

**WESTERN ELEMENTARY**  
**Lexington Local School District**  
385 West Main St.  
Lexington, Ohio 44904  
(419) 884-2765  
www.lexington.k12.oh.us

**Dear Students and Parents,**

On behalf of the faculty and staff, we extend to you a warm and sincere welcome as you begin a new school year or join our school as a new student.

This handbook has been prepared to serve as a resource to assist students in establishing the correct procedures, attitudes, and conduct necessary for good citizenship at school. This handbook has been approved by the Board of Education. Students and parents are encouraged to read it carefully.

Parents are an integral part of the educational process because their support, concern, and understanding are needed for students to make the most of our academic program.

Our school will assist you in gaining knowledge, developing skills, and creating positive attitudes that will benefit you now and in the future. Take advantage of these opportunities and make this a positive year for yourself.

We hope you enjoy your school year. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any of us for help and assistance.

REGULAR STUDENT SCHOOL DAY	
TIME	EVENT
8:20	Morning Drop Off Begins
8:20-8:50	Morning Recess/Breakfast
8:50	Tardy
11:30-12:20	Kindergarten Lunch/Recess
11:50-12:40	Kindergarten/1st Grade Lunch/Recess
12:10-1:00	1st Grade Lunch/Recess
3:10-3:35	Loop Line/ Car Pick-Up
3:10	Bus Dismissal Begins

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Students who do not ride the bus should not arrive before 8:20 a.m. Upon arrival, students should proceed directly to their homeroom, the cafeteria, or outside if they arrive before 8:50 a.m. Any student arriving after 8:50 a.m. should report directly to the office. The regular school day begins at 8:20 a.m. All students must be picked up prior to 3:40 p.m.

**ADDRESS CHANGE**

Please update FinalForms and notify the school secretary immediately of any changes in your residential address, telephone number, or employment. This information is vital

in case of an emergency.

**SUPPLIES REQUIRED**

Students are expected to have the necessary supplies on the first day of school. We ask that students use these supplies wisely and come prepared for each class. Supply lists are available on the Central Elementary website.

**CAFETERIA: Lunch Procedures**

A closed lunch period will be observed, with all students eating in the cafeteria, whether they purchase food there or bring it from home. No soda pop is permitted.

Cafeteria business may be conducted in the kitchen between 8:50 a.m. and 10:45 a.m., or money can be placed on the child's account via the Internet. No lunch charge payments will be accepted during the lunch hour. Students bringing their lunch may purchase milk daily. Any questions regarding the cafeteria should be directed to the Food Service Director at 419-884-2192.

**Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Applications**

This application is available annually for families who need assistance and qualify according to federal guidelines. Applications can be found in the office and on FinalForms throughout the year.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCERNS**

- If a concern arises from a school situation, students or parents should first discuss it with the teacher or advisor most directly involved.
- If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, they may then bring the matter to the building principal for further discussion.
- Concerns about administrative actions may be addressed directly to the building principal.

**TECHNOLOGY & ELECTRONICS**

**Rules & Expectations**

- Personal electronic devices should remain in student book bags during school hours.
- Unless permitted with medical documentation, students are not allowed to carry phones during the school day. All phones, iPods, smartwatches, iPads, Kindles, and similar devices must remain in book bags. Teachers will not monitor or store devices for students.
- The school is not responsible for stolen or damaged devices. While we will do everything to protect student belongings, responsibility ultimately lies with the students.
- Cell phones are not to be used as communication devices; no texting or calls are allowed. Electronic devices are not to be used for taking pictures at any time without prior permission from a teacher.
- Personal devices may be used for educational purposes occasionally with staff permission and supervision.

**PROGRESS REPORTING/REPORT CARDS**

**Progress Reports (Grade Cards)**

- Students will receive a standard grade card by the

- Friday following the end of the grading period.
- Student progress and grades are also accessible online via ProgressBook. Parent login information is available upon request.

Grading Period Dates	Grade Cards Home
1 <sup>st</sup> Grading Period <i>Aug. 20 – Oct. 17, 2025</i>	Oct. 24, 2025
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grading Period <i>Oct. 20 – Dec. 19, 2025</i>	Jan. 9, 2026
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grading Period <i>Jan. 5 – Mar. 13, 2026</i>	Mar. 20, 2026
4 <sup>th</sup> Grading Period <i>Mar. 16 – May 27, 2026</i>	May 27, 2026

### Interim Reports

Interim reports may be sent home midway through the grading period if necessary.

### PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

There are two scheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences during the school year. The schedule of times will be sent to each parent before the dates. We encourage all invited parents to attend these conferences.

### Conference Dates

- Fall Conferences Dates: November 6 & 13, 2025
- Spring Conference Dates: March 5 & 12, 2026

### LOST AND FOUND

A Lost and Found is located outside the principal's office. If you find an item in the building or on the school grounds, please bring it to the office. If you have lost something, notify the office promptly. Please label all personal property with your name. The school is not responsible for lost items. Unclaimed items will be donated to charities after a reasonable period.

### FIRE/TORNADO/SAFETY DRILLS

All students will receive instructions on fire, tornado, and emergency drills. Directions for exiting the building are posted in each classroom. Setting off false fire alarms or tampering with extinguishers is a serious offense.

### INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is available to all pupils at a nominal charge, providing coverage during school hours. Prepaid mailer forms are provided to each student. Filing claims is the responsibility of the student and parent, with claim forms available in the office.

### ATTENDANCE

Illness/Excuses: Regular attendance is crucial for a child's academic success. According to Ohio Revised Code 3321.04, parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly. Excused absences under Ohio Revised Code 3321.01 include:

- Personal illness or family illness
- Death of a family member or relative

- Quarantine for contagious disease
- Acts of God
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Emergencies or circumstances approved by the Principal one week in advance

Students will be referred to the Truancy Education Program (TEP) after:

- 30 consecutive unexcused hours (5 days)
- 38 unexcused hours (6 days) in a month
- 65 unexcused hours (10 days) in a school year

Official charges will be filed after:

- 30 consecutive unexcused hours (5 days)
- 42 unexcused hours (7 days) in a month
- 72 unexcused hours (11 days) in a school year

Students absent for disciplinary reasons or absent with/without parent knowledge, not meeting the above criteria, are permitted to make up missed work.

### PRE-EXCUSED ABSENCE – VACATION

Absences due to work, travel, or vacation must be pre-arranged with the approval of the principal. A form must be completed by the student and signed by all teachers one week in advance. The student's attendance and academic standing must be acceptable, and all missed work must be made up.

### TARDINESS

Students arriving after 8:50 a.m. must check in at the office.

### ILLNESS DURING DAY/SIGNING OUT

Students who become ill should inform their teacher. The teacher will then send you to the clinic. If you need to go home, your parents or emergency contacts listed on the information card will be notified. In cases of serious illness or injury, emergency medical procedures will be followed.

### REPORTING ABSENCES

A parent/guardian may call the office at (419) 884-2765 between 8:00–9:30 a.m. on the day of the absence, unless prior arrangements have been made or the absence is part of an extended illness.

Upon returning to school, students must bring a signed note from a parent/guardian or doctor that includes:

- Student's full name, date(s) of absence, and reason for absence.

A written note is required for all absences or tardies to be considered excused. Notes must be submitted by the next morning unless otherwise arranged. **After 5 days, unexcused absences may be permanent.** Students with 65+ hours of absence (excused or unexcused) will be placed on medical status. Only medical notes, court documents, death in the immediate family, or principal's approval will excuse future absences.

For Juvenile Court purposes, no late medical excuses from a doctor will be accepted after the Attendance Officer has submitted documentation and filed for an Official Court Hearing with the Richland County Juvenile Court.

### **MAKE-UP WORK POLICY FOR ILLNESS**

Students who are absent are required to make up missed work and are responsible for requesting assignments from teachers immediately upon returning to school. The following guidelines apply for making up work:

- One day of absence allows two days to complete missed assignments.
- Two days of absence allows three days to complete missed assignments, and so forth.

If illness causes a prolonged absence, assignments can be obtained by calling the office or contacting teachers. If the office is notified by 9:30 a.m., assignments can be ready by 3:00 p.m. Otherwise, they may not be available until 8:30 a.m. the following day..

