

**HIGHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL  
PARENT/STUDENT  
HANDBOOK  
2017-18  
SCHOOL YEAR**

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## **Philosophy of Highland Middle School**

We believe in the worth of the individual and recognize our responsibility to help each individual to develop their physical, intellectual, and creative capacities as fully as possible.

Realizing the vastly different maturity levels which occur during the middle school years, we strive to help our students to develop their abilities and interests in each stage of the early adolescent period. We believe our educational program should be geared to the special needs and capabilities of the middle school student and that we must be engaged in a continual search for innovations and improvements which will enhance the effectiveness of our program.

We accept the obligation of the middle school to assist each student into developing as a responsible member of a democratic society, including the development of critical reasoning and the assumption of responsibilities for oneself and toward mankind.

We believe the middle school serves an important function in providing a unique, yet integral, transitional period between the elementary school and the advanced educational program of the high school.

### **Literacy Vision**

Literacy is everybody's business.

### **HMS Vision for Literacy**

Our vision is to ensure that literacy is a priority in all disciplines. HMS will promote a shared culture of literacy that provides content rich materials, leading students to higher levels of critical thinking, comprehension, writing, and vocabulary.

## VISION

**PLAN** to succeed.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Highland Middle School is to provide all students with a **PLAN** for academic success by:

**P**racticing essential skills

**L**inking prior knowledge to future learning

**A**ccepting responsibility for achievement

**N**ever settling for less than the best

## Goals:

1. Students will achieve grade level proficiency in critical thinking as measured by performance on 2-3 step problems on locally developed assessments.
2. Students will achieve an increase of 3% in grade level proficiency on standardized assessment in literary text features.
3. Each year students will practice “Close Reading” strategies (specifically read, discuss, read, annotate, identify textual evidence) once a week in ESL, Discover class and in Title 1 reading classes.

## HIGHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL CREED

I believe in myself.  
I am responsible for my own actions.  
I solve problems without arguing or fighting.  
I am honest and fair.  
I treat others as I want others to treat me.  
I come to school prepared and on time.  
I am proud of my school and community.  
I do my best every day.  
Education is important to me.

## DESIRED LEARNER OUTCOMES

Students exhibit positive self-image.  
Students assume the obligations and rights of citizenship.  
Students communicate verbally, creatively, and in written form.  
Students demonstrate the ability to reason, problem solve, and make appropriate choices.  
Students work cooperatively and independently to complete designated tasks.  
Students demonstrate an understanding of individuals from different ethnic backgrounds and of varying viewpoints  
Students develop good health habits and an understanding of the conditions necessary for the maintenance of physical and emotional well-being.  
Students use study skills and current technology as means for learning, discovering, and accessing and processing information.  
Students are life-long learners.

## I. BELIEFS

All students can participate, learn, and achieve.

Cultural awareness increases student understanding of the differences and commonalities among people.

Educators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for the education of children.

Students learn best when actively engaged in the learning process.

Student instruction and performance are determined by student needs

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. ADVERTISING PROHIBITION

Pupils, staff members, and school facilities may not be used for advertising or promoting the interest of any non-school organizations without the permission of the principal. The school shall not participate in any fund-raising event or campaign for any purpose without the approval of the superintendent. Teachers and sponsors may not permit any fund-raising campaigns or events within their classroom or student organization. Contests and organizations sponsored by outside agencies which involve awards or prizes to pupils are not permitted without the approval of the superintendent. Such activities must have educational value for the participants in order to be approved.

### B. BELL SCHEDULE

7:45	Students admitted to building
8:27	Class periods begin.
10:41-11:11	First lunch period
11:35-12:05	Second lunch period
12:29-12:59	Third lunch period
3:18	End of Student Day – (Wednesday 3:05)
3:30	Students must exit the building unless they are with a teacher or coach.

### C. CAFETERIA

Middle School Lunch Price \$2.25  
Breakfast Price \$1.50                      Milk .50

### D. DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The School Town of Highland School Corporation designates the following items as Directory Information: student name, address, telephone number, date of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, hair and eye color, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended, photograph and videotape not used in a disciplinary matter, student work display at the discretion of the teacher with no grade displayed. The corporation may disclose any of those items without prior written consent, unless notified in writing to the contrary by 3rd Tuesday of the current school year.

