

Highland Middle School

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Mission
For Each Student

Vision
The students of Highland Local Schools will be
well-prepared, self-aware, and independent learners.

2023-2024 Student Handbook

Welcome to Highland Middle School! In this student handbook, you will find our policies, rules, and regulations. Please take the time to read this handbook so you will become familiar with our expectations that are of utmost importance to all students and parents. If you have any questions or need additional information, please visit our website at www.highland.k12.oh.us or contact us by telephone at **(419) 768-2781**.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Principal: Matt Bradley
Dean of Students: Lynn Thompson
School Counselor: Brianne Jaynes
Secretary: Robin Stewart
Nurse: Caitlyn Messmer

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Superintendent: Nathan Huffman
Treasurer: Jason Fleming
Director of Teaching and Learning: Suzanne Kochheiser
Director of Student Services: Amy Randolph
Director of Athletics: Mike DeLaney
Food Service Director: Derek Bower
Assistant treasurer: Jessika Roberts
Assistant treasurer: Susan DeLaney
Systems administrator: Dana Lehman
EMIS coordinator: Kristen Eblin
Transportation director: Christine Scaffidi
School Resource Officer: Jenny Bachelder
Secretary: Judy Deluliis

BOARD OF EDUCATION

President: John Messmer
Vice President: Bill Short
Board Member: Kathy Belcher
Board Member: Burgess Castle
Board Member: Eric Thacker

NOTE:	This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was printed in June 2022. If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal, or access the document on the District's website and finding the specific policy or administrative guideline in the Table of Contents for that section.
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HMS Positive Behavior Expectations

	Learning spaces	Halls, Locker Rooms, Restrooms	Cafeteria	Bus	Gym, Field, Court
Honorable <i>Responsible</i> <i>Honest</i> <i>Accountable</i>	Take credit for own work Clean up Be on time Listen to teachers and do what is asked	Pick up and throw away trash Use own locker Walk on right side of hall	Pick up and throw away trash Take what is paid for	Follow the driver's instructions and speak to him/her with respect Pick up and throw away trash Report wrongdoings	Show up on time Listen to coaches and do what is asked
Mindful <i>Polite</i> <i>Selfless</i> <i>Kind</i>	Keep hands to self Listen to, and have patience for others Speak appropriately Carry materials carefully Celebrate others	Keep hands to self Speak appropriately Be patient with others Let others go first Carefully carry materials	Keep hands to self Speak appropriately Say thank you to cooks Nobody eats alone Listen to announcements	Keep hands to self Speak appropriately Say thank you to driver Share seat	Cheer for our team Speak respectfully to referees and opponents Encourage teammates
Self-Aware <i>Confident</i> <i>Motivated</i> <i>Present</i>	Set goals and work toward achieving them Limit distractions - fully aware of the present moment Never give up Own your choices	Aware of present moment and circumstances Use own space Own your choices	Aware of present moment and circumstances Wait turn in line and enter/exit patiently Own your choices	Enter/exit patiently Own your choices	Give very best effort Make decisions based on what is best for the team

FOREWORD

This Student Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. Please take time to become familiar with the important information contained in this Handbook and keep the Handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this Handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal. This Handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects. This Handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of the 2022-2023 school year. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised the 2022-2023 school year, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current Board policies and administrative guidelines are available from the building principal and on the District's web site.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

This District provides an equal educational opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District’s Compliance Officer(s):

Nathan Huffman, Superintendent, 419-768-2206

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

DAILY SCHEDULES

Each student at Highland Middle School is assigned an adult mentor. Students will begin their day (first period) with their mentor and mentor group.

Regular schedule

Period	Time
1	7:30-7:55 (Mentor)
2	7:56-8:38
3	8:39-9:21
4	9:22-10:04
5	10:05-10:48
6	10:49-11:31
7	11:32-12:14
8	12:15-12:57
9	12:58-1:41
10	1:42-2:25
6th grade lunch: 10:18-10:48 8th grade lunch: 11:01-11:31 7th grade lunch: 11:44-12:14	

Two-hour delay schedule

Period	Time
2	9:30-10:00
3	10:01-10:31
4	10:32-11:02
5	11:02-11:32
6	11:33-12:03
7	12:04-12:34
1	12:35-12:52 (Mentor)
8	12:53-1:23
9	1:24-1:54
10	1:55-2:25
6th grade lunch: 11:02-11:32 8th grade lunch: 11:33-12:03 7th grade lunch: 12:04-12:34	

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the appropriate staff member.

- Adult students (age 18 or older) must follow all school rules.
- If residing at home, adult students are encouraged to include their parents in their educational program.