### **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY/PICKING UP STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

All requests for a student to leave school early must be cleared through the office. For the safety of all students, please follow this procedure:

- Parents should write and sign a note including the student's name, destination, reason for leaving, and the total time they will be away from school.
- If someone other than the natural or custodial parent is picking up the student, please send a dated note stating this. Otherwise, we cannot release your child, and they will need to go home on the bus as usual.
- Please limit phone calls to emergencies only. If you must fax a note for early release or pick-up, please call the school to confirm receipt of the fax.
- Give the note to your homeroom teacher to attach to the Daily Attendance Sheet sent to the office.
- Students should report to the office at the designated time and wait for their parent/guardian to sign them out.

### **BICYCLE RIDERS**

All bikes must be parked in the racks at the back of the building upon arrival at school. Bikes should remain parked in the racks until dismissal time and should not be moved during school hours.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

It is mandatory for all students to participate in physical education as per state requirements. Students are expected to dress appropriately for activities, which includes wearing tennis shoes and clothing that allows for movement.

- If a student is unable to participate due to injury or illness, a note from home will excuse them from active participation for that day. However, they will be required to engage in class in an inactive capacity (e.g., as a scorekeeper, referee, or completing worksheets).
- If a doctor's note specifies that a student should not dress for physical education, appropriate class-related written assignments will be given to determine their participation grade.

### **DRESS CODE REGULATION**

Final decisions regarding dress code and regulations are made by school administration. Specific guidelines include:

- Footwear must be worn at all times for safety. Flip-flops, open-toe shoes, or backless shoes are discouraged. Proper outdoor shoe attire is recommended for daily recess participation.
- Clothing should not display inappropriate language, pictures, hate signs, or advertisements.
- See-through and cut-off shirts are not permitted. Spaghetti strap tank-tops and midriff-baring shirts are also not allowed.
- Hoods are to be worn down during the school day.
- Sunglasses may not be worn inside the school building.
- Shorts are permitted throughout the year but must be of appropriate length to avoid distraction or offense.
- During daily recess, consideration should be given to weather and temperature for the safety and well-being of all students.
- Clothing should not interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program.

### **FINES/CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

- Damaged or Lost Books: If a school book is lost or damaged beyond normal use, the student will be charged based on the replacement or repair cost.
- Damage to School Property/Equipment: Students are responsible for cleaning, repairing, or replacing damaged items of school property or equipment.
- Library Charges: A schedule of charges for damaged or lost books is available in the school library.

### **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS**

Parents should notify the office at least one week prior to the student's last day of school. Student transcript records will be released or forwarded under the following conditions:

- The student obtains a withdrawal or transfer form and has it signed by each teacher.
- The student returns all school items (such as books, technology, etc.).
- All school fees, fines, and lunch balances are paid in full.
- Current grades are documented by teachers.
- A record request form is received from the receiving school.

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYS**

In the event of emergency situations or inclement weather, school may be closed or delayed. Notifications may be announced through various channels (Lexington website: [www.lexington.k12.oh.us](http://www.lexington.k12.oh.us), Lexington Schools Social Media, Class Dojo, WMFD, Mansfield News-Journal, etc.)

- Cancellations and delays will be reported to the media between 5:45-6:00 A.M.
- Please refrain from calling the school.
- There is a text and email alert system available on the Lexington website ([www.lexington.k12.oh.us](http://www.lexington.k12.oh.us)) where you can sign up to receive alerts regarding school closings and other emergency information.

### **VISITORS**

During school hours, all doors will remain locked. Visitors

must use the main office door, where they will be buzzed in. Upon arrival, parents and other visitors are required to report to the office, sign in, and obtain a visitor badge. ***All visitors must present a photo ID upon arrival at the office.*** This procedure is mandated by State Law (O.R.C. 2917.221) and ensures the safety of every student.

### **GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**

Lexington Local School District has two elementary guidance counselors who serve all elementary students. They offer individual and small group sessions. One counselor is available at Western Elementary multiple times a week.

### **FIELD TRIP INFORMATION**

Teachers plan extended field trips for students to enhance the curriculum and offer opportunities not typically available in a regular school setting. Participation in these trips is a privilege that students can earn by demonstrating responsible and cooperative behavior throughout the school year. Students may be ineligible to participate in these trips due to suspensions, chronic behavior issues, or lack of academic effort. Decisions regarding participation are made by teachers and administrators.

