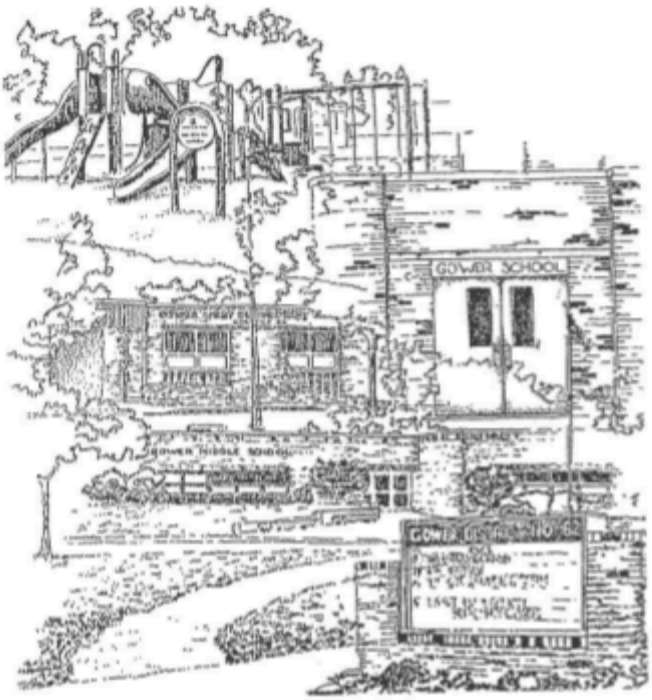
Gower School District 62

Children at their Best!



Parent/Student Handbook
2026-2027

Gower West Elementary School
7650 Clarendon Hills Rd.
Willowbrook, IL 60527
630 - 986 - 5383

Gower Middle School
7941 S. Madison St.
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
630 - 986 - 5383

www.gower62.com

Gower School District 62

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025–2030

Mission

Empowering children to be their best today to lead a better tomorrow.

Vision

Ensure an environment that cultivates confident, compassionate, and innovative learners to actively shape and enrich the world.

Belief Statements

In Gower School District 62, we:

- Commit to personal, social, and academic growth resulting in continuous improvement and high achievement.
- Build strong relationships across our community to foster a culture where everyone thrives.
- Ensure an emotionally and physically safe, supportive environment for all.
- Model respect and demonstrate empathy and kindness in all interactions.
- Provide all students with equitable access to resources, opportunities and experiences through collaboration.

Motto

Children at their Best!

Strategic Goals

Ambitious Instruction

Enhance learning through innovative and immersive opportunities to ensure all students reach their highest potential in growth and achievement.

Supportive Environment

Ensure the highest standard of protecting physical safety and emotional well-being.

Involved Families

Expand opportunities for collaboration, connection, and service with parents and community.

Collaborative Teachers

Empower teachers and support staff through a collaborative environment that fosters professional growth focused on student success.

Effective Leaders

Embrace leadership that incorporates collaboration and communication to guide the district in a cohesive and transparent manner.

Adopted by the Board of Education
March 19, 2025

GOWER SCHOOL DISTRICT 62

DISTRICT OFFICE
7700 Clarendon Hill Road
Willowbrook, IL 60527
Phone: 630-986-5383, Opt. 3; Fax: 630-413-0237
Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. www.gower62.com

Victor Simon III, Ed.D……..……..……...……....Superintendent
Brian Riegler…….……Chief School Business Official
Jackelyn Cadard, Ed.D……..Director of Special Education and Student Services
Karen Hess…… Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Programs
Rachel Kunst..…….……..……Payroll/Accounts Payable
Shaina Alegria…….……..District Office and Board Recording Secretary

Gower West School **Grades EC-4**
7650 Clarendon Hills Road
Willowbrook, IL 60527
Meg Hoff, Principal
Natalie Harden, Assistant Principal
Abbi Lohenis, Administrative Assistant
Julie Jaworski, School Secretary

School Office……630-986-5383 Opt. 1
Fax…… 630-413-0238
Absence line……. 630-286-4948
Office Hours……...7:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
***Student Hours:**
Grades K-4……..…7:45 a.m-2:25 p.m.
Emergency Line……..... 630-816-0949
Early Childhood …..…7:55 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Early Childhood …..…11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Gower Middle School **Grades 5-8**
7941 S. Madison
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
Tracy Murphy, Principal
Julie Schiffler, Assistant Principal
Jacqueline Boye, Administrative Assistant
Mona Song, School Secretary

School Office……630-986-5383 Opt. 2
Fax……... 630-413-0239
Absence line…… 630-323-8279
Office Hours……. 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
***Student Hours……. 8:30 a.m.-3:28 p.m.**
Emergency Line…….……. 630-816-0948

The Parent/Student Handbook was created to provide parents and students with important information about District expectations, curriculum, procedures, programs, and services.

The Handbook also contains summaries of important Board of Education policies. Full copies of the Handbook and Board policies are available at the District Office or on the District website. Since the Board continues to review its policies, some may change during the year. Proposed policy changes are discussed at public Board meetings prior to adoption. Comments/suggestions are always appreciated.

Dr. Victor Simon III, Superintendent

Changes & Updates: 2026-2027 Parent Student Handbook

The Handbook Advisory/Safety Committee meets annually to review the student discipline policies, the implementation of those policies, and any other factors related to the safety of our schools, students, and staff. The recommendations from the Handbook Advisory/Safety Committee (Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee) are incorporated in the 2026-2027 Parent/Student Handbook and include:

1. Updated Staff Names throughout the handbook
2. Updated language from quarters to trimesters at Gower Middle throughout the handbook
3. Updated Gower West Lunch Hours on Page 1
4. Additional language under Extra-Curricular Activities on Page 5, which states that students must be present at least half of a school day to participate
5. Updated language under Extra-Curricular Eligibility Rules and Procedures on Page 5: A 5th grade student with three or more missing assignments **and**/or two D's or any F average in a class is ineligible to participate.
6. Updated Gower Middle grading under Powerschool Parent Portal to reflect the recommended changes presented at the May 20, 2026 Board of Education meeting–Page 8
7. Updated language for cell phone and smartwatch use - Pages 13-14
8. Additional language Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Deepfake Content on page 14
9. Additional sections added on Page 30 to align with special education requirements: PUNS (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services) and ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Account
10. Additional language under Building Security on Page 33: The vestibule at Gower West will serve as the designated waiting area for all visitors.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Term expires 2029

To contact the Gower Board of Education, the following email should be used: boardofeducation@gower62.com.
There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means and will be reported by the Superintendent as part of the regular monthly Board meeting.

Functions
The Board is charged by law with governing a school district and serves in trust for its entire community. The Illinois Association of School Boards, of which the Gower Board is a member, has identified some fundamental duties imposed on each School Board to meet the obligation to govern effectively. They are as follows: (1) Clarifies the District Purpose. (2) Connects with the Community. (3) Employs and Delegates Authority to a Superintendent. (4) Monitors Performance. (5) Takes Full Responsibility for Itself.

Membership
The Board of Education consists of seven members elected to four-year terms by the District's registered voters at the April Consolidated Elections held in odd-numbered years. Illinois law requires that a person must be at least 18 years old, a registered voter, and a District resident for one year prior to the board election date. Should a member resign, the Board appoints a successor to serve until the next regular election. Terms are staggered so that all members are not elected in the same year. There is no legal limit to the number of terms a person may serve. Board membership is a community service. Members are not compensated for their service to the District.

Meetings
Regular Board meetings are generally held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month, Gower Board Room, District Office. Residents are encouraged to attend. Meeting agendas are posted on the district website at least forty-eight hours before the meeting.

Officers
The Board annually elects a president, who conducts the meetings, a vice-president, and a secretary.

Communication to and from the Board (Policy 2:140)

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by the Board members, individual Board members will not reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board. If contacted individually by staff, parents, community or the media, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate channel of authority, except in unusual circumstances.

GOWER WEST

Early Arrival
Students may not arrive prior to 7:35 a.m. unless they are participating in a before school activity. There is no supervision until that time. Students arriving early to participate in a before school activity must arrive on time and report to the designated meeting area.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures: Traffic Pattern for Gower West
You are encouraged to have your child ride the bus whenever possible. The bus provides a safe way to get to and from school and reduces the number of cars entering or leaving the school site. If you choose to transport your child to and/or from school **we are asking that all parents use the following method when dropping-off or picking-up students at Gower West:**

- All **drop offs and pick ups** should take place along sidewalk at Door #29 and Door #1 in the carline off **Sheridan Road**. Preschool will enter through Door #8.
- Students may be **dropped off** between **7:35 a.m. and 7:45 a.m.** while staff is on duty.
- Students **picked up** at the end of the day are dismissed beginning at **2:25 p.m**.
- Students must **always enter and exit cars on the building side and parents must remain in their cars.**
- Entrance to the school parking lot is a right **turn only off of Sheridan Road**. Left turns will be prohibited after 2 p.m. in the afternoon.
- **Pull ahead as far as possible** when dropping off or picking up your child.
- Parents **must use the pick up lane to pick up their children by car**.
- **Always display your Family Name Card on the rearview mirror where it can be seen.**
- Parents may **park in the parking lot** and **walk to Door #1** to pick up their student.

Although we realize that some of you may experience a time delay or slight inconvenience as a result of these procedures, we firmly believe that the inconveniences are minor when considering the safety of our children, staff and school guests.

Instructional Program
All students in grades K-4 receive instruction in language arts, spelling, mathematics, physical education, reading, science, social studies, art, use of technology, handwriting, health, vocal music, social emotional learning, and Erin's Law. Gower offers a full day Kindergarten program. Please review the Curriculum and Instruction section for more information on District programs.

Physical Activity Exclusion
A note from a parent will excuse a student from physical activities such as physical education and recess for up to 2 days. A doctor's note is necessary for exclusion of 3 days or more.

Lunch Hours

Kindergarten	10:45-11:10	Grade 3	11:45-12:10
Grade 1	11:20-11:45	Grade 4	11:45-12:10
Grade 2	11:20-11:45		

If a student forgets his/her lunch, a parent/guardian should bring the lunch to the school office prior to the student's lunch period. The student will be notified to pick up the lunch. The main office will NOT accept food deliveries for a student via Door Dash, Uber Eats, Jimmy Johns, etc. Exceptions to this food delivery rule will be extremely limited to accommodate emergency family situations and at the discretion of the principal. Please contact your school office directly to make an emergency request.

Recess and Unstructured Play (Public Act 102-0357)
Recess and unstructured play time provide respite from the learning routine. Recess and unstructured play time are generally outside, and students need to have appropriate clothing for weather conditions. If a student has a medical condition that prevents the child from going outside for recess, a note from the parent/guardian and/or physician must be given to the classroom teacher. All school rules apply at recess and during unstructured play.

Supplies
Supply lists may be obtained from the school offices or the school website. The Gower PTO provides options for families to purchase school supplies.

Celebrations (Birthday Party or Other Celebration Invitations)
Room Parents sponsor celebrations at all grades levels. All celebrations require prior approval from the Principal. Funds are collected by the PTO to cover the costs of these celebrations. Staff are unable to share the home or email addresses of school families and cannot forward correspondence on behalf of a family for the purpose of inviting students to private events outside of school.

In accordance with the District vision of building the body and due to concerns for our children with food allergies, we are asking parents who choose to send birthday items, to provide non-food items. These items will be distributed at the end of the school day.