### E. FIELD TRIPS

Educational trips may be taken during the school day to supplement classroom instruction, if approved by the teacher, building administration, and the Superintendent's Office. Students participating in a field trip should follow the instructions listed below:

1. Students will receive permission slips to take home to parents for their signatures. These slips must be signed and returned before a student is eligible to go on a trip.
2. Students are responsible for their share of the amount assessed for transportation and admission fees.
3. Students are to remain with their assigned group.
4. Assignments from all classes missed must be completed. If possible, this should be done prior to the field trip.

**F. NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

A non-custodial parent, unless restricted by a court order, will be given access to all students' report cards, progress reports, student records and disciplinary actions. Such parents will also be allowed to participate in conferences, classroom visitations, Back to School night, and all other school activities.

The non-custodial parent may not visit with his or her youngster during the school day nor may the student be released to the non-custodial parent unless written permission has been given by the custodial parent.

A certified copy of a court order restricting the rights of the non-custodial parent shall be provided to the principal should a custodial parent wish to prohibit the distribution of information to, or the school visitation of, the non-custodial parent.

**G. PESTICIDE POLICY**

The School Town of Highland is committed to providing students a safe environment. It seeks to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. While pesticides protect children from pests that may be found in the school and its surrounding grounds, under some circumstances they may pose a hazard to children. Therefore, pest control practices may involve a variety of chemical and non-chemical methods that are designed to control pests effectively while minimizing potential pesticide exposure to children.

The School Town of Highland will:

1. Inform annually, parents and staff members, of the pesticide policy at the time of student registration (beginning of the school year or semester) as provided in the student and staff handbooks.
2. The Manager of Buildings & Grounds will be the contact person for information regarding pest control and pesticides.
3. Each building principal will establish a registry of parents and staff members who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use and provide such notice. The list will also be sent to the Manager of Buildings & Grounds.
4. The Manager of Buildings & Grounds will provide notice of planned pesticide applications to the building principals who will in turn notify parents and employees who have requested advanced notice.
5. The Manager of Buildings & Grounds will maintain written record for 2 years of any pesticide applications.

The School Town of Highland will provide notice at least two (school) days prior to the date and time the pesticide application is to occur.

The notice will include the date and time of the pesticide application, the general area where the pesticide is to be applied, and the telephone number to contact the school for more information. In case of emergency pesticide applications because of immediate threat to the public health, the School Town of Highland shall give written notice as soon as possible.

**H. High Ability Education Program**

There is a K-12 High Ability Education Program in the School Town of Highland. If you feel your child qualifies and has not been contacted, please contact the Assistant Principal.

**I. Honors Classes**

A student's placement in an honors class will be determined on an annual review of objective data. Students must maintain a B average to remain in honors classes.

**J. RDS**

All parents are strongly encouraged to check their child's grades on a regular basis on the RDS Parent Access.

**K. SCHOOL WEBSITE**

The following are available on our website ([www.highland.k12.in.us](http://www.highland.k12.in.us)): school cancellations, lunch menus, sports schedules and teacher e-mails.

**L. THIRD PARTY CUSTODY**

Third party custody agreements (DOE form 11, I.C.20-26-11-3) are valid for one school year only.

**M. VISITORS**

All visitors are to register in the office through the Raptor system and **wear a visitor's pass** before entering any other part of the building. Any unauthorized person who enters a school building is trespassing and may be expelled from the school premises.

Enrollment in school gives the student official clearance to enter the school building each day that classes are in session. Students may not enter the school building during days when classes are not in session without first having obtained clearance from the office.

### III. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

#### A. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities are an important part of a student's school life. Interested students and teachers have organized various extracurricular activities. Students are invited to participate in the activities by the sponsoring teacher(s).

##### **Guidelines for Members:**

Highland Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities: Builders club, Chess club, Geography Bee, Newspaper, Science club, Spelling Bee, Student Council, and Yearbook. Additional Clubs may be available at teacher's discretion.