### **MUSIC PERFORMANCE GROUPS**

Band, strings, and choir are performance-based groups. Students in these groups are expected to attend their after-school performances as part of their grade.

### **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

According to Ohio Revised Code 3319.321 (B1), the following information is considered directory information: student's name, parents' names, address, date of birth, and class grade. This information may be made available to the public upon request, except when the recipient is engaged in profit-making activities.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Please notify the school if your son or daughter is absent due to a communicable disease. Your cooperation will help us stay informed and vigilant about symptoms to prevent the spread of illness.

### **CUSTODY NOTIFICATION**

#### **Reporting Court Decisions to School**

When a child custody order or decree, including a temporary order, is issued due to divorce, separation, annulment, or dissolution of marriage, the custodial parent must notify the school of these arrangements. The custodial parent is responsible for providing the school administration with a certified copy of the court's legal custody order or decree detailing any modifications. It is the custodial parent's responsibility to report these court actions to the school district.

### **HEALTH NURSE SERVICES**

The school nurse conducts regular visits to each school to maintain records and provide students with the following services:

- Vision and hearing tests
- Scoliosis instruction and screening
- Head lice assistance
- Maintenance of immunization records (O.R.C. 3313.670)
- Individualized emergency plans

Additionally, the school nurse serves as a resource for medical issues, acts as a referral source when necessary, and may assist with case management for students.

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

Parents are legally required (O.R.C. 3313.712) to have an Emergency Medical Authorization (E.M.A.) form on file at the school office. Any changes in contact persons or physicians should be promptly reported to the school office.

### **MEDICATION/DISPENSING OF**

All medication will be stored and administered from the school office. According to state law (O.R.C. 3313.713) and Board policy, proper forms completed by both the doctor and parent must be on file in the school office. Non-prescription medications, including Tylenol and aspirin, will only be administered with a form signed by a parent providing specific directions. Students are responsible for providing their own medications.

### **PROMOTION/PLACEMENT/RETENTION**

All decisions regarding promotion, placement, or retention are made collaboratively as a team. Parents are integral members of this decision-making process, and their participation is encouraged.

- Promoted: Student advances to the next appropriate grade level.
- Placed: Student advances to the next appropriate grade level with close monitoring.
- Retention: Student repeats the current grade level.

### **DISCIPLINE/STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

According to the Ohio Revised Code 3313.661, the school expects reasonable behavior from all students. Teachers act in loco parentis, exercising necessary control, restraint, and correction to fulfill their educational duties. It is each student's responsibility to contribute positively to the school environment by showing respect for themselves, others, personal property, and others' property. Students must behave in a manner that supports their own learning and that of their peers. Each student is accountable for their behavior at school, during travel to and from school, and at school-sponsored events. Enforcing certain standards and regulations ensures optimal outcomes for everyone's efforts.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT CODE**

Students at our school are governed by state law and enjoy full constitutional rights as citizens. This code, published in accordance with O.R.C. 3313.661, outlines the school's expectations and is displayed in each classroom. Students are entitled to fair treatment from school staff and peers alike. Conversely, the school expects reasonable behavior from students. Violations of any rule may lead to

disciplinary measures, such as lunch reflection, in-school detention, after-school detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. The Student Conduct Code applies across all buildings within the Lexington Local School District, although specific violations may not apply to students of all ages.

### **Due Process**

In all instances of suspension from school, students will receive due process. They will be provided with written notification detailing the reason for the suspension, and parents will be promptly informed of the action taken.

### **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

Western Elementary follows Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and its discipline plan adheres to PBIS principles. The PBIS plan aims to promote positive behavior by aligning student conduct with common expectations in all areas: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready. Violations of the Student Conduct Code are categorized as either "Major" or "Minor" infractions.