Snacks or treats cannot be brought to school or lunch to be shared with other students.

GOWER MIDDLE

Early Arrival
Middle students should not arrive prior to 8:20 AM. There is no supervision until that time and the doors will be locked. Students arriving earlier to participate in an activity, such as band or athletic practice, must report to the designated meeting area upon arrival. Students that arrive early to receive academic assistance from a teacher should check in the office and then proceed to the classroom.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures: Traffic Pattern for Gower Middle
Gower District buses drop off and pick up in the front of the building. If a parent is dropping their child off **between 8:20 and 8:30 AM, the student *must* be dropped off at Door #6** at the back of the school. After school and extracurricular student pick up is located at Door #6 at the back of the school. **Students are not to be picked up across Madison St. or on Madison or 89th Street for their safety.**

A left turn onto Madison from the Gower Middle parking lot is *not* permitted Monday-Friday from 8AM-9AM and 3 PM-4 PM.

Bell Schedule

5th Grade 6th Grade	Bell Schedule	7th Grade 8th Grade
1st Period	**8:30-9:13 (43)**	**1st Period**
2nd Period	**9:15-9:58 (43)**	**2nd Period**
3rd Period	**10:00-10:43 (43)**	**3rd Period**
4th Period	**10:45-11:28 (43)**	**4th Period**
5th Period	**11:30-12:13 (43)**	**5th Period**
Lunch	**12:15-12:43 (28)**	**WIN/Advisory**
Advisory/WIN	**12:45-1:13 (28)**	**Lunch**
7th Period	**1:15-1:58 (43)**	**7th Period**
8th Period	**2:00 - 2:43 (43)**	**8th Period**
9th Period	**2:45 - 3:28 (43)**	**9th Period**

Lunch Hours

Grades 5 – 6	12:15 p.m. - 12:43 p.m.
Grades 7 – 8	12:45 p.m. - 1:13 p.m.

If a student forgets his/her lunch, a parent/guardian should bring the lunch to the school office prior to the student's lunch period. The student will be notified to pick up the lunch prior to going to the lunchroom. Lunches that are delivered for a student cannot be shared with other students. Please ***do not*** provide outside lunch items (i.e. pizza, sub sandwiches, fast food items, etc.) for your child's friends/lunch table. The main office will NOT accept food deliveries for a student via Door Dash, Uber Eats, etc. Exceptions to this food delivery rule will be extremely limited to accommodate emergency family situations and at the discretion of the principal.

Tardiness to Class

Students who are on time to school but tardy to their first period class or any other class throughout the day will be marked tardy by the classroom teacher. There is no "excused tardy" policy. Repeated tardiness is considered a disregard of school rules and students will be assigned an after school detention every three tardies to class, per trimester.

After School Procedures

Students staying after school must remain in a supervised area. Students participating in or attending an athletic event must remain in the cafeteria or gym where the event is taking place. Students staying after school for academic purposes must have a pass from a teacher.

Supplies
Supply lists may be obtained from the school office or the school website. The Gower PTO provides Supply Box options for parents to purchase school supplies.

Instructional Program
Students in grades 5-8 are assigned to interdisciplinary grade-level teaching teams. The teams coordinate and integrate classroom instruction and are available to meet with parents as a group or individuals if requested.

All fifth grade students have Math, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, PE, advisory, and lunch each day. Fifth grade students choose to take Band (year long course) or Art and World Cultures (one semester per course).

- **Art:** students learn the essential elements of art including; line, shape, form, space, texture, color and value. The students experience working with different mediums such as painting, drawing and sculpting.
- **World Cultures**: students explore the culture, customs, and learn some basic vocabulary words from Mexico/Spain, France, Germany and China. This class offers students the chance to explore the four foreign languages that are offered to them starting in sixth grade.

Students in grades 6-8 have Math, English Language Arts (two period class), Science, Social Studies, PE, advisory, and lunch each day. The sixth and seventh grade program includes Art, Music, Family and Consumer Sciences, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). In eighth grade, students are given the choice of taking the trimester cycled specials classes: Teen Leadership, Everything Art, and Food for Life. Students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade also have the option of taking year-long Spanish. Year-long German, Mandarin, and French are offered through the Imagine Learning online learning platform. Year-long study hall is also an option for sixth-eighth grade students. Students choose two specials classes to take each year.

Students may elect to participate in instrumental Band and/or chorus. The Cadet Band (5th grade) and Concert Band (6th-8th grades) are graded elective classes that students can select. Jazz Band and Chorus are currently offered outside of the school day. Fifth grade sectionals will occur during student's lunch or advisory time.

Physical Activity Exclusion
A note from a parent will excuse a student from physical activities such as physical education and recess for up to 2 days. A doctor's note is necessary for exclusion of 3 days or more.

The district excuses any student from engaging in any physical activity components of a physical education course during a period of religious fasting if the student's parent or guardian notifies the school principal in writing that the student is participating in religious fasting. The district also honors excuses signed by persons licensed under the Medical Practice Act of 1987, and has adopted a policy defining the types of parental excuses it will deem appropriate, which must include, but not be limited to, reliance upon religious objections. If the board has established a policy to excuse students from physical education for any other reason, the policy allows for students to be excused only for those reasons and grade levels as authorized by statute. For more information on a student exemption from Physical Education, please refer to Board Policy 7:260.

P.E. and Athletic Uniform Modification
The district allows a student to modify his or her athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of his or her religion or his or her cultural values or modesty preferences.

Extra-Curricular Activities
Gower Middle School offers all students the opportunity to develop their ability and skill through participation in a variety of seasonal sports and after-school clubs. A description of all activities may be found in the Extra-Curricular Activities Handbook available on the website. Participation in and/or attendance at activities is a privilege, not a right. These activities are considered an extension of, but separate from, the regular school program. It is the student's responsibility to maintain eligibility by meeting all academic and behavioral standards.

Students assume certain responsibilities to participate in after school activities. These include:

- Attending school, practices, and/or meetings; students must be present at least a half day of school (arriving by 12pm or remaining in school until at least 12pm) in order to attend extracurricular activities or school sponsored events on the same day.
- Acting respectfully with staff and peers;
- Following academic honesty
- Maintaining academic eligibility;
- Following school rules. The school discipline policy remains in effect during all school-related activities. If a student is suspended, he/she is not eligible to participate in extracurricular activities during the suspension.
- Serving as a positive role model.

Each activity may establish additional expectations for participation with the approval of the Principal.

Extra-Curricular Eligibility Rules and Procedures (Policy 7:240, 7:30)
A 6th, 7th or 8th grade student with two D averages or any F average is ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity until the grade or grades are above 60%. A 5th grade student with three or more missing assignments and/or two D's or any F average in a class is ineligible to participate. Missing work that affects eligibility must be submitted to the teacher(s) in which the deficient averages(s) exists. Students have until 12:00 PM Monday (or the first day of the school week) to raise their deficient averages/turn in missing assignments and regain eligibility. School disciplinary action may affect student eligibility and/or the ability to attend or participate in a sport or extra-curricular activity. The seriousness of the offense(s) will determine the action taken by the school administration. Eligibility questions should be directed to the Athletic Director at 630-986-5383.

Conference Sports Teams
Gower is a member of the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA). All students participating on an IESA team must have a current physical on file. The $50.00 athletic fee must be paid prior to the first day of the sport or activity. Students must also provide proof of medical insurance or purchase it through the District or a private carrier.

Graduation
A graduation ceremony is held to honor 8th grade graduates. The $30 graduation fee will be collected from all 8th grade students in January. Students wear caps and gowns for the ceremony.

Special Events
There are school sponsored activities held after school or in the evening throughout the year.

ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/TARDINESS/MAKE-UP WORK (Policy 7:70)
Regular attendance is vital to student school success and is required by Illinois law. A valid cause for absence includes: Illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student; Observance of a religious holiday; Death in the immediate family or family emergency; Other situations beyond the control of the student, as determined by the Superintendent or the School Principal as a designee; or such other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student. Family vacations planned on school attendance days are typically not a valid reason for student absence.

Attendance Procedures
If your child will be absent**,** please call the attendance line at his/her school:

- Gower West: 630-986-5383 Opt 1 by 8:15 a.m. or direct line 630-286-4948
- Gower Middle: 630-986-5383 Opt 2 by 8:45 a.m. or direct line 630-323-8279

If the front office has attempted to contact the parents/guardians multiple times regarding an absence and exhausted all emergency contacts without success, the school will contact the nonemergency number for a wellness check.

If the absence is due to a contagious disease, a doctor's statement is required in order for the student to return to school regardless of the number of days missed. If a student has been vomiting, has shortness of breath, coughing, and/or has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, please keep your child home until he/she has been fever/vomit free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication). Please contact the school nurse (Mrs. Sandy Anderson at Gower West and Mrs. Sophia Haile at Gower Middle) with any questions.

When a student takes more than two of the approved mental health days, the student will be referred to the appropriate school support services. Students who take mental health days will also be given the opportunity to make up missed work.

A student who is absent without valid cause totaling 5% of the previous 180 days (9 days within the previous school days) may be considered a "chronic or habitual truant" reported to the DuPage County Regional Office of Education. Note: "Previous 180 regular attendance days" means that students do not begin each school year or term with "a fresh start". This includes students moving to new schools as they progress in grade levels (elementary to middle or middle to high school or transfer). If the school determines that the student is a "chronic or habitual truant", a review of absences will be initiated to determine the causes and establish a plan to alleviate absences. If invalid absences continue, the Principal may contact outside agencies to intervene. Agencies could include the police department juvenile officer or the truant office at the Regional Office of Education.

A student who is absent with or without valid cause totaling 10% of the school year is considered "chronically absent" by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Late Arrival/Tardiness to School Applicable
Being prompt to school is important.

Gower West: If a student arrives late to school, a parent **must** accompany the child into the school and sign the child in at the main office.

Gower Middle: If a student arrives late to school, they are to check in at the main office and will receive a pass to class. Students are allowed three "free" tardies to school each trimester. After the third tardy, the student will be assigned a detention for any additional tardies that trimester. Parents of students with a pattern of tardiness will be notified and a truancy officer may investigate. Repeated tardiness is considered a disregard for school rules and consequences may be assigned.

Dismissal

In order to ensure that only authorized people pick-up students from school, parents or the designated person must go to the school office to get their child.

Parents may not pick up a child while the child is boarding or seated on a school bus. Office staff will contact the bus driver or supervisor and have the student return to the office.

Make-Up Work for Daily Absence(s) Applicable at Gower Middle

Upon return to school, a student will receive the work missed during an excused absence. The student will have the number of days equal to the days absent to complete the work, not to exceed seven calendar days. Teachers will assist whenever possible. Gower Middle students are encouraged to check PowerSchool and their teachers' Schoology page for current homework information. Any work given for the extended absence, must be completed and turned in on the day of the student's return or at the teacher's discretion. If a parent or guardian has any questions regarding make-up work, they are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher(s) directly.

BUILDING OR FIELD RENTAL (Policy 8:20)

Although educational programs and school-sponsored activities have priority, District 62 school buildings are for community use as well. Facilities use application may be obtained from the District's website. School-sponsored events may preempt groups that have scheduled school building use. Organizations that sponsor activities in school facilities outside of regular school hours should adhere to Board Policy 8:30 prohibiting the use of tobacco products or alcohol on school property. Failure to observe this policy may result in the loss of school-use privileges.