All Highland Middle School students participating in extracurricular activities will be governed by the following rules:

- a. A student who fails more than one course at the end of a nine-week grading period will be ineligible for membership for the next full nine-week period. Sponsors of each extracurricular activity reserve the right to implement their own discipline and participation policy if approved by principal/assistant principal.
- b. All students become ineligible/eligible for membership on the **day report cards are issued**. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to check report cards for membership eligibility.
- c. A student must be in school by 11:30 in order to participate in any extracurricular activity. An exception may be made by the building administrator if the student has an approved medical or non-medical excuse.
- d. During a suspension period (in-school or out-of-school suspension), the student MAY NOT attend any extracurricular activities including dances, plays etc.

#### B. INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

To be eligible for participation on the school teams, students must demonstrate scholastic ability and citizenship demanded of a team member and must meet the standards set by Highland Middle School, coaches, the IHSAA, and the Lake Middle School Athletic Conference.

##### **Guidelines for Athletes**

Highland Middle School students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of athletic programs. Interscholastic competition is offered in cross-country, football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, track, cheerleading, and poms/dance team.

This school is a member of the Lake Middle School Athletic Conference, which includes junior high schools and middle schools in Lake County.

All Highland Middle School students participating in the interschool athletic program, including cheerleading and poms/dance team, will be governed by the following rules:

- a. A student who fails more than one course at the end of a nine-week grading period will be ineligible for competition for the next nine-week period.
- b. All students become ineligible/eligible for athletic participation on the **day report cards are issued**. It is the responsibility of the coach to check report cards for athletic eligibility.
- c. A student **may** try out for an athletic team while academically ineligible if the possibility for academic reinstatement exists during the upcoming season. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to remain in good standing during the period of ineligibility. Students that become eligible may participate on the day that report cards are issued.

- d. In order to correspond with IHSAA guidelines, the following age requirements will be in effect for the Lake Middle School Athletic Conference:

7th Grade - Students whose fifteenth (15) birthday occurs on or after the scheduled date of the IHSAA STATE FINALS in a particular sport will be ineligible for interschool athletic competition in that sport.

8th Grade - Students whose sixteenth (16) birthday occurs on or after the scheduled date of the IHSAA STATE FINALS in a particular sport will be ineligible for interschool athletic competition in that sport.

2017-2018

Football (7/8)	Girls Basketball (7/8)
Cross Country (6-8)	Wrestling (6-8)
Volleyball (7/8)	Boys Track (6-8)
Boys Basketball (7/8)	Girls Track (6-8)
Intramural Basketball (6)	

- e. All athletes must have a physical exam prior to any participation. The physical covers all sports for the entire following school year provided the examination occurred on or after April 1.
- f. A student must be in school by noon in order to participate in any extracurricular practice or contest. An exception may be made by the building administration if the student has an approved medical or non-medical excuse.
- g. During a suspension period (in school suspension or out of school suspension), the athlete MAY NOT attend any extracurricular or school-sponsored activities including athletic practices or contests, dances, etc.
- h. In special circumstances, coaches reserve the right to implement their own discipline and participation policy if approved by the principal and /or athletic director.

#### **IV. STUDENT SERVICES**

##### **A. GUIDANCE SERVICES**

Counseling is available at the middle school for all students. A primary goal of this service is to enable our students to reach their fullest potential academically, socially, and emotionally. Students are encouraged to contact their counselor on their own. They may be referred to a counselor by a teacher, parent, or friend.

##### **B. HEALTH SERVICES**

###### **Requirements:**

The nurse and other volunteers work within the schools to assist students and school personnel. A medical history of each student is obtained from the parent and recorded on the school health record. All screening test results, such as vision and hearing, are indicated on the school health record. Parents are notified of findings that are less than normal and encouraged to seek medical attention.

Indiana State Law (IC20-8.1-7 as amended by Public Law 103, Acts of 1985) requires that when a student enrolls in a school corporation, the governing body shall require that the parents furnish a written updated statement of the student's immunizations no later than the first day of school.