### **Major Violations of the Student Conduct Code:**

1. Disrespect/insubordination toward students, teachers, and other school employees.
2. Any derogatory remark or use of profanity directed toward or about a staff member.
3. Inappropriate comments toward a fellow student, visitor, teacher, employee, or administrator.
4. Making a slur towards another student's race, sexual orientation, creed and/or religion.
5. Use of profanity, symbols, or gestures.
6. Intimidating, provoking, or threatening anyone on school grounds or at a school function (home or away), including verbal abuse toward anyone at a school function (home or away).
7. Bullying of anyone on school district premises or at a school function.
8. Fighting, including assault toward anyone on school district premises or at a school function.
9. Leaving school property early without signing out in the main office.
10. Being in any area of the building or grounds without permission.
11. Being in school facilities outside of school hours without permission of a supervisor.
12. Loitering in the student parking lot or any other unauthorized area prior to the start of the school day, during school hours, or after school hours.
13. Truancy from school/class, cutting or skipping class.
14. Disruption, taking part in or causing a disturbance/disruption in class, in the school building, on school grounds, or at curricular and/or co-curricular activities.
15. A student shall not possess, use, transmit, conceal, smoke, smell of, or otherwise make use of tobacco products, any alternative nicotine product, look-a-like product, including electronic vapor, or other substitute forms of cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, or pipes or any

tobacco or nicotine cessation products in the school building, on school buses, at school sponsored activities (home or away), or on school property at any time.

16. Possession, use, or sale of drugs, look-alike drugs, or related paraphernalia, including alcohol, carrying an odor on or about your person or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
17. Possession of dangerous articles, which are prohibited at school.
18. Destruction of property, including graffiti.
19. Attempts to mislead school personnel.
20. Cheating, dishonesty, altering grades, etc.
21. Theft or possession of stolen items.
22. Calling and/or having someone call the school to excuse oneself or another student from school/class under false pretenses.
23. Forging signatures, and/or note information on absence excuses, hall passes, appointment documentation, or any other documents.
24. Sexual harassment (see the table of contents for the sexual harassment policy page.)
25. Misuse of school computers and/or technology.
26. Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) regarding technology.
27. Being in a restroom stall with another student(s).
28. Opening locked entries during school hours without permission.
29. Operation of a motor vehicle in a reckless manner on school grounds.
30. Failure to comply with administrators regarding a search of property, vehicles and/or person.
31. Failure to serve other discipline, detentions, Friday Schools, ISD assignments, ...
32. Repeated violations of the Cell Phone/Headphone Policy.
33. Repeated violations of the school dress code.
34. Other just causes which cause a disruption of the educational process.
35. Continued repetition of misconduct.

### **Minor Violations of the Student Conduct Code:**

#### ***Be Responsible***

- Defiant Behavior (Refusal to Do Work, Follow a Reasonable Request, Complete an Assigned Consequence, Etc.)
- Disruptive Behavior (Out of Seat, Interrupting, Calling Out, Etc)
- Misuse of Technology
- Other Violations Not Listed

#### ***Be Respectful***

- Disrespectful Behavior (Inappropriate Tone, Attitude, Comments, Etc.)
- Aggressive Behavior (Hitting, Yelling, Pushing, Running, Etc.)
- Misuse of Property
- Cheating (Assignment)
- Other Violations Not Listed

#### ***Be Ready***

- Preparedness

- Dress Code
- Tardy to School
- Other Violations Not Listed

### **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism and cheating occur when one directly copies another individual's words without properly acknowledging the source. Any student found plagiarizing an assignment will face disciplinary action, ranging from loss of credit for the assignment to potential loss of credit for the course in cases of repeated offenses.

### **COMPUTER ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

As adopted by the Lexington Local School District, at the start of each school year, every student will receive a copy of the District Acceptable Use Policy. This document includes an explanation of the policy, consequences for violations, and an Internet-use permission form. The form must be signed by both the parent and student and returned to the homeroom teacher. Access to the Internet will not be granted to any student without a signed and returned form on file.

Violations of the Lexington Board of Education Acceptable Use Policy related to typing inappropriate material or using the Internet inappropriately will result in the following consequences:

- First Offense: The student will be removed from the computer and lose computer privileges in the building for one day. Parents will be notified and provided with a copy of the inappropriate material. Additional disciplinary actions may be determined by the administration.
- Second Offense: The student will be removed from the computer and lose computer privileges in the building for the remainder of the nine-week grading period. Parents will be notified and provided with a copy of the inappropriate material. Additional disciplinary actions may be determined by the administration.
- Third Offense: The student will be removed from the computer and lose computer privileges in the building for the remainder of the semester. Parents will be notified and provided with a copy of the inappropriate material. Additional disciplinary actions may be determined by the administration.