COMMUNICATION

Board of Education Policies

Board policies are posted on the District website. Revisions are posted after approval by the Board of Education.

Classroom Visits

Parents/guardians are invited to make an appointment with the Principal to visit a class in which their child is enrolled to better understand classroom dynamics and grade level curriculum. Parents/guardians are required to check in at the School Office. The Principal or a Certified Teacher may accompany a parent to provide information or answer questions.

Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents
Non-custodial parents need to call the office and complete a form in order to request that student and school information be sent to another address. If this is not communicated, the school office can only send it to the parent who registers the student.

Distribution of Brochures, Flyers, and Petitions
Brochures, flyers, or petitions by students, outside agencies, or parents must be approved by the Superintendent or delegate prior to District distribution, in accordance with Policy 8:25.

PowerSchool (Parent Portal)
The PowerSchool Parent Portal is an online communication tool that parents and students use to access information and monitor progress. PowerSchool is accessed via the school homepages.

Gower Middle grades for students in 5th through 8th grade may be accessed using PowerSchool. Fifth grade students will be using standards based grading for Science, Social Studies and specials classes. They will have traditional grades for English Language Arts and Mathematics. The grading scale used for English Language Arts and Mathematics will be consistent with the 6th, 7th and 8th grade courses. Grades are typically updated weekly beginning after the 3rd week of each trimester. The 6th, 7th and 8th grade grading scale that is used is: 93-100 (A), 82-92 (B), 71-81 (C), 60-70 (D) <60F. Gower West report cards may be accessed three times a year using PowerSchool. Parents and students are issued user accounts to access this information. For assistance with logging in or if personal Internet access is not available, please call the school office to request a printed copy.

Parent Concerns
If a problem or concern involving a student arises, a parent/guardian should first discuss the matter with the classroom teacher. If the problem is not resolved, the next person to contact at Gower Middle is Tracy Murphy, Principal (tmurphy@gower62.com) or Julie Schiffler, Gower Middle Assistant Principal (jschiffler@gower62.com) and at Gower West contact Meg Hoff, Principal (mhoff@gower62.com) or Natalie Harden, Gower West Assistant Principal (nharden@gower62.com). If a satisfactory solution is not reached, parents are encouraged to contact Jackelyn Cadard, Director of Special Education and Student Services (jcadard@gower62.com), Karen Hess, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Programs (khess@gower62.com) or Dr. Victor Simon Superintendent (vsimon@gower62.com) directly.

Note: The District utilizes an Employee Code of Professional Conduct. In accordance with Policy 5:120, all District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their job performance, demonstrate integrity and honesty, be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents/guardians, staff members, and others. For a full copy of the policy that includes more details on the professional and appropriate conduct expected, please contact the District Office or visit our website under the Policy tab.

Parent Calls/Messages
Parents who wish to communicate a message to their student during the school day should call the school office. Office staff will ensure the student receives the message before school is dismissed and will work with parents directly in the case of an urgent message. Students are expected to follow a **Bell to Bell No Cell** rule, which includes other wireless communication devices (e.g. smartwatches, personal tablets, and/or wearable devices). Students are not allowed to check for voicemail or text messages during the school day unless they are given permission by their teacher or school administrator.

Parent-Student Handbook Revisions
Parent/Student Handbook revisions may occur during the school year. Such revisions will be posted on the District website.

Language Interpreters
Gower values parent participation. If a language interpreter is needed to support parent participation in a meeting related to classroom learning, please contact the principal at least 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Parent/Teacher Conferences
Parents and teachers may meet up to twice a year to review student progress as needed. A parent/guardian may schedule additional conferences at any time by contacting his/her child's teacher. If a parent needs an accommodation due to a disability, please contact the school office.

Publications
District newsletters, flyers, and school information are sent home on a regular basis through email blasts. In addition, this information is posted to school (click on Virtual Backpack) and District web pages.

Automated Phone Calls
Gower District 62 uses Parent Link, a company that specializes in automated phone calls, to contact Gower families in a very short period of time with news of the utmost importance. We have used this service to inform families of school closings due to snow emergencies and to communicate quickly about events affecting student safety and other important school matters. In accordance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, participants must be given the opportunity to opt out or unsubscribe. If you would like to opt out or unsubscribe, please contact the District Office at (630) 286-4929.

In the past, when it was necessary to use the service, several parents reported that they did not receive the message. Parent Link, gave the following explanations:

- If you have a privacy manager on your phone, you will not receive the message.
- This system tries to call four times. If the line is busy all four times, you will not receive the message.
- Some of our families do not have voicemail or an answering machine to receive a message.
- If you have Caller ID, the number displayed will be (630) 986-5383, or the Caller ID will be unavailable, depending on your service.

We continue to monitor the Parent Link calling system. Should you experience any problems receiving a message, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Public Relations (Policy 8:10)
The Board affirms its commitment to inform its residents on an ongoing basis of the policies, programs, and planning of the District. The Board will implement this policy through its own efforts, those of the administration, and such information officers as may be appointed by the Board.

Community Relations (Policy 8:110)
The School Board is interested in receiving suggestions and concerns from members of the community. Any individual may make a suggestion or express a concern at any District or School Office. All suggestions and/or concerns will be referred to the appropriate level of staff member or District administrator who is most able to respond in a timely manner. Each concern or suggestion shall be considered on its merit.

eLearning Days
Gower utilizes eLearning Days in place of what would otherwise be used as Emergency School Closure Days or during times of Remote Learning when it is deemed unsafe to be at school, such as during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Parents will be notified of school being closed for severe weather/emergencies/pandemic through the website, community newsletter email, and automated phone calls.

On an eLearning Day, parents/students are notified of the eLearning assignments that need to be completed remotely by 8:30 am. Teachers are available for remote support from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm. Students can ask questions through email, phone, Google chats, or providing feedback on a Google Document. The eLearning assignments are due at 9:00 pm. If a student does not participate or complete the eLearning assignment, the student is considered absent and can make-up the work following the guidelines on page 8. If the student is unable to access the eLearning assignment due to being unable to access the internet and/or have limited or no access to the required technology, it is critical to notify the teacher or principal immediately as accommodations will be made accordingly. Additional information regarding eLearning Days can be found on the District website under the Parents-->e-Learning tab.

Phones Out of Service
Occasionally, the school and district phones might be out of service. When this occurs, parents may call the following emergency numbers or send an email to the school secretary as follows:
Gower Middle: jboye@gower62.com or 630-816-0948
Gower West: alohenis@gower62.com or 630-816-0949

Report Cards
Report cards are issued three times a year (at the end of each trimester) for students in grades K-8. Report cards will be available for parents through PowerSchool for students in grades K-8.

Solicitation of Staff (Policy 5:140)
Employees shall not be solicited for donations or sales without prior approval from the Superintendent. Approval may be limited to District, school, student council, grade-wide fundraisers, or school related groups.

Surveys
The District seeks parent and student input through surveys during the school year. The District in partnership with ISBE and the University of Chicago participates in the 5 Essentials Survey. Parents can opt out by contacting the school office at (630) 986-5383, Option 1 or 2.

Website (www.gower62.com)
The District website provides timely information about school and District activities, a listing of Board policies, financial information, residency and registration forms, and links to other school and District

resources. Lunch menus, school newsletters, and links to teacher webpages may be accessed through school homepages.

CONDUCT (Policy 7:190)

Capturing Kids' Hearts Process

Gower School District 62 utilizes the Capturing Kids' Process, which involves working with students on the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards in order to help students be successful in all settings. Teachers and students work together to create a "social or class contract" to define how students will treat each other and how the teacher will treat students and be treated. These become the classroom rules and behavioral expectations and students are responsible for following the contract throughout their day.

Examples of behaviors included in the class or social contract are:

- Listen and follow directions;
- Respect one another;
- Be kind; no put downs

There are several components to the Capturing Kids' Process, however the main focus is on a way of being: respectful, respected, building relationships, teacher greets students at the door or beginning of class, sharing "Good Things", making good decisions, self-managing behaviors, and a positive learning environment for all.

Through the Capturing Kids' Hearts process, teachers utilize four guiding questions when dealing with misbehavior and disrespect. The four questions for misbehavior are:

- What are you doing?
- What are you supposed to be doing?
- Are you doing it?
- What are you going to do about it?

The four questions for disrespect are:

- Who are you talking to?
- How are you supposed to talk to me?
- Are/Were you doing it?
- How are you going to talk to me?

If students do not respond to the four questions, they may choose to "behave out" of the classroom. At that time, the teacher or principal will use the appropriate consequence as outlined in the section on page 15.

Expectations for Appropriate Behavior

Student behavior should reflect what they have learned through the Capturing Kids' Hearts process. Gower students are expected to behave in a respectful and courteous manner at all times. We set high expectations for student conduct and anticipate that they will demonstrate these qualities.

The expectations for student behavior described below apply during the following times and in the following places:

- At all times while students are on school property
- At all times and in all places when students are traveling to and/or from school
- At all times and in all places when students are engaged in, participating in, or present at an activity or event, including all school related field trips, that is connected to school programs, clubs, sports teams, or school related functions; and
- At all times and in all places where inappropriate student conduct is substantially likely to disrupt the school programs or school related functions.

The staff and the administration reserve the right to determine whether student behavior is in violation of the established rules of conduct. The goal is to take corrective action that leads to improved behavior and remind students of the social or class contract.

Backpacks
Backpacks are for carrying books, supplies, and personal items to and from school. If students need to carry a bag from class to class, we encourage students to use a small bag such as a drawstring bag or small tote bag. Backpacks with wheels are not allowed. Please make sure your child's backpack can fit in their school locker. Our goal is for students to learn organizational skills and using their locker to house the majority of their items each day is a step in this direction.

Bikes, Skateboards, Rollerblades, and Scooters
Skateboards, rollerblades (including shoes with rollers), and scooters are not allowed in school at any time. Gower Middle students may ride bicycles to school. Bicycles should be locked at the bicycle racks located in the front of the school (near Door #13). Electric bicycles (e-bikes) and electric scooters (e-scooters) are restricted in the Village of Willowbrook (Village Ordinance 8-7-14 amended by Ordinance 25-O-09) and the Village of Burr Ridge (Municipal Code 35-11-1600, Ordinance A-668-01-25). These restrictions result in electric bicycles being operated by a person of at least 16 years of age and electric scooters being operated by a person of at least 18 years of age.

Bus Conduct (Policy 7:220)
Students are expected to follow all school rules, the Capturing Kids' Hearts process, and the following bus procedures:

- Follow the instructions of the bus driver.
- **Arrive 5 minutes before scheduled pick-up time** to the designated bus stop.
- Wait at the side of the road for the bus.
- Wait for the bus to stop completely before boarding.
- Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
- Stay in the assigned seat facing forward while on the bus.
- Use appropriate language and quiet voices.
- Keep objects out of the aisle.
- Immediately report any bus damage to the driver.
- Do not eat or drink while on the bus.
- Gower Acceptable Usage policy applies on the bus to personal (e.g. phone, smartwatch, etc.) and school owned devices.