In order to keep parents informed of their child’s progress in school, parents will be provided information on a regular basis and whenever concerns arise. Many times, it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver the information. The School, however, may use the mail or hand delivery when appropriate. Parents have the option of receiving communication from the School via e-mail and/or facsimile by filling out the appropriate form available in the school's administrative office. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child’s teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

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

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

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

INJURY AND ILLNESS

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

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

Any student that has a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher will be excluded from school the day they become sick and for 24 hours once they are fever free without the use of medication. Any student prescribed antibiotics for illness (e.g., strep throat, pink eye, etc.) will be excluded from school until they have been on the antibiotics for 24 hours.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance by students is critically important. In many cases, irregular attendance is the major reason for poor schoolwork; therefore, all students are urged to make appointments, do personal errands, etc., outside school hours.

All educable children, ages of six through eighteen, are compelled to attend school unless properly excused. Ohio law requires compulsory school attendance for all persons 6-18 years of age or until completion of a high school diploma. Marriage, pregnancy, or parental consent *are not* legal means of school withdrawal in Ohio. Persons 17 can be legally withdrawn, upon receipt by the school of a full-time work permit (working at least 35 hours per week). If a person loses or quits the job, he/she has seven working days to have a new job and new work permit or he/she must return to school. In accordance with this and other applicable Ohio law and Ohio Board of Education standards (cited below), the following guidelines prescribe the reasons any child may be excused for past absence from the Highland Local Schools.

Habitually Truant: Define by Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.011 (B) (18)

A child of compulsory age who is absent for:

30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse

42 or more hours in one month without a legitimate excuse

72 or more hours in one year without a legitimate excuse

Excessive Absences: Defined by Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.191(C)(1)

A child of compulsory age who is absent **WITH OR WITHOUT A LEGITIMATE EXCUSE**

38 or more hours in one school month

65 or more hours in one school year

*** Including any hours missed due to school suspensions

DOCUMENTED EXCUSED (PROFESSIONAL EXCUSED)

The Ohio Revised Code (Section 3321.00) has listed guidelines that prescribe the reasons why any child may be excused for absence at Highland Local Schools. The following list defines "excused absences" as determined by the Ohio Revised Code and the Highland Board of Education. Documented Absence (*must have actual documentation*) include:

Medical Doctor, Dentist, Urgent Care, Court, Attorney Appointments, Funerals, Observance of religious holiday, and/or School Related Business (pre-approved by the principal)

EXCUSED ABSENCE

Students are only allowed to miss 65 hours for the entire school year that are not “professionally” excused. Absences that count towards their 65 hours include, but not limited to, are: Illness, Non-Professional Appointments, and Vacations.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

An absence with no documentation or a parent phone call is an unexcused absence. **Unexcused absences count toward a student’s 65 hours.** Chronic unexcused absences could result in referral to the Juvenile Court System.

MEDICAL STATUS

Students who accumulate 65 absent hours that are not documented excused in a school year will be placed on medical status. At this point, only a doctor’s excuse, hospital record, court excuse, death in the immediate family, or principal’s approval may be accepted as an excused reason for the absence. In addition, documentation must be presented to the school within twenty-four hours of the student’s return to school. Parents of students with chronic medical conditions should contact the Principal. Once students are on medical status, absences without documentation will be unexcused.

ABSENCE INTERVENTION TEAM

State law requires districts with a chronic absenteeism rate above 5% to establish an Absence Intervention Team for students who are habitually truant. The school-based absence intervention team will establish a student-centered absence intervention plan by identifying specific barriers, solutions, and possible consequences to attendance problems.

Membership of each team should vary based on the needs of each individual student, but each team is required to include:

1. a representative of the school or district.
2. Another representative from the school or district who has a relationship with the child.
3. The child's parent/guardian.

The Absence Intervention Team may also include: school psychologist, counselor, or social worker; representatives from a public or non-profit agency; a case worker from Children Services if there is an open case or if the child is in foster care.

FOR STUDENTS DETERMINED TO BE HABITUALLY TRUANT:

1. Written notice will be provided to the parent/guardian
2. Student will be assigned to an absence intervention team
3. If the child fails to make progress after 61 days on the personalized absence intervention plan, the district will file a complaint in juvenile court
4. Counseling may be provided
5. Children Services may be notified as deemed necessary

FOR STUDENTS DETERMINED TO BE EXCESSIVELY ABSENT:

1. Written notice will be provided to the parent/guardian
2. The student will follow the district's plan for absence intervention
3. The student and family may be referred to community resources

VACATIONS

Students may be permitted to go on vacation during the school year. The purpose of this administrative guideline is to accommodate parents who must take their vacations during the school year and the desire to enjoy that time as a family. However, please note that vacation days fall under absences that are not medically excused.

