) in which one or the other party(ies) or both contributed to the situation by verbally instigating a fight and/or physical action. Promoting or instigating a fight (i.e., contributing to a fight verbally or through behavior).

Rule 35. Lighting Incendiary Devices

Unauthorized igniting of matches, lighters and other devices that produce flames.

Rule 36. Possession of Pornography

Possessing sexually explicit material.

Rule 37. Repeated Behaviors

Actions or habits that a person engages in repeatedly

Rule 38. Unauthorized use of vehicles

Occupying or using vehicles during school hours without parental permission and/or school authorization.

Rule 39. Unathorized Touching

Students shall not engage in any form of unauthorized or inappropriate physical contact with another person. This includes, but is not limited to, unwanted touching, grabbing, pushing, patting, slapping, hugging, or any other physical interaction that is not consensual, disrupts the school environment, or makes another person feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or disrespected. Physical contact that is aggressive, overly familiar, or violates personal boundaries will be addressed seriously, regardless of intent.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the School's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school transportation, and on property not owned or controlled by the Board but that is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on property owned or controlled by the Board. Furthermore, students may be disciplined for conduct that, regardless of where or when it occurs, is directed at a Board official or employee, or the property of such official or employee. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

The School is committed to providing prompt, reasonable discipline consistent with the severity of the incident. The consequences for misbehavior are designed to be fair, firm, and consistent for all students in the School.

Because it is not possible to list every misbehavior that occurs, misbehaviors not listed above will be responded to as necessary by staff.

Two (2) types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

INFORMAL DISCIPLINE

Informal discipline takes place within the School. It includes:

1. writing assignments;
2. change of seating or location;
3. lunch-time, after-school detention;
4. Loss of privileges/participation in school activities;
5. Saturday School
6. in-school discipline.

Detentions

A student may be detained after school or asked to come to school early by a teacher, after giving the student and the student's parents one (1) day's notice. The student or their parents are responsible for transportation.

Saturday School

Saturday School may be assigned to students who have exhibited repeated behavioral infractions, academic deficiencies, or attendance issues. The assignment to Saturday School will be determined by school administration based on the nature and frequency of the student's misconduct or academic needs.

Saturday School sessions will be held from 7:30am-11:30am on designated Saturdays during the academic year, located in the High School Student Success Center (High School Library).

Attendance at Saturday School is mandatory for students who are assigned to it. Failure to attend without a valid excuse will result in further disciplinary action. Students must arrive on time. Late arrivals will not be admitted and will be considered as a missed session.

Saturday School sessions will be supervised by qualified school staff who will ensure a structured and productive environment. Students are expected to adhere to all school rules and policies during Saturday School. Any disruptive behavior will result in immediate dismissal from the session and additional disciplinary measures. Students will be required to engage in academic work, including completing assignments, studying for exams, and participating in educational activities. Students must bring all necessary materials, such as textbooks, notebooks, and writing tools. Electronic devices are permitted only for educational purposes and must be used in accordance with school policies.

Parents/guardians will be notified when their child is assigned to Saturday School, including the reason for the assignment, the date and time of the session, and expectations for student conduct. Parents/guardians are encouraged to support their child in meeting the requirements of Saturday School and to communicate any concerns to the school administration. Transportation to and from Saturday School is the responsibility of the student and their parents/guardians. The school will not provide transportation services for this program.

In-School Suspension
During an in-school suspension, students are isolated from their peers and required to work on assignments in a designated area. The goal is to minimize the disruption to the student's education while still enforcing disciplinary measures. ISS serves as an alternative to out-of-school suspension, allowing students to continue their academic work and maintain a presence in the school community. Assigned students will report to the office immediately upon arrival at school and are not allowed on campus for any events including athletics after school.

Failure to timely serve Detentions and/or In-School Discipline may lead to suspension from school. Any such suspension shall be in accordance with District guidelines on suspension and expulsion.

The following rules apply to Detention and In-School Discipline:

1. Students are required to have class assignments with them.
2. Students are not to communicate with each other unless given permission to do so.
3. Students are to remain in their designated seats at all times unless permission is granted to do otherwise.
4. Students shall not be allowed to put their heads down or sleep.
5. No electronic communication devices, radios, CD/MP3 players, cards, magazines, or other entertainment/recreational articles or devices shall be allowed in the room.
6. Food or beverages shall be consumed during their scheduled lunchtime.