Bus Consequences
Each school bus is equipped with a video camera to record student behavior. A Bus Incident Report is written if a student behaves inappropriately. The Principal or Assistant Principal investigates the bus

incident and a copy of the Incident Report is sent home. Consequences are assigned at the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal. Inappropriate behavior may result in a verbal or written warning, after-school or lunchtime detention(s), or a bus suspension of 1-10 days. A child on bus suspension is still expected to attend school. The seriousness of the offense will determine the action taken by the Principal or her designee. Serious misconduct, such as fighting, property damage, endangering others, or possession of controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco products or weapons, can lead to a school suspension, permanent removal from the bus, and/or expulsion. District regular suspension procedures apply to instances of misconduct on the school bus. Repeated bus suspensions may result in the loss of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Dress Code (Policy 7:160)
Student dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process; interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning environment, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, and decency. Examples of Dress Code Violations include:

- Clothing that allows undergarments to be seen
- Clothing, jewelry, or accessories that are considered to be gang-related or contain obscene or suggestive slogans, statements, or pictures (including references to television shows/movies or characters) that advertise or promote tobacco products, unlawful substances, alcohol, weapons, or overt violence
- Hats and other head coverings except those for religious or medical reasons.

Students who are determined to be in violation of the dress code will be asked to call a parent/guardian for a change of clothing, change into clothing supplied by the Health Office (Gower West), or wear his/her gym uniform (Gower Middle) for the remainder of the day.

Electronic Devices (Policy 6:235) - **Cell Phone and Smartwatch Use at Gower West & Gower Middle**
Gower School District believes the responsible use of electronic devices - particularly cell phones - is the goal. In short, Gower students are expected to follow the district's **Bell-to-Bell No Cell** guideline and refrain from using cell phones, smartwatches, and other personal wireless communication devices during the school day unless a Gower staff member has given them permission for use. Gower has used a *Silent and Out of Sight* approach to cell phones since 2014 with the introduction of our i3 Learning Initiative as an effort to minimize distractions and maximize learning, safety, and healthy social interactions in our schools.

The use of a personal computer, cell phone, smartwatch, video recording device, or PDA (personal digital assistant) device is allowed, but must follow the Gower District 62 Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks per Board Policy 6:235 and may not violate Student Conduct Rules in any way. Additionally, Senate Bill 2427 was signed into law by the Governor of Illinois on July 28, 2026 which prohibits the use of wireless communication devices during the school day (from arrival to dismissal). More details about prohibited student behaviors can be found in Board Policy 7:190; Student Behavior.

Our schools cannot provide safeguards for the loss or damage to personal electronic devices a student brings to school. If a student does bring a personal electronic device to school, it should be stored safely in their locker, or, at the discretion of their classroom teacher, may be kept in a designated storage area in the classroom.

Headphones or earbuds are not allowed unless being used with teacher permission. Use of the district's electronic network is a privilege, not a right. All use must be in support of education or for legitimate

school business purposes. Inappropriate use may result in a verbal or written warning, the assignment of an after school detention, or the student may lose the privilege of using an electronic device at school.

We recognize that parents must weigh all of the pros and cons before making the decision to allow their child to carry a cell phone (smartphone or otherwise) and/or a smartwatch for various reasons (communication, coordination, location tracking, data collection, etc.) at any grade level. We encourage parents to take an active role in deciding which apps, if any, your child has access to as many apps require the user to be at least 13 years of age. Gower has built and maintained an intentional culture around the appropriate and responsible use of technology, including personal devices. As a result, managing and enforcing the appropriate use of wireless communication devices during the school day has not proven to be a major issue for our staff at Gower West or Gower Middle School. Recent legislation in Illinois (Senate Bill 2427) will only further support our ongoing efforts.

At Gower Middle, the procedure of **Bell to Bell No Cell** is expected throughout the *entire* school day unless otherwise directed by a teacher/staff member. It is important to note that student cell phone usage is not allowed during passing periods or during lunch without teacher/staff member permission.

If students violate the cell phone procedure, the following consequences may occur:

- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning
- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning, parent/guardian contacted
- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning, parent/guardian contacted, phone "parked" in administrator's office for a period of time

At Gower West, the procedure of **Bell to Bell No Cell** is expected throughout the *entire* school day unless otherwise directed by a teacher/staff member. There are no passing periods at Gower West and student cell phone usage is not allowed during lunch or recess.

If students violate the cell phone procedure, the following consequences may occur:

- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning
- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning, parent/guardian contacted
- Phone turned into administration, verbal warning, parent/guardian contacted, phone "parked" in administrator's office for a period of time

Teachers and students will use devices as learning tools as part of the i3 Learning Initiative: Innovate, Integrate, Inspire. Students will have access to District 62 owned devices for use within the classroom and students/parents will be required to sign the *Authorization for Electronic Network Access Form* and District 62 Technology Lending Agreement in order for the devices to be used at home.

For additional information on the device handbooks, including regulatory and compliance information, please visit the Gower District web page under the Curriculum-i3 Learning tab. Teachers and administrators encourage students to follow these recommended practices for the use of mobile devices:

1. Turn off device when not in use.
2. Turn Wi-Fi on only when needed.

3. Always place the device on a solid surface when in use.
4. Viewing distance should be a minimum of 12 inches from the screen.

Digital Safety
The digital world offers incredible opportunities for learning and connection, but it also requires proactive boundaries to keep our students safe. We partner with parents to cultivate responsible digital citizens both in the classroom and at home. We strongly encourage families to establish clear guidelines regarding screen time, utilize reliable parental control software, and maintain open, non-judgmental conversations about online experiences. Remind your child never to share personal information, such as full names, passwords, or locations. Also remind your child to report any uncomfortable online interactions immediately (Tip62 is available on our website and app). By working together to monitor devices and teach ethical online behavior, we can ensure technology remains a secure and powerful tool for your child's growth.

We use GoGuardian to create a safe, focused, and productive digital learning environment for our students. This software helps our teachers manage classroom devices, minimize online distractions, and filter out inappropriate content during the school day. GoGuardian also acts as an essential safety net by alerting school administrators if a student searches for or views content related to self-harm, cyberbullying, or explicit material. Our goal is not to spy on students, but to proactively protect their well-being and help them build healthy digital habits. Information about parent access to GoGuardian through the GoGuardian Parent App will be provided at the beginning of each school year through school-based weekly newsletters. GoGuardian Parent is a free mobile app that lets families view student browsing activity and manage out-of-school internet controls on school-managed devices. Key features include browsing history visibility, out-of-school website filtering, and internet pausing capabilities

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Deepfake Content (Policy 6:235)
In accordance to Access to Electronic Networks policy and appropriate use of technology, students may not create, possess, share, post, transmit, or distribute digitally altered, AI-generated, or "deepfake" images, audio recordings, or videos that falsely depict another person, misrepresent events, invade privacy, cause disruption, constitute harassment or bullying, or otherwise violate school rules. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action, loss of technology privileges, notification of parents/guardians, involvement of law enforcement when appropriate, and any other consequences permitted under District policy.

Preventing Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment (Policy 7:180)
Bullying, harassment, and intimidation are behaviors that diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important District goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School District or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any nonschool-related activity, function or program.

Bullying includes *cyberbullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one of the following:

1. Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Students who believe they are victims of bullying, harassment, or intimidation or have witnessed bullying, harassment, or intimidation are encouraged to discuss the matter with the District Complaint Managers designated at each building as follows:
Mrs. Meg Hoff, Principal, Natalie Harden, Assistant Principal, Miss Emily Breslin or Ms. Juliana Gutierrez, Social Workers at Gower West
Mrs. Tracy Murphy, Principal, Ms. Julie Schiffler, Assistant Principal or Ms. Jenna Zimmerman, Social Worker at Gower Middle

In addition, parents or students may submit a concern via the Tip62 confidential link located on the District 62 webpage. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Any student who engages in this type of behavior is subject to the consequences section of this handbook.

Teen Dating Violence (Policy 7:185)
Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. Teen dating violence occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

The administration encourages anyone with information about incidences of teen dating violence to report them to any school staff member.

Inspection/Search of School Property and Equipment (Policy 7:140)
The administration may inspect and search places and areas such as lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by Gower District 62, as well as personal effects left in those places by students, without notice to or consent of the student or parent/guardians, and without a search warrant. The administration may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

Lunchroom Conduct
Students are expected to eat lunch in an orderly manner. Students should not bring in food items for multiple people. In addition, lunches that are delivered for a student cannot be shared with other students. Proper manners and behavior are expected at all times. Students who misbehave in the lunchroom may be denied the privilege of eating with classmates.

Personal Property
Toys, games, fidget spinners, locker decorations, cameras, card collections, and similar personal property should not be brought to school without prior approval. The school cannot provide safeguards for such items. Students should not keep valuables in lockers. Middle students should keep locker combinations confidential. No more than $20.00 should be brought to school.

CONSEQUENCES (Policy 7:190)

Inappropriate Conduct or Behavior
Gower School District uses a progressive discipline approach as needed. We put our resources into prevention. However, there are times when a student misbehaves or causes a disruption to the education environment. In such cases, students can expect consequences. There are a range of disciplinary consequences for student misbehavior. Inappropriate behaviors and the range of consequences for these behaviors are listed in the School Discipline Guide. Parents can request the School District Discipline Guide found in each of our school offices. For more information on the categories of misbehavior and the associated consequence, contact your school office.

No Corporal Punishment
Board Policy 7:190 does not allow school personnel to administer corporal punishment to students. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include, and certificated personnel are permitted to use, reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or the defense of property.

Use of Time-Out and Physical Restraint
Time-out and physical restraint shall be used only as behavioral interventions in school (that is, as a means of maintaining a safe and orderly environment for learning) and only to the extent that they are necessary to preserve the safety of students and others. Neither time-out nor physical restraint, as a form or punishment, shall be used in administering discipline to individual students.

Time-out and physical restraint are considered restrictive interventions and should only be used by trained staff members in emergency situations or when less restrictive interventions have been attempted and failed.

This Policy does not apply to the restriction of a student's movement when that restriction is for a purpose other than the maintenance of a safe and orderly environment, such as the appropriate use of a safety belt in motor vehicles.

If a student needs to be physically restrained for the safety of others or him/herself:

School administrators or student services team members must make a reasonable attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian on the same day the event occurred. Within one business day after an incident of physical restraint, the school district or other entity serving the student shall send the required ISBE Form to the student's parent/guardian.

A student's parent/guardian must be notified as soon as possible but no later than two school days after the event of the right to request a meeting to discuss the incident. If a parent/guardian requests a meeting, it must be held within two school days of the request. This meeting timeline may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian may request that the meeting be convened via telephone or video conference. The meeting must be separate and apart from a student's IEP meeting or a Section 504 meeting.

The meeting must provide an opportunity to discuss the following: (i) The events that occurred prior to the incident and any actions that were taken leading up to the incident; (ii) The incident itself (iii) The events that occurred or the actions that were taken following the incident including whether the student returned to regular school activities, and if not, how the student spent the remainder of the school day.

Gower has a District Restraint Time Out (RTO) Oversight Team that reviews local plans and protocols on a regular basis. If you have specific questions or would like to review the plan, please reach out to Director of Special Education, Jackelyn Cadard at jcadard@gower62.com.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

The curriculum is approved by the Board of Education and implemented by the instructional staff.

Standardized Tests: NWEA MAP, CogAT, IAR, ISA
The standardized tests listed below are given at various times throughout the school year as measurements of student achievement and the effectiveness of our programs and curriculum. The results of the assessments are shared with parents.