Whenever a proposed absence for vacation is requested, parents may discuss it with Principal, and the school may be notified in writing at least five days in advance. The length of absence should be made clear, and those involved should have an opportunity to express their views on the potential effects of the absence. It is up to the student to make up their work missed and to notify their teachers of their absence.

EARLY DISMISSAL

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

ATHLETIC ATTENDANCE

A student must be present in school on the day of an after-school event to attend an after-school event. An exception to this would be an excused absence for a funeral or doctor/dentist excuse. If a student is home due to illness for a part of the school day, the student must attend for at least half a school day.

AFTER SCHOOL PICK-UP

No student is permitted to walk to the high school or elementary school without special permission. High School student traffic and parent pick-up lines are a cause for concern for school age pedestrians. Students are only allowed to be picked up by parents/siblings. All others need office approved notes.

Students wishing to stay after school for extra help must communicate with their teachers a day ahead of time.

Students wishing to stay after school for athletic or other extra-curricular events must provide a signed note from parents giving the student permission (e.g., walking to Highland Pizza after school).

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

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

EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

Students are expected to be:

- A. Honorable (responsible, honest, accountable)
- B. Mindful (polite, selfless, kind)
- C. Self-Aware (confident, motivated, present)

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

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

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

DRESS AND GROOMING:

Students are expected to dress appropriately at all times. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted.

The following styles or manners of dress are prohibited:

1. Thin ("spaghetti strap") tank tops as outer garments
2. Tank tops or cut-off shirts that expose any portion of the chest area
3. Dresses, shorts, and skirts of a length with buttocks or groin visible
4. Clothing that shows underwear as visible
5. Torn or extremely frayed clothing with holes above what would be covered with appropriate-length shorts
6. Bare midriff-type outfits
7. Hats, hoods, headwear that is distracting, or sunglasses
8. Items with alcohol or tobacco advertising; references to drugs, alcohol or sexually suggestive pictures or obscene slogans.
9. Bandanas or other items of color to draw attention to the student
10. Winter/thick coats (inside classrooms)

These are minimum standards. With approval of the administration, advisors of extra-curricular activities and teachers of lab classes are authorized to establish any specific, reasonable dress, or grooming requirements that they deem suitable for participation. Also, students who are representing the school at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

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

- A. Material cannot be displayed if it:
 1. is obscene to minors, libelous, or pervasively indecent or vulgar;
 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law;
 3. intends to be insulting or harassing;
 4. intends to incite fighting; or
 5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it will cause or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.
- B. Material may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods, and/or before or after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

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

GANGS

Gangs that initiate, advocate or promote activities that threaten the safety or well-being of persons or that are disruptive to the school environment will not be tolerated.

Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations or related activities that are likely to cause harm or personal degradation are prohibited.

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

CARE OF PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The School is not responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student and/or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or repair. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

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

1. Students may not use profanity and/or obscenity. A student may not, by written, verbal, gestural, or other means, annoy or humiliate others or disrupt the educational process by using profanity or obscenity.
2. Students may not frighten, degrade, or direct disgraceful acts toward a teacher, student, or other person by written, verbal, or gestural means.
3. Students may not use, possess, transmit, sell, offer for sale or show evidence of consumption of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind that causes physical or mental change.
 - a. Students may not use, possess, transmit, sell, offer for sale any counterfeit or phony alcoholic beverage or phony controlled substance.
 - b. Students may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with Ohio law for violations of this section of the behavior code.
4. A student may not indecently expose his or her body or participate in indecent acts with other persons.