**Indiana State Department of Health**  
**MINIMUM IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ENTRY**  
**2017-2018 GRADES 6-12**

- 5 doses of DTap (Diphtheria-Tetanus-Acellular Pertussis, DPT (Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis, or pediatric DT (Diphtheria-Tetanus vaccine) (4 doses are acceptable if the 4<sup>th</sup> dose was administered on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday and at least 6 months after the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose)
- 4 doses of any combination of IPV or OPV by age 4-6 (3 doses of all OPV or all IPV are acceptable if the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose was administered on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday).
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) on or after the first birthday.
- 2 doses of Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccine or history of the Chicken Pox disease. A written statement from the parent indicating month and year of disease is sufficient.
- 1 dose of Tetanus-Diphtheria-Acellular Pertussis vaccine (Tdap) given on or after 10 years of age.
- 1 dose of Meningococcal Conjugate vaccine (MCV4/Menactra) in grades 6-11
- 1dose of Meningococcal Conjugate vaccine (MCV4/Menactra) in grades 12
- 2 doses of Hepatitis A (6 months apart) recommended but will be required in 2018/2019 school year.
- 2 doses of Meningococcal B (1 month apart) must be age 16. Recommended but will be required in 2018/2019 school year.

New students may be granted a waiver of 20 calendar days in which to produce a written statement of immunizations. Students may remain in school at the end of a granted waiver by documenting that they have either:

1. Completed all requirements, or
2. Entered upon a specific schedule of immunizations approved by a physician or the local health department, or
3. Qualified for a medical or religious exemption.

Any parent wishing to be exempt from the above regulations, because of religious beliefs or medical reasons, should submit a written request for exemption, and the request must be filed annually with the school corporation.

**Illnesses:**

**A student who needs to go home due to illness must report to Health Services first.** Before a student may leave school, a parent or other designated adult must be notified for pickup and the student must be signed out.

If an accident occurs, first aid will be administered, and if necessary, the parent will be called. It is important to have an emergency number on file.

If a student becomes ill or injured and it is not an emergency situation, they need to report to their classroom teacher first for a pass to the Nurse's Office. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO USE CELL PHONES TO CALL OR TEXT PARENTS** (use of cell phones for this purpose will result in a referral). The nurse will make the necessary contacts if a student needs to leave because of illness or injury. Students determined to be too ill to return to class will be sent home only after the nurse contacts a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult on the emergency contact form. If emergency care is necessary, a parent will be contacted to determine appropriate action.

**Medication:**

1. Prescriptive Medication
  - A. Prescriptive medication may be given to students if:
    1. The form entitled AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION is completed and signed by a physician and the parent or guardian. This form may be obtained from the nurse or can be downloaded from the STOH website under District Services and is to be renewed annually at the beginning of the school year.
    2. The medication is stored in the nurse's office. Students may NOT keep medication in their possession, unless it is used for a life-threatening condition.
    3. The medication is in its original prescriptive container.
2. Non-prescriptive medications (such as aspirin and other over-the-counter medications) may be given to a student if:
  - A. A parent authorization form (lower portion of form) is completed and signed by a parent.

B. The medication is stored in the nurse's office. The student does not keep it in his/her possession.

C. The medication must be FDA approved.

**C. EXCUSES FROM PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

A student presenting a valid written excuse from the parent to the P.E. teacher will be placed on limited activity for 2 days, which will include dressing for class. Limited activity is determined by the teacher, with student input. More than 2 days would require a written excuse from a physician. The physician must specify the date of return to activity. If it is stated "until further notice" or "until recovery," an additional written note from the physician will be necessary to return to activity.

**D. MEDIA CENTER**

The media center is open each school day. A wide variety of materials are available for students. There is a networked on-line public access catalog (OPAC). In addition, many on-line databases may be accessed.