NWEA MAP Measure of Academic Progress is given in grades 1-8 in the fall, winter, and spring. K in spring only.
Assesses: Reading and Math Achievement

CogAT **Cognitive Abilities Test** is given in grades 2, 3, and 4 (spring)
Assesses: School Aptitude

IAR **Illinois Assessment of Readiness** is given in grades 3-8 in April/May
Assesses: English Language Arts and Math

ISA **Illinois Science Assessment** is given in grades 5 and 8 in April
Assesses: Next Generation Science Standards

FastBridge
Gower utilizes FastBridge as a universal screener and benchmarking tool to monitor student progress and used to help determine if an intervention needs to be put into place. FastBridge Math and Reading screeners are administered in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. FastBridge SAEBRS is utilized in the Fall, Winter and Spring to screen for social emotional concerns.

Textbooks
Gower currently uses the following textbooks and materials for curriculum implementation. A list of Board adopted textbooks and the adoption date appears below.

Family & Consumer Science (6-8)	Adventures in Food & Nutrition, Goodheart-Willcox (2022)
Health (5-8)	Teen Health, Glencoe/McGraw-Hill and District 62 Curriculum Guide
STEM (6-8)	District 62 Curriculum Guide
Mathematics (K-4)	Illustrative Mathematics, Imagine Learning (2022)
Mathematics (5-8)	Big Ideas Math & You, Cengage Learning (2025)
Music (K-8)	Quaver Music (2024)
Reading/Language Arts (K-4)	Benchmark Advance, Benchmark Education (2021)
Reading/Language Arts (5)	Into Reading, Houghton Mifflin (2021)
Reading/Language Arts (6-8)	Study Sync, McGraw-Hill (2021)
Science (K-4)	Mystery Science (2023)
Science (5-8)	Inspire Science, McGraw-Hill (2020)
Social Studies (K-4)	District Curriculum Guide, Benchmark Advance books, Time for Kids, Scholastic News (2025)
Social Studies (5)	Teacher's Curriculum Institute (2019)
Social Studies (6-8)	Voices and Perspectives, McGraw Hill (2024)
Spanish (6-8)	Realidades, Pearson (2014)
World Language Electives (6-8)	Imagine Learning (2024)

Textbooks, as well as other school issued materials, are given to students for use during the school year. If textbooks/materials are lost or damaged, the parent/guardian is responsible for replacement cost.

Curriculum Materials (Policy 6:60)
Parents/guardians have the right to review the instructional materials and textbooks used by the classroom teacher and students. Parents/guardians wishing to review materials should contact their child's teacher. In compliance with the state law, students will be provided instruction in recognizing and avoiding sexual abuse and suicide prevention. This is taught within the elementary and middle school health curriculum. Parents will be notified in writing 5 days before this instruction to provide parents an opportunity to object to their child's participation.

Curriculum Complaints (6:260)
Individuals with suggestions or complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, and programs should complete a curriculum objection form and/or use the Uniform Grievance Procedure. A parent/guardian may request that his/her child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a curriculum objection form which can be obtained by contacting the District Office Secretary at 630-986-5383.

Homework (Policy 6:290)
Homework is a necessary part of the District instructional program. Homework is assigned to further student educational development and is an application or adaptation of a classroom experience. The District expects that students consider homework a priority. At Gower Middle, if homework is not completed, the student may be assigned to 10th Hour for up to three days to complete and hand in the assigned work. Failure to turn in assigned work within three days will result in loss of credit for the incomplete assignment(s).

Homework that extends individual learning is most beneficial. As an example, students are encouraged to read for pleasure, extend project requirements, and hone research skills.

The following guidelines for homework are general guidelines that have been established to include short and long term assignments.

Grades K-2:	10 – 30 minutes per day
Grades 3-4:	30 – 45 minutes per day
Grades 5-6:	45 – 60 minutes per day
Grades 7-8:	60 – 90 minutes per day

Homework may not be formally evaluated; however it is an important part of ongoing student assessment.

10th Hour (Gower Middle School)
Gower staff believes it is essential that all students take responsibility for completing daily assigned work. Failure to complete assignments results in a lack of conceptual understanding and leads to lower grades. If a student does not understand the homework, he/she is expected to ask for clarification during class. Assigning a zero for incomplete work does not assure that students learn important content. In order to assure that students have every opportunity to maximize their learning, 10th Hour is designed to assure that all assignments are completed by students in grades 5-8. 10th Hour is designed for homework completion and is not a tutoring session. Parents are notified when their child is assigned to 10th Hour and are asked to confirm with the school office by 3:00 p.m. If the office has not received return communication, the student will not be required to stay for 10th Hour. Late bus service is available at Gower Middle on Mondays-Thursdays. Students are expected to attend 10th Hour on the assigned day. If a student does not report to 10th Hour, the parent/guardian will be contacted.

Instruction
The regular classroom teacher may provide modifications or accommodations of the regular curriculum based upon the individual needs of the student. These include but are not limited to:

- Reduce the number of problems on a page

- Use a highlight marker to identify key words, phrases, or sentences for the student to read
- Provide manipulative objects for the student to use in solving math problems
- Use graph paper for math problems, handwriting, etc.
- Have peers deliver directions or explanations
- Allow more time to take tests or quizzes

Curriculum modifications that are required by students to meet their individual needs will be determined by each student's IEP or Section 504.

Promotion (Policy 6:280)

Student promotion shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance based assessments and other forms of evaluation. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

Field Trips (Policy 6:240)

Field trips are permissible when the experiences are an integral part of the school curriculum and/or contribute to the District's educational objectives. All field trips must have the Superintendent or designee's prior approval, except that field trips beyond a 200-mile radius of the school or extending overnight must have the prior approval of the School Board. The Superintendent or designee shall analyze the following factors to determine whether to approve a field trip: educational value, student safety, parent concerns, heightened security alerts, and liability concerns. To be deemed "an integral part of the school curriculum and/or contribute to the District's educational objectives", a minimum of 80% participation of qualified/invited students is expected. This is particularly important for grade-level trips designed to contribute to the social-emotional learning objectives of the district.

It is important to note that the expectations of appropriate student behavior apply during all field trips, as well as travel to and from field trips. This includes the appropriate use of cell phones and cellular technology (i.e. smartwatches and other devices connected to the Internet) as described on page 13 of this handbook, Electronic Devices. While we offer several types of field trips, all field trips must be in complete compliance with policy 6:240. Teachers will provide parents with information regarding supervision prior to a field trip. In the event a parent is selected to act as a chaperone, they will be provided with a set of guidelines and expectations to ensure focus on the students assigned to their group. Parents/guardians of students shall be given the opportunity to consent to their child's participation in any field trip and all non-participating students shall be provided an alternative experience. Any field trip may be canceled without notice due to an unforeseen event or condition. Parents may be asked to cover or help defray the costs for field trips. Participating students must have a Gower District 62 field trip form signed by the parent/guardian prior to departure. No modifications to waivers or hand written notes will be accepted. The school nurse provides a first aid kit and any school-administered medications for students.

If a student is required to bring lunch on a field trip, students/parents should not order lunch via Door Dash, Uber Eats, etc. Food/drinks should not be provided for more than just your student on the day of any field trip. A sack lunch should arrive with the student on the day of the trip and it should be transported with the student.

Privately arranged trips, including those led by District staff members, shall not be represented as or construed to be sponsored by the District or school. The District does not provide liability protection for privately arranged trips and is not responsible for any damages arising from them.

Curriculum-Based Field Trips
These trips are designed to provide supplemental instruction to support the Illinois Learning Standards and Common Core State Standards and are an important part of the student learning experience. In the event a parent does not approve participation, an alternative instructional activity is provided.

Extracurricular Activity Field Trips
These trips are generally participatory or competitive events for students in after school activities such as athletic teams, student council, etc.

FEES AND WAIVER OF FEES

Annually, the Board of Education establishes required student fees for textbook rental, workbooks, and special materials. Fees for the 2025-2026 are as follows:

Gower West Fees

Grades K-4	$200.00 per student
P.T.O. Celebrations	$12.00 per student
P.T.O. Dues	$20.00 per family
Transportation (bus riders only)	$200.00 per student

Gower Middle Fees

Grade 5 – 8	$200.00
Sports Participation Fee - for participants only	$50.00 (team members only, payable after team tryouts)
Transportation (bus riders only)	$200.00 per student
Combination lock for hallway locker	$8.00 (should be used all four years)
P.E. Uniform and Lock (Grades 6-8)	Shorts $10.00, Shirt $7.00, Lock $8.00
Cap, gown, tassel (Grade 8)	$30.00 (collected in January of the graduation year)
Yearbook (optional)	$25.00
Band (band students only)	$40.00
P.T.O. Class Celebration	$12.00 per student
P.T.O. Dues	$20.00 per family

Waiver of Fees (Policy 4:130)
Children from families whose gross income is at or below prescribed state or federal levels are eligible for free milk, meals, and fees.

Parents/guardians may apply at any time during the year. Application forms are available at the school or District office. Once reviewed, the school office will notify parents as to eligibility. If parents/guardians do not agree with the eligibility decision, they may request a hearing by calling the District Office, 630-986-5383 or writing to the Superintendent: 7700 Clarendon Hills Road, Willowbrook, IL 60527.

HEALTH

Registered Nurse
Each school has a Registered Nurse assigned during the school day throughout the school year. Mrs. Sandy Anderson can be reached at Gower West, 630-286-4935 and Mrs. Sophia Haile (Certified School Nurse) can be reached at Gower Middle School, 630-286-4934.

Immunizations/Physicals/Dental Exam

Illinois law requires that all school children be immunized **before entering school**. It is also required that all students have a complete physical examination (the Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination form signed by a doctor) when they enter kindergarten and sixth grade. Students new to the District must provide evidence of a physical exam and immunization record regardless of their grade level. All immunizations must be up to date and documented. Students entering during the year shall have 45 days to comply with health examination and immunization requirements. Students not in compliance with the state requirement will not be permitted to attend school. Parents who object on religious or medical grounds should contact the school nurse.

Students entering Kindergarten and students entering an Illinois school for the first time are required by Illinois School Code to provide proof of an Eye Exam administered by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Proof must be submitted to the school **no later than October 15 of the year** the child is first enrolled.

Illinois law requires that Kindergarten, second (2nd), and sixth (6th) grade students have a dental exam. Parents/guardians of children in these grades must submit proof of their child's dental exam to the school **no later than May 15th of each school year.**

Except with prior written notice to a parent/guardian, no school official or staff member shall subject a student to a non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as a condition of school attendance.

Allergies/Food Management Allergy Program

Food-contact and environmental allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure can be reduced in the school setting when parents, physicians, and the school work together to provide a safe environment for students with allergies. Please notify the Health Office if your child needs accommodations. Both an Allergy History Form and School Medication Authorization form will be completed, and an Allergy Action Plan will be developed and shared with appropriate school personnel.

Asthma

The parent of a student with a diagnosis of asthma should contact the school nurse, Mrs. Sandy Anderson at Gower West or Mrs. Sophia Haile at Gower Middle to complete a medication authorization, asthma action plan and asthma care plan.