### **WEB PAGE PERMISSION POLICY**

- The Lexington School District takes pride in the daily achievements and successes of students and staff. We regularly announce and publicize a variety of accomplishments, activities, and events, including but not limited to academic presentations, art exhibits, athletic events, awards, community service activities, concerts, contests, district presentations, music performances, outstanding academic work, educational initiatives, plays, special programs, sports events, students of the month, and team achievements.
- Throughout the school year, there may be opportunities for your child to be photographed for announcements on our website or in newsletters. With your permission,

information that may be posted on our district and/or school website could include student names, photographs or images, and artwork.

- We are dedicated to celebrating and recognizing our students' achievements and contributions to our school community.

### **DISCIPLINE: SCHOOLWIDE PLAN**

Western Elementary implements Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and its discipline plan is aligned with PBIS principles. The primary goal of the PBIS plan is to reinforce positive behavior among students. Throughout the school, a PBIS Matrix is prominently displayed to reinforce behavioral expectations.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL FROM CLASS/ EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

If a student's presence poses a continuing danger to people or property, or is disrupting the academic process, then a teacher may remove the student from the activity. (O.R.C. 3313.66)

### **IDENTIFYING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

- The Lexington Local School District is participating in an effort to identify, locate and appropriately serve all individuals with disabilities, birth through age 21. A variety of services are available for preschool and school-age children to age 21 who have one or more handicapping and/or learning disabilities.
- If you know of a diagnosed handicapped child who is not receiving services, please contact the Special Education Coordinator, at 419-884-1111.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

- Lexington Local School District shall make reasonable accommodation(s) for a disabled person to be able to participate in and benefit from school services and programs. For assistance, contact Mr. Jeremy Secrist, at 419-884-2132.
- The Lexington Local School District provides equal opportunities for all children to achieve their potential through the District curriculum and associated programs and activities regardless of race, color, creed, handicap, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or social/economic background.

### **TITLE IX REGULATIONS COMPLIANCE**

- The Board of Education of the Lexington Local School District, in compliance with the rules and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination on the basis of sex under federally assisted programs and activities, has established a grievance procedure whereby a complaint related to violation, interpretation or application of Title IX Rules and Regulations may be quickly and smoothly resolved.
- Students are eligible to participate in this grievance procedure by addressing the complaint in writing to the Title IX Coordinators:
  - o Kevin Young, Assistant Superintendent  
103 Clever Lane

Lexington, OH 44904  
419-884-2132 ext. 1902  
[young.kevin@lexington.k12.oh.us](mailto:young.kevin@lexington.k12.oh.us)

- o Julie Borchers, Special Education Director  
103 Clever Lane  
Lexington, OH 44904  
419-884-1111 ext. 1922  
[borchers.julie@lexington.k12.oh.us](mailto:borchers.julie@lexington.k12.oh.us)

## **DRUGS, TOBACCO, ALCOHOL**

### **Definitions**

- **Illegal drugs/narcotics** are defined as any narcotics, drug, medicine, or pill, chemical preparation, plant, seed, or derivative thereof, of a hallucinogen, barbiturate, or amphetamine nature.
- **Paraphernalia** are instruments such as pipes, bowls, syringes, hypodermic needles, or any other items normally or actually used for the packaging, conveyance, dispensation, or use of drugs/narcotics
- **Look-a-like or counterfeit drugs** are specifically, amended Section 2925.01 (P) of the Ohio Revised Code, to mean any of the following:
  1. A drug that bears, or whose container or label bears a trademark, trade name, or other identifying mark used without authorization of the owner or rights to such trademark, trade name or identifying mark.
  2. Any unmarked or unlabeled substance that is represented to be a controlled, manufactured, processed, or distributed substance.
  3. Any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance but is not a controlled substance or is a different controlled substance.
  4. Any substance other than a controlled substance that a reasonable person would believe to be a controlled substance because of its similarity in shape, size, and color, or its markings, labeling, packaging distribution, or the price for which it is sold or offered for sale.