Guidelines:

1. Orientation in use of the media center is given to all students during the beginning of the fall semester.
2. Additional instruction in information gathering skills is given to students as classroom research projects evolve.
3. Students are responsible for all materials that they check out. If materials are lost or damaged, the current replacement cost is charged to the student.
  - a. Books are checked out for a two-week period. Fines are charged for overdue books at the rate of \$.05 per day up to the current replacement costs.
  - b. Magazines may be checked out on an overnight basis. Magazines are due before 1st period on the day following their check out. Fines are charged for late magazines at the rate of \$.05 per class period up to the current replacement cost.
  - c. Students who have overdue materials and/or fines may not check out materials until their obligations are cleared.

**E. BOOKSTORE**

The bookstore is open each morning before the beginning of classes. Paper, pencils, flash drives, and other school supplies are available for purchase.

**F. LOST AND FOUND**

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Lost and Found is located in the office. 6<sup>th</sup> grade Lost and Found is located in the LGI where recovered items may be claimed.

**G. GRADING POLICY**

**1. Grade Card**

The semester term is divided into two grading periods of nine-weeks each. Report cards are issued to students at the end of each grading period for the purpose of keeping students and their parents informed about scholastic and attendance records. Reports cards will be available on RDS the Friday following the end of each nine-week grading period. If needed, parents may secure copies of report cards from the school office. RDS Parent Access is available at all times.

**2. Evaluation Marks**

Each teacher will evaluate the student's progress according to guidelines that are appropriate for the subject being taught. Grades for each class will then be reported as percentages on the report card according to the following ranges:

- A+ =98-100
- A =93-97
- A- =90-92
- B+ =87-89
- B =83-86
- B- =80-82
- C+ =77-79
- C = 73-76
- C- = 70-72
- D+ =67-69
- D =63-66
- D- =60-62

F =00-59

These percentages will be used to calculate the overall semester averages as described in the next section.

Conduct and Effort gradations:

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Satisfactory
- 3 Needs Improvement
- 4 Unacceptable

### **3. Semester Average**

The semester average will be determined by averaging the percent grades for each of the two 9-week periods. Each of the two 9-week periods are weighted equally and are averaged together to obtain the semester grade.

### **4. Mid-Term Progress Reports**

RDS parent access is available to check grades, attendance and discipline. If parents do not have access to a computer, they may request an update be sent home with their child.

### **5. Academic Honor Roll**

Honor Roll requirement is:

All grades 90% or above = A Honor Roll

All grades 80% or above = Honor Roll

Also, students must receive all 1's and 2's in conduct and effort to be eligible.

Conduct/Effort Honor Roll - Students who receive all 1's in effort and conduct will also receive recognition.

## **H. ISTEP**

Students who do not pass the LA and/or Math portion of the ISTEP will be placed in an additional Math/Reading class. This class will replace an encore class, band, orchestra, choir or reading/PE.

## **I. PROMOTION/RETENTION**

The goal of the middle school program is to insure that each student has the skills necessary to be successful at the next level of learning. A variety of standards are used to make this determination.

The guidelines for possible retention are:

1. Any two core subject failures based on the first semester average.  
Any two core subject failures based on the third grading period and projections for the fourth grading period.
2. Sub-standard performance on group testing (ISTEP+ and MAPS).
3. Teacher/team recommendation
4. HMS principal will make the final decision.
5. The parent could be notified of the possibility of retention as early as the end of the first semester of the school year.

## **V. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Students withdrawing from Highland Middle School should complete the following steps:

1. In a written note to the school, have their parents declare their intention to withdraw the student from attendance at HMS and indicate the name of the school to which transfer will be made. A withdrawal form must be signed in the office by the parent(s) before the student leaves.
2. Students are responsible to turn in their textbooks to teachers.

### **B. BOOK RENTAL**

Textbook rental and fees are due and payable online during registration. If unable to pay in full, a parent may set up a payment plan in RDS. The amount due for book rental and fees could vary depending on the courses a student is taking. Fees will be pro-rated for students who either register or withdraw from classes during the course of either semester.

Students accepted on the free or reduced lunch program qualify for a reduction of their book rental/fees cost.

Students are responsible for all books, materials, supplies, and equipment assigned to them or provided for their use. Abuse or loss of such items will result in payment for the lost or damaged items and possible disciplinary action.

Any student using a school instrument (Band or Orchestra) is responsible for all repairs or replacement for damages. All instruments must be returned at the end of each school year.