Concussion

A concussion is a brain injury that is caused by a bump or blow to the head. It can occur even if a student does not lose consciousness, and can be serious even if a student has just been "dinged". Any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion will be immediately removed from class and may not return until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. The student should be evaluated by a health-care professional the same day and a written statement from a healthcare professional must be submitted to the School Health Office indicating when it is safe for the student to return to school and physical activity. For a list of specific symptoms or further information, please visit: https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/index.html

The Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act requires all Illinois schools to implement "return to learn" and "return to play" protocols for students who have been diagnosed with a concussion. All students

are required to have a signed parent concussion acknowledgement form in the Health Office at Gower Middle or Gower West. All coaches and physical education teachers are required to participate in concussion training to become better educated on the signs and symptoms of a concussion and to protect the health and well-being of all students. The Gower 62 Concussion Oversight Team developed the Return to Learn and Return to Play protocols. The Concussion Information Form and the Return to Play/Learn Protocols are located on the Gower District web page under Parent Info-Health/Medical tab. Questions regarding concussion information or the District protocols should be directed to Mrs. Sophia Haile (School Nurse at GM) or Mrs. Sandy Anderson (School Nurse at GW).

Cumulative Health Records

The school nurse at each building keeps a cumulative health record for each student and shares the responsibility for keeping it up-to-date with parents. Should a student transfer, the health record is forwarded to the new school.

Fitnessgram Data

The Illinois State Board of Education requires student fitness data to be collected and submitted in 5th and 7th grade annually. The areas of fitness include: aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, body composition. In all physical education classes in grades K-8, students are assessed in these areas and parents/students can monitor progress through the Fitnessgram web-based program. Each October, parents and students will receive information regarding Fitnessgram from their physical education teacher.

First Aid

When a student suffers a minor accident or illness at school, first aid may be administered. The name, date, and cause will be recorded. Should a serious accident or illness occur that warrants emergency treatment, 911 will be called and parents notified.

Opioid Antagonist

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) allows the administration of undesignated opioid antagonists (Narcan or Naloxone) to any person suspected of or appearing to be experiencing an overdose of an opioid. If a student requires the administration of an opioid antagonist, the parent will be notified immediately and the school is required to send a report to ISBE within 3 calendar days.

Defibrillator

Each school is equipped with two automated external defibrillators (AED) located near the gym and the office for use in a cardiac emergency. When the AED is used, 911 will be called immediately.

Diabetes Care Plan

The parent of a student with diabetes should contact the school nurse, Mrs. Sandy Anderson at Gower West and Mrs. Sophia Haile at Gower Middle, to establish a school diabetes care plan.

Health Concerns Impacting Learning-504 Plans

If a student's health concern is negatively impacting his/her ability to learn, it may be necessary for the school's Student Services Team to meet with the parent and determine if a 504 Plan should be developed in order to provide additional strategies to support the student within the classroom. Please contact the school nurse if you believe your child has a significant health concern that potentially requires a 504 Plan.

Hearing/Vision Tests
Mandated hearing screening will be done for students in grades K-3, students new to the District, students referred for a special education evaluation, and by teacher referrals.

Mandated vision screening will be done for students in Kindergarten, 2nd and 8th grade, for students new to the District, for special education student referrals, and for students referred by a teacher. If an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and the evaluation is on file at the school, your child is not required to undergo this vision screening. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye examination or a vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have a complete eye exam for their child(ren) by an ophthalmologist or an optometrist.

On-Site Testing
Gower School District maintains a certified, on-site screening/testing program in accordance with the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA; Certificate of Waiver). Our Registered Nurses are trained and fully equipped to carry out on-site tests to help identify and prevent the spread of communicable diseases. On-site tests include: Flu A and B, Strep, RSV, COVID-19, and COVID-19 + Flu A/B and can be requested at any time with an Annual Consent Form and Waiver on file. For further inquiries, or to complete an Annual Consent Form and Waiver for the school year, please contact your school nurse directly.

Medication in School (Policy 7:270)
If your child requires prescribed or over-the-counter medication (including cough drops) during the school day, your doctor must complete the Gower School District 62 Medication Authorization Form and leave the medication with the school nurse. Prescription medication must be in an original pharmacy or physician labeled container with the student's name; the prescription number and date, the medication name and directions for the use; the name of the prescribing physician; the pharmacy name address, and phone number; and the name or initials of the pharmacist. Parents should note the expiration date on the medication, provide refill as ordered by the doctor, and bring new medication to the health office. Non-prescription medication must be in the original unopened container and labeled with the student's name and directions for use. Forms must be submitted each year or whenever there is a change in dosage or frequency of administration. In order for students to carry emergency medications, such as an inhaler for asthma or an EpiPen for severe allergies, they must have a signed and completed Parent/Guardian Authorization for Self-Administration form on file in the health office. Otherwise, medication will be dispensed by the school nurse or a specified staff member.

Reporting Communicable Diseases (Policy 7:280)
Parents should contact the School Health office within 24 hours to report any communicable disease during the school year whether on a school day, weekend, or during vacation. This includes, but is not limited to: Covid-19, chicken pox, Fifth's disease, flu, head lice, impetigo, measles, mumps, pink eye, ringworm, and strep throat.

Smoke Free/Drug Free Schools (Policy 5:50)
The use of tobacco is prohibited on District property. All schools are designated as drug free zones. To educate students regarding the dangers of drugs and alcohol, Gower incorporates a drug and alcohol prevention program into its curriculum through Candor Health Education.

INTERNET (Policy 6:235)

The District has a network of computers that are connected to the Internet for educational purposes. Students have supervised access on the Internet and the ability to communicate by email. Parents are encouraged to review the terms of the Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks Policy 6:235 which is located on the District website. Each year, Internet access is only granted to students whose parents/guardians have signed the *Authorization for Electronic Network Access Use Form*. Failure to meet the expectations established in this policy may result in the loss of computer access, privileges, and other disciplinary consequences, up to and including expulsion from school. Students are not allowed to access any Internet site for personal use. (Please review Discipline Category 2)

The District maintains a wireless network. The equipment utilized meets all regulatory compliance requirements as outlined by the FCC. For additional information, please see the Gower District web page under the Curriculum-i3 tab.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

District Committees

Parent representatives bring an important perspective to District work. Requests for parent representatives are placed in school emails and district newsletters.

School Leadership Teams (SLT)

Each school has a School Leadership Team. The SLT has primary responsibility for school improvement planning, monitoring progress towards goals, and data analysis. Parents may be asked to participate as needed by the Principal.

Student Discipline and Parent/Student Handbook Committee

The committee includes the Assistant Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, and teacher representatives from each school, parents, and local community members. The primary responsibility of this committee is to annually review all District disciplinary rules and consequences to assure alignment with Policy 7:190. This committee also reviews the Parent/Student Handbook to suggest revisions.

Gower Foundation

The Gower Foundation for Excellence in Education was established to enhance the educational programs offered in our schools. By attracting private funds and resources, the Foundation supports educational programs and opportunities not funded with tax dollars. For further information please visit the Foundation website (www.gower62foundation.com)

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

PTO programs and fundraising activities support many District 62 projects. Gower invites and encourages parents to become members. For further information please visit the PTO website (www.gowerpto.com).

Volunteer Program (Policy 6:250)

The District Volunteer Program brings parent and community volunteers to the schools to enrich and supplement the educational program. A person defined by the *Sex offender Registration Act* or the *Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act* or anyone who has otherwise

been convicted of a felony, is prohibited from being a resource person or volunteer. Background checks are required for volunteers that are supervising students on overnight trips. Volunteers are required to sign in/register in the School Office and wear a volunteer badge at all times while in the building.

PICTURES

Pictures of students are taken each year to keep school records current. Parents may purchase the photos for a nominal price. Student photographs may appear in publications, such as newsletters, school newspapers, yearbooks, and communications to parents or guardians, professional journals, textbooks, newspapers, videos, brochures, streaming video (assemblies, etc.), or the district website. If a parent chooses not to have a child's photograph used as listed above, it should be marked on the student registration form.

POLICIES

Policies of the District 62 Board of Education protect the rights of all students, in compliance with state and federal laws. The policies are posted on the District website and are available for inspection in the District and school offices. No statement within this handbook is intended to supersede Board policy.

Compliance Statement

Gower complies with all applicable federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with legal and applicable requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the policy of District 62 that no person - on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry, age, sex, marital status, or disability - should be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied benefits of or otherwise be subjected to unlawful discrimination in any program or activity which receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. The District's Compliance Officer, Jackelyn Cadard, can be contacted by calling (630) 986-5383.

Equal Educational Opportunities (Policy 7:10)

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religious beliefs, physical, and mental handicap or disability, sexual orientation, homeless status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. Any student may file a discrimination grievance or sex equity complaint by using the Uniform Grievance procedure. The District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Jackelyn Cadard, can be contacted by calling (630) 986-5383.

Sexual Harassment/Sex Equity (Policy 7:10)

The Board of Education has adopted policies concerning sexual harassment and sex equity. Copies of these policies are on file in each school and at the District Office. Any students or parents who allege sex discrimination or sexual harassment may file a complaint with the Superintendent or designee in accordance with the Universal Grievance Procedure, Policy 2:260. A description of the procedures and a copy of this policy may be obtained at the District Office, 7700 Clarendon Hills Road, Willowbrook. Designated Complaint Managers are Jackelyn Cadard and Julie Schiffler.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Accelerated Track (AT)

Programs for high ability learners are available to students in grades 3-8 through the Accelerated Track (AT) Program. Students in grades 3-8 are formally identified and served by a pullout program in:

- Grades 3-4 English Language Arts and/or Mathematics
- Grades 5-8 English Language Arts and/or Mathematics

Eligibility for the AT Program in grades 3-8 is determined using: the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), writing prompts for English Language Arts and math extended response or performance tasks. The rubrics used to determine eligibility for AT English Language Arts and AT Math are posted on the District website. Once a student qualifies for the AT Program, he/she remains in the program through 8th grade, unless academic performance suggests that continued placement is inappropriate. In fairness to all students, the District does not utilize outside testing results as part of its process for qualifying students for the program.

Students new to Gower must meet the qualifying criteria for the AT Program. Students enrolled prior to December 1 will be evaluated for placement during the current school year. After December 1, new students who qualify for the AT Program enter in the fall of the next school year.

AT Qualifying Rubric: Reading/Language Arts and Literature

Eligibility for the AT English Language Arts program is based on student performance on the CogAT Verbal Reasoning test, MAP RIT scores in Reading, and a classroom writing prompt. Points are awarded based upon student test performance. A score of 10, using any combination of points, is required to qualify for AT.

AT Qualifying Rubric: Mathematics

Eligibility for the AT Math program is based on student performance on the CogAT Quantitative test, the MAP RIT score in math, and a classroom extended response/performance task. A score of 10, using any combination of points, is required to qualify for AT.

The AT Math program accelerates students one year. Students will complete Geometry in 8th grade. High achieving math students who do not qualify for AT Math may qualify for Advanced Math beginning in 5th grade. This program accelerates students, resulting in completion of Algebra I in 8th grade.

AT Eligibility Appeal Process

Gower believes that AT services are important to the intellectual and emotional development of qualified students. A parent, teacher, or student may appeal an eligibility decision by contacting Karen Hess, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Programs at 630-986-5383 to initiate an appeal.

Accelerated Placement Program (Policy 6:135)

The District provides an Accelerated Placement Program (APP), which advances the District's goal of providing educational programs with opportunities for each student to develop his or her maximum potential. APP options include, but are not limited to a) accelerating a student in a single subject, b) other grade level acceleration; and c) early entrance to kindergarten or first grade. This program involves a fair and equitable decision-making process, a parent notification process, and assessment processes that include multiple valid, reliable indicators.