### **Drug/Alcohol 10 Day Suspension Reduction Procedures**

If a student is suspended for a first violation of the board of education alcohol and drug policy (except for the sale and transmission), the parent may request a reduction of up to five days of the suspension in the following manner:

- The parents will be advised of the reduction possibility by the administrator who notifies them of the suspension
- A combination of the following alternatives may be required by the administrator to effect
- a reduction in the suspension.
  - o Parents take their student to a school approved person or agency for a dependency assessment and authorize the release of the results to school.
  - o Failure of the student or parent to complete the activities assigned by the administrator will result in the days of reduction being reinstated.

### **Use of Tobacco/Nicotine**

No pupil shall smoke, use or possess tobacco, or any substance containing tobacco, lighted or unlighted,

including clove cigarettes, any smoking device, including lighters or cigarette rolling papers, any alternative nicotine products including electronic, vapor or other substitute forms of cigarettes, cigarillos, cigars, or pipes, or any tobacco or nicotine cessation product in any area under the control of the Board of Education; in any vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the Board. Use of tobacco shall mean all uses of tobacco, including chewing or maintaining any substance containing tobacco, including smokeless tobacco in the mouth; using or possessing any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, including clove cigarettes, or using or possessing any alternative nicotine products. Violation of this policy may result in discipline pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct.

### **Smoke Free Schools**

The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco/nicotine presents a health hazard which can have serious consequences for both the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the Board. For the purposes of this policy, "use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including a cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff or any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, and the use of any electronic, vapor, or other substitute forms of cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, or pipes. In order to protect students and staff who choose not to use tobacco/nicotine from an environment noxious to them, and because the Board cannot, even indirectly, condone the use of tobacco/nicotine, the Board prohibits use of tobacco and alternative nicotine products or devices on school grounds, in school buildings, on school buses, and at any school-supervised activity.

## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, BULLYING**

### **Introduction**

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students in the school environment can substantially interfere with their ability to learn, perform, and feel safe. Therefore, any conduct, communication, activity, or practice that occurs at any time, on school property or during any school sponsored event and at the times, and/or places set forth in the Code of Student Conduct, that constitutes harassment, intimidation, or bullying involving students shall be strictly prohibited. Students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. Further, any such conduct, communication, activity, or practice should be immediately reported to the building principal or other responsible school employee. All reports of harassment not covered by this policy shall be investigated in accordance with the policies applicable to the particular harassment.

To implement this policy and to address the existence of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in the schools, the following procedures shall be followed:

- Students must report acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying to teachers, district employees, and/or school administrator
- The parents or guardian of students should file written



reports of suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying with the building principal or other appropriate administrator

- Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or receive student reports of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall notify school administrators
- School administrators shall investigate and document any written or oral reports
- School administrators shall notify both the parents of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were committed, and to allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by O.R.C. §3319.321 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

#### **Definition of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying**

In accordance with this policy, “harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means either of the following:

- Any intentional written, verbal or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both (1) Causes mental or physical harm to the other student, and (2) Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student; or
- Violence within a dating relationship—The behavior prohibited by this policy is marked by the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the victim. In evaluating whether conduct constitutes harassment, intimidation, or bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred, of the perpetrator.

#### **Conduct Constituting Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying**

Such conduct can take many forms and can include many different behaviors having overt intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Physical violence and/or attacks.
- Taunts, name-calling, and put-downs.
- Threats and intimidation (through words and/or gestures).
- Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions.
- Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors.
- Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other Web-based/online sites (also known as “cyber bullying”), such as the following:
  - o Posting slurs on Websites where students congregate on Web logs (personal online journals or diaries);
  - o Sending abusive or threatening instant messages:

- o Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of students and posting them online;
- o Using Web sites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students;
- o Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers
- o Violence within a dating relationship.

#### **COMPLAINT PROCESS**

##### **Formal Complaints:**

- Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including person(s) involved, time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected harassment, intimidation, 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 and action.
- Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the building principal and/or his/her designee of the event observed, and shall promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

##### **Informal Complaints:**

- Students may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, or bullying by verbal report to a teacher or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including person(s) involved, time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witness. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such a written report by the school staff member and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review and action.
- In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in other interactions with students. School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about harassment, intimidation or bullying and help eliminate harassment, intimidation or bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect



of ridiculing, humiliating, or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “harassment, intimidation, bullying.”