5. Students may not assault, fight or threaten a school employee, student or other person on the school premises, while in the custody and control of the school, or in the course of a school-related activity.
 - a. Students may not film assaults, fights, or threats with personal electronic devices.
6. Students may not cause disruption or interference with curricular or extracurricular activities by cutting or skipping class or school, tardiness, loud boisterous or careless behavior or similar action, ignite fireworks, smoke bombs, or use disruptive chemicals or objects.
7. Students may not make bomb threats, set fires, set false alarms, tamper with plumbing, heating, or electrical equipment.
8. Students may not steal or attempt to steal school or private property.
9. No student may cause or attempt to cause damage to school or private property by cutting or marking furniture, walls, books, vehicles, buildings, plugging toilets, sinks, washing basins, or drinking fountains, spinning tires on walks, drives, parking areas or grass.
10. Students may not disregard or defy the valid authority of supervisors, chaperones, substitute teachers, teachers, bus drivers, administrators, and other school personnel.
11. Students may not be insubordinate or disrespectful to school personnel by using nicknames, disrespectful language or gestures, or refuse to follow directions and instructions.
12. Students may not use or copy the academic work of another and present it as his or her own work with proper attribution, or cheat, or attempt to cheat.
13. No student may repeatedly fail to comply with directions or instructions of teachers, substitute teachers, aides, bus drivers, administrators or other school personnel, during any period of time when the student is properly under the authority of school personnel.
14. Cooperation with substitute teachers;
 - a. All students must cooperate fully with substitute teachers.
 - b. In many instances, the substitute teacher may not be familiar with students' names, classroom or study hall procedures, and school routines. In these instances, a special effort is expected of all concerned to ensure a smoother running atmosphere and a more positive educational experience.
15. No student may smoke, use tobacco, or possess tobacco in school buildings or on school premises.
16. No student may vape or use e-cigarettes, or possess vaping or e-cigarette materials.
17. No student may use or possess a toothpick.
18. Students may not obtain or attempt to obtain another person's property, either by implied or expressed threat.
19. Students may not falsify in writing the name of another person, times, dates, grades, addresses or other data on school forms, or correspondence directed to the school.
20. Students may not be present in a school building or on school grounds at unauthorized times when his or her presence may cause disruption of an activity, function or the educational process.
21. A student may not use or attempt to use false identification to mislead school personnel.
22. A student may not break or enter, or attempt to break and enter, school or private property either on school grounds or at any school activity, function or event off school grounds.
23. Students may not possess, transmit, handle, conceal, sell, offer for sale or use any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous weapon or objects, fireworks, smoke bombs or dangerous or disruptive chemicals or objects.
24. Students may not leave school during regular school hours without permission from the office.
25. Students shall not depict violence in classwork, notes, writings, drawings, etc. This includes, but is not limited to guns, bombs, robbery, violence, etc.
26. Students may not miss a scheduled class or other assignment (ex: detention) without permission from the office.
27. No student may engage in an activity or behavior, which would violate any criminal law, whether or not criminal charges are brought.
28. General misconduct: students shall refrain from throwing objects, or being abusive or excessively disruptive in their behavior. Respect the rights and feelings of others.
29. No students may violate any portion of the Highland Local District Technology Acceptable Use Policy
30. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while en route to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND INTIMIDATION

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

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

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

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

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

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

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

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The building principal or appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the building principal for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

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

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

PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY

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

REPORTING REQUIREMENT

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

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

IMMUNITY

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R.C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation,

and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

NOTIFICATION

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

The statement may be sent with regular student report cards or may be delivered electronically.

The policy and an explanation of the seriousness of bullying by electronic means shall be made available to students in the District and to their custodial parents or guardians.

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

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

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

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

The District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students.

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

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

General Behavior Guidelines – The examples of specific misconduct cited in the above behavior code are not inclusive of all acts of misbehavior that may result in disciplinary action, but serve as examples of misconduct, and similar types of misconduct, that may result in disciplinary action under this code.

General Principle: The penalty imposed for any specific violation up to ten days' suspension from school may be within the discretion of the building principal or designated school official based upon the severity of the misconduct, the harm or disruption caused, and the discipline record of the student. The Superintendent may expel a student for serious or repeated violations of any of the rules in this policy up to the maximum time provided by law (District policy 5610).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The Highland Local School District is committed to eliminating and preventing sexual harassment from all schools and facilities. Sexual harassment is improper, immoral, illegal, and may not be tolerated within the district. This policy is implemented to inform

all of Highland School District's students as to what sexual harassment is and what procedures are to be followed in dealing with sexual harassment within the district.

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Ohio and Federal laws define sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, or unwanted visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such offensive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Unwanted sexual advances, including propositioning, repeatedly asking someone out for a date after it is clear that the person is not interested.
2. Explicitly or implicitly offering employment or other benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
3. Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances.
4. Non-verbal conduct: leering; making sexual gestures; displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters.
5. Verbal/cyber conduct: making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes; making sexually based remarks about another person or one's own body.
6. Verbal/cyber abuse of sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letter, notes or invitations.
7. Physical conduct: touching, assault, impeding or blocking movement.

This sexual harassment policy is intended to protect against sexual harassment before it becomes actionable sexual harassment. The term "sexual harassment" is intended to mean sexual harassment in the broadest meaning of that term in current popular as well as legal usage.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE SEXUALLY HARASSED

When unwelcome activities described above of a milder nature occur, the best thing to do is to say that you are uncomfortable with the behavior and ask that it cease. If the behavior does not cease, then recourse for students should be sought through your school Counselor, Principal or Superintendent.