Burr Ridge Park District After School Care

After school care is available at Gower West for students in grades Kindergarten-5th until 6:00 pm. The District provides after school bus service to Gower West for 5th grade Gower Middle students. Parents

pay a reasonable fee for this service. Information may be obtained by contacting the Burr Ridge Park District (630-920-1969).

Remote Educational Program (Policy 6:185)
The remote educational program shall provide an opportunity for qualifying students to participate in an educational program delivered by the District in a location outside of a school. There may be times when a student needs to be absent for a short or long term due to an illness, hospitalization or other extenuating circumstances. A parent may request consideration of a remote educational program by contacting their school principal and completing the required form.

Homebound or Hospital Instruction (Policy 6:150)
Students who will be absent from school for 10 or more consecutive days or have ongoing intermittent absences due to a medical condition, may be eligible for home, hospital, or remote instruction. The student's parent or guardian must submit to the District a physician's written statement specifying, 1) the student's medical condition; 2) the impact of the condition on the student's ability to participate in education (the child's physical and mental level of tolerance for receiving educational services); and 3) the anticipated duration of the student's absence from school. Please contact Director of Special Education, Jackelyn Cadard at jcadard@gower62.com or 630-986-5383 (Option 3) for more information.

Interpreter Services
Interpretation services are available at IEP meetings for parents whose preferred language is other than English, or who are deaf, to assist with participation in the meeting. If you would like an interpreter at your child's IEP meeting, please request an interpreter by completing a Request for Interpreter Form, found on the District website under Interpreter Services or by contacting Karen Hess at khess@gower62.com. You have the right to request that the interpreter serve no other role in the IEP meeting other than as an interpreter and the District will make reasonable efforts to fulfill this request.

Lunch Program
Gower School District operates its own Food Service Program. We proudly serve a variety of food items to meet the needs of hundreds of children each day with a focus on student health and wellness as well as student voice and choice when selecting menu items. All students eat lunch at school, with the exception of Early Childhood. Students may bring a lunch from home or buy a hot lunch at school. Milk may be purchased on a daily basis. Food and drink items must remain in the lunchroom unless a staff member gives permission. Information about costs and menus are posted on the School website. We are open to your suggestions related to lunch menu items and encourage you to contact your school office directly, or contact our District Kitchen Supervisor, Tracy Jannenga at tjannenga@gower62.com.

Gower provides free or reduced price lunches in accordance with state and federal laws. Eligibility regulations are available in the school and District offices. Please contact the school office with any questions.

Mealtime Lunch Program – How to Deposit Money Electronically
Step 1: Go to www.mymealtime.com and click on the "Create a new profile" link and enter a username and password that you will use to login. The username and password must each be at least 6 characters. Type in the other required information. You may also set up a reminder to receive an email notification when your student's balance is low. Be sure to click "Create a Profile" at the bottom of the screen when you are done.

Step 2: Add your student. Login to your new account using the username and password that you just created. Click on "Meal Account Deposits", then click "Add New Student" to link your student to your account. Select the correct state, school district, and school and use your child's first name and unique 7-digit Student Gower ID number. Repeat this process for multiple students. Contact your school office or the District Office with any questions. District: 630-986-5383; GW: Opt. 1; GM: Opt. 2.

Step 3: Make a deposit. Click on the "Make Deposit" link next to your student's name, to make a deposit into their lunch account. There is a small convenience fee for making deposits. The fee will be clearly displayed before you complete your transaction. If you have multiple students linked to your account, you can deposit separate amounts into each of their accounts into one transaction. Deposits are reflected in the student's lunch account after a brief, periodic synchronization. You can also click on the "View Details" link to view their account balance and purchase history. You can always use checks or cash to make a deposit at either school office or directly at any of our cashier stations for no extra charge.

Early Childhood Screening

Educational screenings are provided in the fall, winter, and spring of each school year for three, four, and five year old children residing in the Gower school community. The early childhood screenings are used to identify children who may have special needs or who have met certain at-risk criteria prior to entering school. Screening dates are publicized on the District website and PTO calendar. Please contact Abbi Lohenis at 630-986-5383, Opt.1 for additional information.

Social Work and Counseling

Social Workers and a School Counselor assist students who have difficulty meeting social, emotional, academic, and/or behavioral expectations that impact their learning and/or the school environment. District Social Workers are Emily Breslin and Juliana Gutierrez, Gower West and Jenna Zimmerman, Gower Middle. School Counselors are Kelsey Ward and Hannah Rakofsky at Gower Middle.

PUNS (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services)

The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) maintains a statewide database called PUNS (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who may need services now or in the future. Enrollment in PUNS is the first step toward accessing Illinois developmental disability services and supports, including residential, day program, employment, and in-home support services. Families are encouraged to register as early as possible, as services may be accessed based on need and available funding.

Gower School District 62 PUNS representatives are available to assist families with information regarding the PUNS database and referral process:

- **Gower West Elementary School:** Ms. Emily Breslin and Ms. Juliana Gutierrez
- **Gower Middle School:** Ms. Jenna Zimmerman
- **District Office:** Dr. Jackelyn Cadard

Families may contact their school representative for additional information and support regarding PUNS enrollment.

ABLE Account

An ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) Account is a tax-advantaged savings and investment account designed for eligible individuals with disabilities. ABLE accounts allow individuals and

families to save money for qualified disability-related expenses, such as education, housing, transportation, healthcare, assistive technology, and other supports, without affecting eligibility for certain public benefits. Families interested in learning more about ABLE Accounts can visit the Illinois ABLE Program website for eligibility requirements and enrollment information.

Special Education (Policy 6:120)
Gower provides special education services and related services to students from three to fourteen and a half years of age to meet the varying needs of students with disabilities. The Special Education Department has the resources of our local District and school administrators, school psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, social workers, resource teachers, nurse, speech pathologists, and aides to provide services to students who are identified as eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In addition, as a member of the LaGrange Area Department of Special Education (LADSE), Gower has access to programs and specialists on an as-needed basis. Most special education students attend classes within the District. All eligible students are entitled to special education and related services through the age of 21, inclusive (i.e. through the day before the student's 22nd birthday). Gower School District also adheres to the *Special Education Procedures Assuring the Implementation of Comprehensive Programming for Children with Disabilities*, ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements while providing eligible students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and access to comprehensive, individualized educational programs, services, and supports designed to meet their unique needs. Dr. Jackelyn Cadard, the Director of Special Education can be reached at jcadard@gower62.com for additional information or contact the District Office at 630-986-5383.

Title I Services
Classroom teachers may refer students who experience difficulty with reading and/or math for additional evaluation and possible interventions. Students qualifying for additional services work with a reading or math specialist or a Reading or Math Instructional Interventionist on a regular basis. Progress reports are sent home and parents may request a conference with the District Reading Specialist, Math Specialist, or Math Interventionist. Title I Federal funds are used to support this program. Parents of Title I students will be notified of services and invited to attend a parent presentation.

Speech and Language Development
Students who have speech and/or language difficulties that interfere with their learning may be referred to the District's speech therapists for evaluation and training. Progress reports are sent to parents/guardians and parents/guardians are invited to visit speech correction sessions to familiarize themselves with the goals set for their child.

Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) (Policy 6:160)
This program assists students with limited English proficiency. TPI is offered by the District, as needed.

Tutoring (Policy 5:204)
Parents/guardians who wish to arrange for private tutoring may use District 62 staff members provided the staff member is not the student's current teacher. In addition, staff members may not tutor the student the summer before the year he/she is the student's classroom teacher. Tutoring schedules and fees are determined by the tutor and the parents. It should be understood that the decision to hire a

tutor is a parent's alone, and the District does not sponsor, endorse, or supervise the tutor nor is the tutor to be considered an employee of the District.

Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind or Visually Impaired
Students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired should be aware of the Illinois School for the Deaf (217-479-4200) or the Illinois School for the Visually Impaired (800-919-5617). Please call these facilities directly for further information.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Residency (Policy 7:40, Policy 7:60)
Only students who are residents of District 62 may attend Gower schools without tuition charge, except as otherwise provided for by Illinois law. The student's birth certificate is required to enroll in the District. If it is determined that a student already enrolled is not a resident of the District, the student may be dis-enrolled and tuition charged for the period of non-residency. The District may investigate to determine the residency of any student before or after enrollment in accordance with Illinois law and may require the furnishing of additional information to be considered by the District in determining residency. Illinois law makes it a crime, punishable by imprisonment and fine, to knowingly or willfully present false information regarding the student residency for the purpose of enrollment. For further information about Gower residency requirements, please contact the District Office at 630-986-5383.

Continuing Student Residency Verification Requirements
The District requires all continuing students to update residency information in Kindergarten and 5th grade. In addition, 10% of the students' parents from our remaining grade levels will be randomly selected for residency verification and will be notified by the District Office to initiate the process. One item from each of the following groups is required:

Group 1: One item from the list below and dated for the most recent billing or statement date.
*Note: some items, payment may be on the second page.

- Most recent active mortgage statement (no coupon book)
- Most current and active signed lease (if rental)
- Most recent real estate tax bill received
- Title, deed, or closing statement showing home ownership
- Affidavit of Student Residency (Students living with friends or relatives must complete an Affidavit of Student Residency (contact District Office).

Group 2: Two items from the list below. No exceptions.

- Current voter or vehicle registration card
- Current automobile or home/rental insurance card/policy
- Current telephone bill (landline only) or cable/internet bill
- Current utility bill for gas, electric, and/or water
- Current credit card or bank statement

Students in Temporary Living Situations
The educational rights of homeless students (Policy 7:60) are protected by the *Illinois Education for Homeless Children Act* and the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act*, a provision within the *No*

Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Emily Breslin (ebreslin@gower62.com or 630-286-4843) serves as the District Homeless Coordinator.

Students of a Military Family
If a pupil's change of residence is due to the military service obligation (Policy 7:60) of the person with legal custody of a student, he/she may, with a written request from the legal custodian, maintain his/her residency as determined prior to the military obligation.

SAFETY

Gower schools are safe places for students. While it is impossible to predict every emergency that might occur, it is important to be prepared. We work closely with the Burr Ridge and Willowbrook Police Departments, DuPage County Sheriff, and Tri-State Fire Protection District to keep our schools safe.

Building Security
All exterior doors are kept locked during the school day. For the safety of our staff and students, there are security cameras and video surveillance in and around both schools. All visitors, including parents and volunteers, are required to register at the school office upon arrival. Gower school offices use the Raptor system to scan IDs and create a visitor's badge. Visitors must wear an identification badge while in school during school hours and sign out when exiting the building. Visitors may be asked to show identification and communicate the purpose for the visit. If another visitor enters as you are entering, please allow the office to buzz them in individually. Please do not hold open the door for any visitors to help maintain a secure environment. The vestibule at Gower West will serve as the designated waiting area for all visitors.

Additionally, electronic visual and audio recordings may be used on school buses to monitor student conduct and maintain a safe environment for students riding buses. Gower administrators have access to the audio and video recordings. Parents/guardians may not listen to or view recordings/camera footage in order to protect the privacy of other students riding the bus or in the school. Law enforcement agency personnel may also have access to these recordings if the content becomes the subject of an investigation.

Erin's Law
Erin's Law, or Illinois Public Act 097-1147, requires public schools to provide child sexual abuse prevention education for children in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grades. Gower provides this age appropriate instruction in Early Childhood through 8th grade, and parents will be notified beforehand by the principal. Common themes instructed at all grade levels include: identifying safe versus unsafe or unwanted touching; 3 safety steps (Say "No", Get Away, Tell a Trusted Adult); and understanding the difference between good and bad secrets.