### **Confidentiality**

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the district’s legal obligation to the complainant, alleged harasser, and witnesses, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

### **Investigation**

- The investigator should remember that the investigation requires a balancing of the accused’s rights, the complainant’s right to an environment free of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and the Board’s interest in a prompt and fair investigation.
- The investigator shall meet with the complainant within a reasonable period of time from the time of making the complaint. However, the investigator is urged to meet with the complainant as soon as possible.
- Following the meeting with the complainant, the investigator shall conduct an investigation to determine if harassment, intimidation, or bullying has occurred. The investigation shall include a conference with the accused and the complainant, as well as any and all other methods which are considered necessary to determine whether harassment, intimidation, or bullying has occurred.

### **Post-Investigation Procedures**

- Upon conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall issue a written report. The report shall include a determination of whether the accused was found to have engaged in harassment, intimidation, or bullying, was found not to have engaged in harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or whether the investigation was inconclusive. The report shall be issued to the complainant’s parents. A copy of the report shall be sent to the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- A finding of no harassment, intimidation or bullying or inconclusive evidence shall end the investigation.
- If harassment, intimidation, or bullying is found to have occurred, the investigator shall recommend what steps are necessary to ensure that the harassment, intimidation or bullying is eliminated for the victim and other individuals affected by the harassment, intimidation, or bullying and to correct its effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate.

### **Retaliation is Prohibited**

Retaliation against those who file a complaint or participate in the investigation of the complaint is prohibited. Therefore, filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting harassment, intimidation or bullying will not reflect upon

the student’s status, nor will it affect future employment, grades, or work assignments. Further, the administrator is directed to implement strategies for protecting a victim from retaliation following a report.

### **Remedial Actions**

- Verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall result in intervention by the building principal or his/her designee that is intended to assure that the prohibition against harassment, intimidation or bullying behavior is enforced, with the goal that any such harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior will end as a result.
- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of “harassment, intimidation, or bullying” as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, or bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in and out-of-school suspension, or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the building principal.

### **Non-Disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered harassment, intimidation, or bullying. If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer mediation may be considered.

### **Disciplinary Interventions**

When acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences.

### **Strategies for Protecting Victims**

- Supervise and discipline offending students fairly and consistently;
- Provide adult supervision during recess, lunch time, bathroom breaks, and in the hallways during times of transition;
- Maintain contact with parents and guardians of all involved parties;
- Provide counseling for the victim if assessed that it is needed;
- Informs school personnel of the incident and instructs them to monitor the victim and the offending party for indications of harassment, intimidation and bullying behavior. Personnel are to intervene when prohibited behaviors are witnessed;

- Check with the victim to ensure that there has been no further incidents of harassment/intimidation/bullying or retaliation from the offender or other parties.

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and direct intervention when acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying are verified, other district actions may ameliorate any potential problem with harassment, intimidation, or bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators and school personnel:

- Respectful responses to harassment, intimidation, or bullying concerns raised by students, parents or school personnel;
- Planned professional development programs addressing bully/targeted individuals' problems;
- Data collection to document bully/victim problems to determine the nature and scope of the problem;
- Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g. males need to be strong and tough);
- Awareness and involvement on the part of all school personnel and parents with regards to bully-victim problems;
- An attitude that promotes communication, friendship, assertiveness skills, and character education;
- Modeling by staff of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior towards students;
- Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere; and/or
- Forming harassment, intimidation, and bullying task forces, programs, and other initiatives involving volunteers, parents, law enforcement, and community members.

This policy shall appear in student handbooks, and in the publications that set forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for schools and students in the district. Information regarding the policy shall be incorporated into employee training materials.

Orientation sessions for students shall introduce the elements of this policy and procedure. Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and preventions of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and their rights and responsibilities under this and other district policies, procedures, and rules at student orientation sessions and on other appropriate occasions.

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 a policy adopted pursuant to this section if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying promptly in good faith and in compliance with the procedures as specified in the policy.

The district administration will semi-annually provide the president of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the district's website to the extent permitted by state and federal student privacy laws.