If you are subjected to behavior which you consider to be sexual harassment, students are to promptly notify either their school Counselor, Principal or Superintendent. You may be asked to put your complaint in writing and an investigation may be made into the matter and appropriate discipline may be imposed against any employee or student who is found to have engaged in sexual harassment while on or about district property, or in relation to any district activity. The investigation may include interviewing the alleged victim, alleged harasser, eyewitnesses, and corroborative witnesses. (Legal Ref: 29CFR1604.11)

DISCIPLINE

Highland Middle School students are expected to maintain good citizenship and show respect for adults and fellow students.

Our #1 expectation is: **BE KIND!**

The violation of the behavior code of conduct may result in disciplinary action including: lunch detention, after school detention, Friday night school, alternate placement, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

Lunch detention is served during the student's respective lunch period. Student should bring school work to complete during the lunch period.

After-school detention lasts from 2:30-3:15 PM. Parents will be notified at least 24 hours in advance of an after-school detention to determine transportation options.

Friday Night School lasts from 2:30-6:00 PM. Students are expected to have materials to keep them busy. Removal from Friday Night School for behavior problems may result in out of school suspension. Parents will be notified at least 24 hours in advance and are expected to provide transportation home at 6:00.

Alternate Placement – Some infractions may result in a student being alternately placed within the school. Students will be monitored and may remain in the same room all day. Teachers may send assignments down and students may receive full credit for their work. Removal from alternate placement for behavior problems may result in out of school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension - Serious infractions may result in suspension. If a suspension is being considered, the incident provoking consideration of suspension may be discussed at an informal hearing with the student. If a suspension is imposed, the parent/legal guardian will receive written notification of the date of the incident and the reason for the suspension. During the suspension, the

student is expected to remain at home and is not permitted on any property owned by Highland Local Schools. If infraction is deemed serious enough, a recommendation to expel will be given to the superintendent. Students may make up any work/assignments and can contact staff members via email through the duration of suspension.

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

The School provides transportation for all students who live in the school district. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the bus garage/transportation office

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

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

BUS CONDUCT

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

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

Students must comply with *all* bus safety rules.

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school or bus driver when their child will not be aboard school transportation. Drivers will not wait for students who are not at their designated stops on time.

VIDEO RECORDINGS ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded, the recording will be submitted to the Principal and may be used as evidence of misbehavior.

PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS

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

GRADING

Highland Middle School uses a traditional grading scale as follows: 100-90% (A), 89-80% (B), 79-70% (C), 69-65% (D), 64-0% (F).

Students and families have access to PowerSchool that shows an up-to-date view of the students' academic progress, and it can be accessed from both school and home. We believe that learning is not confined to the school day – learning can take place anywhere at any time!

HOMEWORK

Students at Highland Middle School *always* have work that can be completed or studied. Teachers are available to give extra help before and after school, and during study hall. Students must plan arrangements with the teacher ahead of time.

The purpose of working at home is that of practice. Students are not penalized for learning and missing some of the questions/problems the first time through the material. Students are not penalized on assessments when they are learning something new. As the students make progress, the initial grades are not held against them. Grades are not final until the last day of school. Students that require additional practice to meet the standard are provided opportunities to do so by retaking assessments.

ABSENCE/REQUEST FOR HOMEWORK

Students who are absent, for any reason, may be required to make up work missed in each class. It is the *student's* responsibility to obtain assignments from teachers immediately upon return to school. Failure to obtain make-up work is no excuse for not doing work missed. At the teachers' discretion work may be given ahead of time.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is in the cafeteria. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

USE OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Students may bring personal electronic devices to school; however, *the devices must remain in lockers unless given permission by an individual teacher for educational purposes*. Students should not use devices in the hallways or cafeteria. If a teacher determines that devices are not being used in his or her classroom, the following consequences apply:

Offense #1: confiscation of device, returned to student at end of day

Offense #2: confiscation of device, parent must pick up device from school

Offense #3: lunch detention, confiscation of device, parent must pick up device from school

Contents of cell phones may be searched if there exists a reasonable suspicion that it may have been used in an activity prohibited by the Code of Conduct.

“Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the PCD.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

- A. Students are responsible for their behavior and communication on the Network.
- B. Students may only access the Network by using their assigned Network account. Use of another person's account/address/password is prohibited. Students may not allow other users to utilize their account/address/password. Students may not go beyond their authorized access.
- C. Students may not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the Network.
- D. Students may not use the Network to engage in "hacking" or other illegal activities (e.g., software pirating; intellectual property violations; engaging in slander, libel, or harassment; threatening the life or safety of another; stalking; transmission of obscene materials or child pornography; fraud; sale of illegal substances and goods).
- E. Transmission of any material in violation of any State or Federal law or regulation, or Board policy is prohibited.
- F. Any use of the Network for commercial purposes (e.g., purchasing or offering for sale personal products or services by students), advertising, or political lobbying is prohibited. () This provision shall not limit the use of the Network by students for the purpose of communicating with elected representatives or expressing views on political issues. [This option is legally correct, but it need not be included.]
- G. Use of the Network to engage in cyberbullying is prohibited. ""Cyberbullying" involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal Web sites or social media accounts, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others." For further information on cyberbullying, visit <http://www.cyberbullying.ca>.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

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

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

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

9. Students should promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable, especially any e-mail that contains pornography. Students should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a staff member.
- I. Malicious use of the Network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited. Students may not use the Network in such a way that would disrupt its use by others. Students must avoid intentionally wasting limited resources. Students may not bypass or attempt to bypass the District's Technology Protection Measure. Students must immediately notify the teacher or principal if they identify a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an unlawful attempt to gain access.
- J. All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property (i.e. copyrighted and/or trademarked). All copyright issues regarding software, information, and attributions/acknowledgement of authorship must be respected. Rules against plagiarism will be enforced.
- K. Downloading of information onto the Board's hard drives is prohibited, without prior approval from the principal. If a student transfers files from information services and electronic bulletin board services, the student must check the file with a virus-detection program before opening the file for use. Only public domain software may be downloaded. If a student transfers a file or software program that infects the Network with a virus and causes damage, the student will be liable for any and all repair costs to make the Network once again fully operational.
- L. Students must secure prior approval from a teacher or the principal before joining a Listserv (electronic mailing lists) and should not post personal messages on bulletin boards or "Listservs."
- M. Students are prohibited from accessing or participating in online "chat rooms" or other forms of direct electronic communication (e.g., instant messaging) (other than e-mail) without prior approval from a teacher or the principal. All such authorized communications must comply with these guidelines.
- N. Privacy in communication over the Internet and the Network is not guaranteed. In order to verify compliance with these guidelines, the Board reserves the right to monitor, review, and inspect any directories, files and/or message residing on or sent using the Network. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- O. Use of the Internet and any information procured from the Internet is at the student's own risk. The Board makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Network will be error-free or without defect. The Board is not responsible for any damage a user may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss of data, service interruptions, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The Board is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet. Information (including text, graphics, audio, video, etc.) from Internet sources used in student papers, reports, and projects should be cited the same as references to printed materials. The Board will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the Network. Students or parents of students will indemnify and hold the Board harmless from any losses sustained as the result of misuse of the Network by the student. Use of the Network by students will be limited to those students whose parents have signed a release of claims for damages against the Board.
- P. File-sharing is strictly prohibited. Students are prohibited from downloading and/or installing file-sharing software or programs on the Network.
- Q. Students may not establish or access web-based e-mail accounts on commercial services through the Network (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo mail, etc.).
- R. Since there is no central authority on the Internet, each site is responsible for its own users. Complaints received from other sites regarding any of the District's users will be fully investigated and disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.
- S. Preservation of Resources and Priorities of Use: Computer resources are limited. Because space on disk drives and bandwidth across the lines which connect the Network (both internally and externally) are limited, neither programs nor information may be stored on the system without the permission of the principal. Each student is permitted reasonable space to store e-mail, web, and personal files. The Board reserves the right to require the purging of files in order to regain disk space. Students who require access to the Network for class-or instruction related activities have priority over other users. Students not using the Network for class-related activities may be "bumped" by any student requiring access for class-or instruction related purpose. ()The following hierarchy will prevail in governing access to the Network:
 1. Class work, assigned and supervised by a staff member.
 2. Class work, specifically assigned but independently conducted.
 3. Personal correspondence (checking, composing, and sending email).
 4. Training (use of such programs as keyboarding tutors, etc.)
 5. Personal discovery ("surfing the Internet").
 6. Other uses – access to resources for "other uses" may be further limited during the school day at the discretion of the principal.

7. Game playing is not permitted at any time.

TRANSMISSION OF RECORDS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Parents/Guardians have to complete and return to the District Form 8330 F4a in order to authorize the staff to communicate with the parent/guardian via facsimile and/or electronic mail ("e-mail"). Parents who elect to communicate with a staff member via e-mail are required to keep the District informed of any changes to their e-mail address.

INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES

The District has custody of the students during the school day and hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to try to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. The administration has developed District regulations to be followed in the case of interrogations.

Students' lockers are the property of the district, and since random searches have a positive impact on reducing drugs and other criminal activity, it is the policy of the Board to permit the building administrator to search any locker and its contents as the administrator believes necessary. This policy may be posted in every building. Legal References: ORC: 2151.411, 3313.6

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

For student safety and welfare, video surveillance cameras are placed throughout the building and school grounds and on buses. Actions recorded on these cameras may be used as evidence in disciplinary action. Any attempt to damage or interfere with the function of these devices will result in disciplinary action by the school and possible referral to local law enforcement agencies.

STUDENT LOCKERS

Students are assigned lockers for their own convenience, but the lockers remain the property of and under the control of the Highland School District. Students are expected to maintain the lockers in a clean, workable, and sanitary condition. The lockers should not be jammed with clothing items or papers making them difficult to open or close and possibly damaging the locker. No one may use his/her locker to store anything unlawful or which may create a health hazard. Students are to use only the locker's assigned to them by the office. No personal locks are permitted.

Lockers may be inspected from time to time, and if deemed necessary by the principal or a representative, the locker and its contents may be searched. Locker security is only as good as the students that maintain it. In order to minimize problems students are encouraged to keep their combinations private. Students may be provided locks for their gym lockers. Highland Middle School and the District may not be responsible for student articles lost or stolen from lockers, classrooms, parking lots, or any other school area.

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian reside.

- unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.
- unless enrolling and paying tuition.

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

- A. a birth certificate or similar document
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- C. proof of residency
- D. proof of immunizations

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

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

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

New students 18 years of age or older are not required to be accompanied by a parent when enrolling. When residing with a parent, these students are encouraged to include the parents in the enrollment process. When conducting themselves in school, adult students have the responsibilities of both student and parent.

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

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

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

- A. an updated copy of the student's transcript;
- B. a report of the student's behavior while in DHS custody;
- C. the student's current IEP, if one has been developed for the child; and
- D. a summary of the instructional record of the child's behavior.

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

WITHDRAWAL/TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL

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

Parents must notify the Principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. School records, including disciplinary records of suspension and expulsion, will be transferred to the new school within 14 days of the parents' notice or request.

IMMUNIZATIONS

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

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

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

USE OF MEDICATIONS

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

- A. Parents should, determine with the counsel of their child's prescriber whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The appropriate form must be filed with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours or to use an inhaler to self-administer asthma medication. Such forms must be filed annually and as necessary for any change in the medication.
- C. All medications must be registered with the Principal's Office and must be delivered to school in the original containers in which they were dispensed by the prescribing physician or licensed pharmacist, labeled with the date, the student's name, and the exact dosage to be administered.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Except as noted below, medication must be delivered to the Principal's Office by the student's parent or guardian or by another responsible adult at the parent or guardian's request. Except as noted below, students may not bring medication to school. Students may carry emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions, or asthma inhalers during school hours provided the student has written permission from a parent or physician and has submitted the proper forms. In the case of epinephrine autoinjectors ("epi pens"), in addition to written permission and submission of proper forms, the parent or student must provide a backup dose to the school nurse. Students are strictly prohibited from transferring emergency medication, epi pens, or inhalers to any other student for their use or possession.
 - Medication may be conveyed to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance.
 - If, for supportable reasons, the Principal wishes to discontinue the privilege of a student self-administering a medication, except for the possession and use of asthma inhalers, the parent(s) shall be notified of the decision in sufficient time for an alternative means of administration to be established.
- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time.
- G. The principal will maintain a log noting the personnel designated to administer medication, as well as the date and the time of day that administration is required. This log will be maintained along with the prescriber's written request and the parent's written release.

NONPRESCRIBED (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS

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

- By written notice parents may also authorize that their child
- may self-administer nonprescribed medication.
- may keep nonprescribed medication in his/her possession.

If a student is found using or possessing a nonprescribed medication without parent authorization, the student will be brought to the School office while the student's parents are contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received.

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

Students shall be permitted to possess and self-administer over-the counter topical sunscreen products while on school property or at a school-sponsored event, provided the student has submitted prior written approval of his/her parent/guardian to the Principal.

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

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

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

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

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

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

CONTROL OF NONCASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

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

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

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

CONTROL OF BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

The School District seeks to provide a safe educational environment for students and take appropriate measures to protect those students who may be exposed to blood borne pathogens in the school environment and/or during their participation in school-related activities. While the risks of students being exposed to blood-borne pathogens may be low, students must assume that all body fluids are potentially infectious and must take precaution to follow universal procedures in order to reduce such risks and minimize and/or prevent the potential for accidental infection.