FORMAL DISCIPLINE
Formal discipline involves removal of the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to three (3) school days, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, expulsion for up to eighty (80) school days or the number of days remaining in a semester, whichever is greater, and permanent exclusion. Expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Any student who is expelled from school for more than twenty (20) days, or for any period of time if the expulsion will extend into the following semester or school year, will be provided with information about services or programs offered by public and private agencies that work toward improving those aspects of the student's attitude and behavior that contributed to the incident that gave rise to the student's expulsion. The Superintendent, at the Superintendent's discretion, may require/allow a student to perform community service in conjunction with or in place of an expulsion. The Superintendent may impose a community service requirement beyond the end of the school year in lieu of applying the expulsion to the following school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension, expulsion, and permanent exclusion may be appealed.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS
Before a student is suspended, expelled, or permanently excluded from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed. As long as the in-school discipline is served entirely in the school setting, it will not require any notice or meeting, or be subject to appeal.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL
When a student is being considered for a suspension, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the basis for the proposed suspension. The student will be given an opportunity to explain their view of the underlying facts. After that informal hearing, the Principal (or assistant principal or other administrator) will determine whether or not to suspend the student. If the decision is made to suspend the student out of school, the student and their parents will be given written notification of the suspension within one (1) day, setting forth the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and the process for appeal. The suspension may be appealed, within five (5) days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the Superintendent. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

During the appeal process, the student shall not be allowed to remain in school.

If the appeal is heard by the Board's designee, the appeal shall be conducted in a private hearing. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the appeal shall be conducted in executive session unless the student or the student's representative requests otherwise. A verbatim transcript will be made, and witnesses will be sworn in prior to giving testimony. If the appeal decision is to uphold the suspension, the next step in the appeal process is to the Court of Common Pleas.

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process taking place either in a classroom or elsewhere on the school premises, the Superintendent, Principal, or assistant principal may remove the student from any curricular or extracurricular activity or from the school premises. A teacher may remove the student from any curricular or extracurricular activity under the teacher's supervision, but not from the premises.

If a teacher makes an emergency removal, the teacher will notify a building administrator of the circumstances surrounding the removal, in writing, within one (1) school day. No prior notice or hearing is required for any removal under this procedure. In all cases of normal disciplinary procedures where a student is removed from curricular or extracurricular activity for less than one (1) school day, and is not subject to further suspension for expulsion, the following due process requirements do not apply.

If the emergency removal exceeds one (1) school day, then a hearing will be held on the next school day after the removal is ordered. Written notice of the hearing and the reasons for removal and any intended disciplinary action will be provided to the student, as soon as practical prior to the hearing. If the student is subject to an out-of-school suspension, the student will have the opportunity to appear at an informal hearing before the Principal, assistant principal, Superintendent, or a designee, and may challenge the reasons for the removal or otherwise explain their actions.

EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL

When a student is being considered for expulsion, the student and parent will be provided with a formal notice of the proposed expulsion. This written notice will include the reasons for the intended expulsion, notification of the opportunity to appear in person before the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee to challenge the reasons for the expulsion and/or explain the student's action, and notification of the time and place to appear. Students being considered for expulsion may be removed immediately. A hearing will be scheduled no earlier than three (3), nor no later than five (5), school days after the notice is given. Parents may request an extension of time for the hearing. The student may be represented by their parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of the student's choice at the hearing.

In accordance with Board Policy 5610, the Superintendent shall initiate expulsion proceedings against a student who has committed an act that warrants expulsion under Board policy even if the student withdraws from school prior to the hearing or decision to impose the expulsion. The expulsion will be imposed for the same duration that it would have been had the student remained enrolled.

If a student is expelled, the student and the student's parents will be provided with written notice within one (1) school day of the imposed expulsion. The notice will include the reasons for the expulsion, the right of the student, or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or custodian(s) to appeal the expulsion to the Board or its designee, the right to be represented in all appeal proceedings, the right to be granted a hearing before the Board or its designee, and the right to request that the hearing be held in executive session.

Within ten (10) days after the Superintendent notifies the parents of the expulsion, the expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the Board of Education or its designee. A hearing on the requested appeal will be formal with an opportunity for sworn testimony. If the expulsion is upheld on appeal, a student's parents may pursue further appeal to the Court of Common Pleas.