For parent information regarding warning signs or signs of abuse, and additional guidance to help your child, please refer to this resource. If your child discloses abuse, please listen, and reassure the child that you will help them. Next, contact the local police department to report the abuse; and feel free to reach out to your child's principal, counselor, or social worker for support, counseling, and additional resources.

Faith's Law
Faith's Law was passed by the 102nd General Assembly as two separate pieces of legislation. The first legislation, Public Act 102-0676 established the definition of sexual misconduct in the School Code and expanded the definition of "grooming" in the Illinois Criminal Code, adding "grooming" to the list of conduct that qualifies a child as an "abused child" under the Abused and Neglected Child Report Act. The second legislation, Public Act 102-0702 focuses on the prevention of "sexual misconduct" as defined in the first part of the legislation by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors; and includes employment history reviews as part of the hiring process and training for all staff. Additionally, the goals of Public Act 102-0702 are to give parents/guardians notice regarding allegations of sexual misconduct that involve their student; and protect students from acts of sexual misconduct.

If you suspect that your student or another student has been involved in an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact the principal or assistant principal immediately. For counseling support, please contact your school social worker or counselor directly. Additional parent information can be found on the Illinois State Board of Education website and in this resource guide.

Fire, Tornado, Lockdown, Earthquake, and Bus Drills
Fire drills, tornado drills, and lockdown drills are conducted twice annually during Drill Week to prepare students and staff to respond appropriately in an emergency situation. If there is a tornado warning, lockdown or emergency at dismissal time, students will not be dismissed and school buses will not depart until an all-clear signal is given. Bus evacuation drills are held annually to ensure students know how to react in the event of a bus emergency.

Court Orders
If there is a current court order (i.e. divorce, order of protection, etc.), the parent/guardian must provide a copy of the portion that applies to custody or protection. A court stamp and signature is required.

Sex Offender Notification
An Illinois sex offender database is online (https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor). Parents may also utilize the online DuPage County resource (https://www.communitynotification.com/). Registered sex offenders are prohibited from being on school grounds without prior notification to the Superintendent and only for specific purposes outlined in Policy 8:30. The Illinois State Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry can be found at: https://isp.illinois.gov/MVOAY.

Weapons and Threats
Any student who brings a weapon to school could be recommended for expulsion for at least one year and will be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Staff members must report to the Principal any student who threatens bodily harm to any member of the school community. The Principal will notify the parents/guardians and the Superintendent. The Principal will also notify law enforcement authorities when appropriate.

Targeted School Violence Prevention Program
Threats and acts of targeted school violence harm the District's environment and school community, diminishing students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Providing students and staff with access to a safe and secure District environment is an important Board goal. While it is not

possible to completely eliminate threats in its environment, a Targeted School Violence Prevention Program using the collective efforts of local school officials, staff, and law enforcement helps the District reduce these risks. This program includes a District Threat Assessment Team, School Threat Assessment Teams, and Threat Assessment protocols and procedures.

Threats of War or Terrorism

The Homeland Security Advisory System designed an advisory system to share information on the risk of terrorist activities. An elevated threat alert warns of a credible terrorist threat. An imminent threat alert warns of a credible, specific, and impending terrorist threat against the United States. Below are the steps the District will take in response to each level of alert:

Elevated Threat Alert

- Field trips to Chicago or places outside of our immediate area will be canceled.

Imminent Threat Alert

- Outdoor recess will be canceled.
- Physical education classes will remain inside.
- Field trips will be canceled.
- A staff member will monitor the school entrance at all times.

Shelter in Place

In the event of a Chicago area emergency, the District will contact police to determine if students should be kept at school ("Shelter in Place") or dismissed as usual.

If it is determined that it is safer to keep students at school, parents will be notified using Parent Link and posting news updates on the school and District website. Students will be released only to parents or to the adult listed on the Emergency Response form. Identification will be required to ensure staff is releasing the child to the proper person.

Evacuation

In the event we must evacuate a school, Gower West students will be moved to Ashton Place (321 75th Street, Willowbrook) and Gower Middle students will be moved to Mars Chocolate North America (15W660 79th Street, Burr Ridge). Notification and student release procedures discussed in the prior section will be followed.

Crisis Response Team

Each building has a crisis plan and a crisis team is available in the event of an emergency.

Communication in an Emergency

An information center will be set up at the District Office. The District uses an automated messaging system to notify parents of school closing and in emergencies. Updated information will be provided by the automated messaging system, school voice mail, and the District website.

What You Can Do To Keep Our Schools Safe

Report any unlocked door to the Principal immediately. Be patient with the inconvenience locked doors present to you.

- Report directly to the school office when you enter a school, sign in, and wear an identification badge. Please understand that you will be escorted to the office if you do not comply.
- Report any unusual or disturbing behavior around school grounds immediately. Notify the Principal during school hours or the Burr Ridge or Willowbrook Police after school hours.
- Maintain updated emergency contact information throughout the school year, including new work and cell phone numbers.
- Talk to your children about the importance of safe schools. Be sure they know what to do in an emergency. Be sure they understand the importance of reporting a student who threatens harm to himself or others. Confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible.
- Have a back-up plan for childcare if students must be sent home during an emergency and you (the parent/guardian) are not available.
- In an emergency, refrain from calling the school. We will need open telephone lines for emergency use. Parents/guardians whose children are directly involved in a crisis will be contacted immediately.
- Refrain from speaking to the media, in order to avoid rumors and excessive disruptive coverage. District officials are expected to communicate directly with the media.

Emergency Closing

Chicago radio and television stations broadcast news of school closings during severe weather or other emergencies. The school district's automated messaging system, Parent Link, and website will also be used in emergency situations.

Asbestos Plan

The District has a Management Plan prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR 763). Copies of the Management Plan are available in the District and School Offices.

Pesticide Management Procedures and Lawn Care

Gower practices a safe Integrated Pest Management Program. Our Integrated Pest Management Program and Lawn Maintenance Program combines preventive techniques, non-chemical pest control methods, and the appropriate use of pesticides. The District maintains a voluntary registry used each school year, which provides the opportunity for parents and/or neighbors to contact the District Office directly at (630) 286-4929 to submit their name and contact information to be notified prior to any scheduled pesticide application. In the event of an extreme emergency and pesticides must be used immediately, the District will notify all registered persons as soon as practicable and in accordance with the law. According to the Structural Pest Control Act (IL P.A. 91-0525), as well as the Lawn Care Products Application and Notice Act (IL P.A. 91-0099), pesticides subject to notification requirements shall not include (i) an antimicrobial agent, such as disinfectant, sanitizer, or deodorizer, or (ii) insecticide baits and rodenticide baits.

Reporting Child Abuse

State law requires that an adult, including parents, administrators, faculty and staff report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The department maintains a centralized HOTLINE to facilitate reporting. The HOTLINE number is 1-800-252-2873.

STUDENT RECORDS (Policy 7:340)

The student permanent record means the minimum personal information necessary to a school in the education of the student and contained in a school record. This consists of basic identifying

information, academic transcript, attendance record, accident reports and health record, record of release of permanent information, and honors and awards received. The permanent record is kept for sixty (60) years after graduation or permanent withdrawal.

The student temporary record means all information contained in a school student record but not contained in the student permanent record. Such information may include family background information, test scores, psychological evaluation, special education files, teacher anecdotal records, disciplinary information, any verified reports or information from non-educational persons, agencies or organizations and records of release of temporary record information. All temporary records in District 62 will be maintained for at least five (5) years for those students who have transferred, graduated, or otherwise permanently withdrawn from school.

Parents/guardians have the right to:

- Inspect and copy any and all information contained in their student's record. There may be a small charge for copies, not to exceed 25 cents/page.
- Challenge the contents of the records by notifying the Principal or records custodian of an objection to information contained in the record.
- Obtain copies of records to be destroyed. The District will provide reasonable notice of the destruction schedule.
- Inspect and challenge the accuracy, relevance, or propriety of the information proposed to be transferred to another school district in the event a student moves. Academic grades and references to expulsion and out of school suspensions may not be challenged.

Local, state, and federal educational officials have access to student records for educational and administrative purposes without parent/guardian consent. Student records will also be released without parent/guardian consent pursuant to a court order or in connection with an emergency where the records are needed by law enforcement or medical officials to meet a threat to the health or safety of the student or other persons. All other releases of information require the informed, written consent of a student's parent/guardian.

The District may release directory information as permitted by law; however a parent/guardian has the right to object to the release of such information regarding his or her child. Directory information is limited to student name, address, gender, grade level, birth date and place, parents/guardians names and addresses, academic awards/degrees/honors, academic information for placement at the high school, information related to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics, and period of attendance in school.

A parent/guardian may not be forced by any person or agency to release information from the temporary record in order to secure any right, privilege or benefit, including employment, credit, or insurance.

Full and complete copies of the laws, rules, and regulations on student records are on file with the records custodian of each school, Abbi Lohenis at Gower West, Jacqueline Boye at Gower Middle, and in the District Office.

TRANSPORTATION (Policy 4:110)

The District owns and operates its own school buses. In order to maintain a high quality transportation service, Gower provides a fee based bus service. Students may only ride the bus they are assigned. In

the event of extenuating circumstances (e.g. family emergency), a request to ride a different bus must be made by a parent to the Principal as soon as possible and prior to dismissal. Parents may not board a school bus unless serving as a chaperone on a school-sponsored activity.

Bus Stops

Bus schedules and routes shall be determined by the Superintendent and shall be altered only with the approval of the Superintendent (Board Policy 4:110). Bus routes and stops are assigned by the District and cannot be changed by bus drivers. The District assigns stops based on what is deemed to be reasonably safe. The District reserves the right to change existing bus routes within 10 days of written notice to families substantially impacted by the change.

Students typically have a bus stop assigned within 1/8 (660 ft.) to 1/4 (1320 ft.) of a mile from their residence. Parents are responsible for assisting children to get to the stop and home from the stop. **Each child is expected to be at the stop five minutes prior to the scheduled time.** Drivers are instructed not to wait or stop for students who are not at the designated stop. If a parent is not at the stop when a Kindergarten student is dropped off, the student will be taken back to school. The parent will be called as soon as the driver returns to the school.

Electronic Recordings (Policy 7:220)

Electronic visual and audio recordings may be used on school buses to monitor student conduct and maintain a safe environment for students riding buses. Gower administrators have access to the audio and video recordings. Parents/guardians may not listen to or view recordings in order to protect the privacy of other students riding the bus. Law enforcement agency personnel may also have access to these recordings if the content becomes the subject of an investigation.

Late Bus Service

Late bus service is provided for Gower students on Monday - Thursday. Gower Middle students who participate in 10th Hour, Extracurricular Activities/Clubs, and Detention may use the late bus service as needed. The late buses leave Gower West and Gower Middle at approximately 4:30 p.m. Students are dropped off at locations in the general area of their homes, but not necessarily at the same stops as the morning and afternoon buses. Students may arrive later than expected depending on the number of the students on the bus that day. Arrival of students could be 5:30 PM or later in some cases.

Emergency Situation

If there is a situation or emergency in your area or neighborhood that would impact the safe transportation of students, please contact the District Office, (630) 286-4929, to communicate the concern. District Office personnel will contact the bus driver(s) to make them aware of the situation.