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

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

Whenever a student has contact with blood or other potentially infectious material, s/he must immediately notify his/her teacher, who will contact the principal and school nurse and assist the student in completing the requisite documents.

The parents of a student who is exposed will be contacted immediately regarding the exposure and encouraged to have the student's blood tested for Hepatitis B and HIV either by his/her physician or health service. The student's parents are encouraged to consult with the student's physician concerning any necessary post-exposure treatment.

- The student's parent will also be asked to provide a copy of the test results and any post-exposure treatment for maintenance in the student's educational record in accordance with the Federal and State laws concerning confidentiality.

The parents of the student who caused the exposure will also be contacted immediately and advised to have the student's blood tested for Hepatitis B and HIV virus either in cooperation with his/her physician or health service.

- The student's parents will be asked to provide a copy of the test results for maintenance in the student's educational record in accordance with Federal and State laws concerning confidentiality.
- The student's parents will be encouraged to allow the District to release their child's name to the exposed student's parents, in the event serious health issues are presented as a result of the exposure.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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

The laws define a person with a disability as anyone who:

- A. Has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- B. Has a record of such an impairment; or
- C. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

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

Additionally, in accordance with State and Federal mandates, the District seeks out, assesses and appropriately services students with disabilities. Staff members use a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, assess and, if appropriate, place students in special education and related services. Students are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment."

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

HOMELESS STUDENTS

Homeless students will be provided with a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as other students served by the District. Homeless students are eligible to receive transportation services, participate in education programs for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, participate in gifted and talented programs, and receive meals under school nutrition programs. Homeless students will not be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency. For additional information contact the liaison for Homeless Students at the district office.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

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

PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

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

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

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by FERPA and Ohio law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age. The Board will provide access or release directory information to armed forces recruiters unless the parent or student request that prior written consent be obtained. See Form 8330 F13.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the principal. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

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

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

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family
- C. sex behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

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

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

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

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

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

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

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

STUDENT FEES AND FINES

Students will be provided necessary textbooks for courses of instruction without cost. In accordance with State law, Highland Middle School charges specific fees for the following activities and materials used in the course of instruction:

School fees for the 2023-2024 school year: **\$20**.

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

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship. Students can avoid late fines by promptly returning borrowed materials. Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of grades and credits.

STUDENT VALUABLES

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

MEAL SERVICE

The School participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee. A la carte items are available. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the School’s cafeteria.

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

Students may charge up to \$10.00 on his/her account, then the student would receive an alternative meal after the \$10.00 charges have accrued. Alternative meal would consist of peanut butter/bread sandwich (or a cheese/bread sandwich if the student is allergic to peanut butter), fruit, and milk. Alternate meals allowed at a \$1.00 charge or until the charges are paid. Student that reaches the charge limit will have parents contacted prior to first alternative meal.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

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

FIRE, TORNADO, AND SAFETY DRILLS

The School complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. The School conducts tornado drills during the tornado season following procedures prescribed by the State. The alarm system for tornadoes consists of repeated loud bells. Teachers will provide specific instructions on how to proceed in the case of fire or tornado and will oversee the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building in such cases.

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

EMERGENCY CLOSING AND DELAYS

If the School must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will provide notice of such closing or delay through School Messenger. The School Messenger System which is an alert system that may make phone calls/texts to your designated phone to alert you to upcoming events, calamity days, or other vital information that you need to know. This is an automated system. If you have changes in phone numbers please contact the office for instructions on how to alter your alert status.

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

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

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

TECHNOLOGY

The Highland Local Board of Education recognizes that technology can greatly enhance instructional programs, as well as the efficiency of District and school site administration. The Board of Education also realizes that careful planning is essential to insure the successful, equitable and cost-effective implementation of technology-based materials, equipment, systems and networks. Computers and the use of the District's network or on-line services network are to support learning and to enhance instruction, as well as assist in the administration of the District.

Computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, legal and ethical manner. Failure to adhere to this policy and the guidelines below may result in the revocation of the user's access privilege and possible disciplinary action. Unacceptable uses of the computer or computer network include but are not limited to:

1. Violating the conditions of the Ohio Revised Code dealing with students' and employees' rights to privacy;
2. Using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive to another user;
3. Re-posting (forwarding) personal communication without the author's prior consent;
4. Copying commercial software in violation of copyright laws;
5. Using the network for financial gain, for commercial activity or for any illegal activity;
6. Accessing inappropriate materials
7. Downloading of freeware or shareware programs.