Students serving expulsions will not be awarded grades or credit during the period of expulsion. Expulsion for certain violations, including use or possession of alcohol or drugs, may result in revocation of the student's driver's license. When a student is expelled, the Superintendent will notify any college in which the expelled student is enrolled under the Early College Credit Program at the time the expulsion is imposed.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION

State law provides for the permanent exclusion of a student, sixteen (16) years of age or older, who engages in certain criminal activity. Permanently excluded students may never be permitted to return to school anywhere in the State of Ohio. A permanent exclusion may be considered if the student is convicted or adjudicated delinquent for committing one (1) or more of the following crimes while on the property of any Ohio school:

A. conveying deadly weapons onto school property or to a school function;
B. possessing deadly weapons onto school property or at a school function;
C. carrying a concealed weapon onto school property or at a school function;
D. trafficking in drugs onto school property or at a school function;
E. murder, aggravated murder on school property or at a school function;
F. voluntary or involuntary manslaughter on school grounds or at a school function;
G. assault or aggravated assault on school property or at a school function;
H. rape, gross sexual imposition or felonious sexual penetration on school grounds, or at a school function, when the victim is a school employee;
I. complicity in any of the above offenses, regardless of the location.

This process is formal and may follow an expulsion with the proper notification to the parents.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), and, where applicable, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

SUSPENSION OF BUS RIDING/TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES

When a student is being considered for suspension of bus riding/transportation privileges, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the reason. The student will be given an opportunity to address the basis for the proposed suspension at an informal hearing. After that informal hearing, the Principal (or assistant principal or other administrator) will decide whether or not to suspend the student'shis/her bus riding/transportation privileges for all or part of the school year.

If a student's bus riding/transportation privileges are suspended, the student and their parents will be notified, in writing and within one (1) day, of the reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Administrators may search a student or a student's property (including vehicles, purses, knapsacks, gym bags, etc.) with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that a search will lead to the discovery of evidence of a violation of law or school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction and the student's age. General housekeeping inspection of school property may be conducted with

reasonable notice. Student lockers are the property of the District and students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in their contents or in the contents of any other District property including desks or other containers. School authorities may conduct random searches of the lockers and their contents at any time without announcement. Unannounced and random canine searches may also be conducted. (ORC 3313.20)

Additionally, students have NO reasonable expectation of privacy in their actions in public areas including, but not limited to, common areas, hallways, cafeterias, classrooms, and gymnasiums. The District may use video cameras in such areas and on all school vehicles transporting students to and from regular and extracurricular activities.

Anything that is found in the course of a search may be used as evidence of a violation of school rules or the law, and may be taken, held, or turned over to the police. The School reserves the right not to return items that have been confiscated.

INTERROGATION OF STUDENTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

The School is committed to protecting students from harm that may be connected with the school environment and also recognizes its responsibility to cooperate with law enforcement and public child welfare agencies. While the School believes these agencies should conduct their investigations off school property if possible, investigations can take place at school in emergency situations or if the violation being investigated occurred on school property.

Before students are questioned as witnesses or suspects in an alleged criminal violation, the building administrator will attempt to contact a parent prior to questioning and shall remain in the room during questioning.

If a student is questioned as the subject of alleged child abuse or neglect, the building administrator will attempt to contact a parent prior to questioning, and the building administrator (or a designated school counselor) will remain in the room during questioning. If the agency investigating the alleged child abuse or neglect suspects the parent is the perpetrator, neither parent will be contacted prior to questioning, but the building administrator (or a designated school counselor) will remain in the room during questioning.

If law enforcement or a children's services agency removes a student from school, the building administrator will notify a parent.

STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do so appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non sponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet school guidelines.

A. Material cannot be displayed if it:
    1. is obscene to minors, libelous, or pervasively indecent or vulgar;
    2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law;
    3. intends to be insulting or harassing;
    4. intends to incite fighting; or
    5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it will cause or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.

B. Material may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods, and/or before or after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the building principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

The School provides transportation for all students living within the boundaries of the district. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting:

Eva Vasher
Director of Operations, Transportation Director
(419) 823-4381 ext. 3156
evasher@otsegoknights.org

Students may only ride assigned buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the Director of Transportation.

The Director of Transportation may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need. Parents should send a note to the Director of Transportation stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

BUS CONDUCT

Students who are riding to and from school on District-provided transportation must follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation.

The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain transportation safety.

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

Prior to loading (on the road and at school)

Each student shall:

1. be on time at the designated place of safety (five (5) minutes prior to scheduled stop);
2. stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for school transportation;
3. line up single file off the roadway to enter;
4. wait until the school transportation is completely stopped and the driver to signal it is safe to board before moving forward to enter;
5. refrain from crossing a roadway until the driver signals it is safe to cross;
6. properly board and depart the vehicle;
7. go immediately to an assigned seat and be seated.

During the trip

Each student shall:

1. remain seated while the school transportation is in motion;
2. keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the school transportation at all times;
3. not push, shove, or engage in scuffling;
4. not litter in the school vehicle or throw anything in, into, or from the vehicle;
5. keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle;
6. be courteous to the driver and to other riders;
7. not eat or drink
8. not use nuisance devices (e.g., laser pointers, loud music) on the bus in a way that disrupts the safe transportation of students and/or endangers students or employees;

9. not tamper with the school vehicle or any of its equipment (including, but not limited to, emergency and/or safety equipment).

Exiting the School Vehicle

Each student shall:

1. remain seated until the vehicle has stopped;
2. cross the road, when necessary, at least ten (10) feet in front of the vehicle, but only after the driver signals that it is safe; the going to their designated place of safety and remain there until the bus pulls away
3. be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless the driver has proper authorization from school officials.

Video Recordings on School Buses

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and the student's actions are recorded, the recording will be submitted to the Principal and may be used as evidence of misbehavior.

PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS BY PRIVATE VEHICLE

When transportation by District vehicle is either not available or feasible, there may be a need to provide transportation to students by private vehicle. However, no students will be permitted to ride in a private vehicle unless written consent is provided by each student's parent using our PARENTAL AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY FORM.

SELF-TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

Driving to school is a privilege that can be revoked at any time. Students who are provided the opportunity to ride school transportation are encouraged to do so. Students and their parents assume full responsibility and liability for any transportation to and from school not officially provided by the School. A parking area is provided for students who drive to school. Parking is at the student's own risk. Otsego Junior High School assumes no liability for damaged vehicles. Vehicles should be locked. Students may not loiter in vehicles or parking lots.

The following rules shall apply:

1. Students and their parents shall complete the Student Vehicle Registration Form via Finalforms to drive vehicles on school property and provide evidence of:
    a. driver's license;
    b. insurance certificate; and
    c. vehicle registration.
2. Busses and pedestrians always have the right-of-way.
3. Students are required to obey the parking lot speed limit of fifteen (15) mph.
4. Reckless or unauthorized operation of a motor vehicle on school property or in the vicinity of school vehicles is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to speeding, revving engines loudly, squealing tires/peeling out.
5. The student must obtain a permit from the high school office and pay an annual fee of $30.00
    a. Student vehicles not registered and without a parking tag will be subject to discipline.

    b. If a student's parking permit is suspended, no fees will be refunded.
6. Student parking is restricted to specific areas designated by school administrators. Students are not permitted to park in areas designated for faculty, staff, or guests.
7. Students are not allowed in the parking lot during school hours (7:30 am - 2:15 pm).
8. An approved student driver may not transport other students to a school sponsored activity unless the parents of the approved student driver and the parents of the student(s) to be transported in the approved student driver's vehicle provide written authorization for the student to drive or to be transported and release the Board from liability.
9. All vehicles entering school property are subject to search and inspection.
10. Failure to comply with these rules will result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary actions for a student.

USE OF MOTORIZED UTILITY VEHICLES

Motorized utility vehicles (e.g., golf carts or similar low-speed vehicles) may be used on school property and/or in conjunction with approved school activities only if operated for the approved purpose and in accordance with AG 5515.01.

1. All operators must be at least sixteen (16) years of age, licensed to drive a motor vehicle in the State of Ohio is required.
2. Student operators shall only operate utility vehicles at the direction and under the supervision of the approved teacher/activity sponsor/coach.
3. Operators shall participate in basic safety training for operation of motorized utility vehicles, as prescribed in the administrative guidelines, prior to operating any such vehicle(s). Individuals authorized to operate such utility vehicles may not allow anyone else to use the vehicle (e.g., other students, relatives, friends, etc.). The utility vehicle may only be used for the specific activity and function that has been assigned.