### **C. FEES**

In addition to book rental, fees are charged for consumable materials used in certain courses and Discover classes. These fees are included in the book rental fee. Regardless of the purpose, all checks should be made payable to **Highland Middle School**. Credit cards and on-line payments are also accepted.

### **D. LOCKERS**

According to Indiana State Law, school lockers remain the property of the school, and the school authorities have a responsibility and a right to examine the contents of those lockers for reasons of health, safety, and security. Acceptance of a locker by the student is acknowledgment of this right.

1. Lockers should contain jackets, lunches, and books only. Students should bring no more items to school or food than they intend to use on any given day. Money and other valuables should never be left in lockers.
2. The school is not responsible for loss to or damage of a student's personal property.
3. All books and personal belongings are to be kept in a neat, orderly fashion.
4. Locker combinations are strictly private information and must not be given out to anyone.
5. Locker malfunctions must be reported to the office immediately.
6. Students are forbidden to share lockers without permission from the office.
7. Under no circumstances should any locker be kicked, hit, drawn on, or defaced in any way.
8. Any persons caught tampering, opening, or removing items from any locker other than their own without proper authorization will face strong disciplinary action.
9. Students should never leave their locker without making sure it is locked.
10. A \$5.00 fee will be required in order to change a locker combination.
11. Sunglasses, backpacks, etc. are to be stored in the student's locker during the day.

### **E. EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Fire drills are required by law in Indiana. Drills will be held monthly. Evacuations are timed and recorded for the Fire Marshall. Fire evacuation routes are posted in each classroom.

Tornado Drills are held at least twice each semester. Each classroom has posted a designated tornado shelter area for students in that class in case of a tornado drill or warning.

Lockdown Drills are also held periodically throughout the year.

During any drill, students are to remain with their own class and teacher and behave in accordance with teacher directions at all times.

### **F. BOMB THREATS**

School personnel work closely with the police department utilizing established procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff.

### **G. TELEPHONES**

Use of the office phone or personal cell phone by students is permitted with staff approval.

### **H. ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **1. ABSENCE DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION**

The State of Indiana designates a child as a habitual truant or chronically absent when their unexcused absences exceed ten (10) days in one school year. Absences may be classified as countable or non-countable. See table:

<p><u>COUNTABLE</u> Excused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal illness not verified by physicians statement</li> <li>• Prearranged absences including vacations</li> </ul>	<p><u>COUNTABLE</u> Unexcused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Truancy</li> <li>• Other preapproved absences under discretion of the Administration</li> <li>• Over 10 days of excused</li> </ul>
<p><u>NONCOUNTABLE</u> Excused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal illness verified by physicians statement saying student is not to attend school</li> <li>• Death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent)</li> <li>• Serving as a page</li> <li>• Court appointment</li> <li>• Working polls on election day</li> <li>• In School Suspension</li> <li>• Doctor, dentist, and orthodontist appointments</li> <li>• Observance of religious holidays (see note)</li> </ul> <p>* In order for observance of religious holiday to be excused, parents or guardians must provide the school with a written excuse explaining the observance of a religious holiday. The absence must take place on the actual date of the holiday. Absence work must still be made up.</p>	<p><u>NONCOUNTABLE</u> Unexcused</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out-of-School Suspension</li> <li>• Students are responsible for obtaining their own work</li> </ul>

Excused or Unexcused:

Highland Middle School also classifies all absences as excused or unexcused. This classification determines if work missed during the absence will be accepted for credit. If an absence is excused, the student's missed work is the responsibility of the students and must be made up to receive credit. Work is to be made up in the number of days absent plus one or a zero will be given for the assignment.

2. ABSENCE PROCEDURE

Parents or guardians must call the school office between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM if a student is going to be absent, tardy, or leave the school for an appointment. If the parent explains on the student's first day of absence that the student will be gone for an extended time, in the hospital, long illness, etc., then the parent need not call back every day.

THE PHONE CALL DOES NOT GUARANTEE AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. (See excused absence above). Office staff answering the phone will ask the reason for the absence. If there is an unusual circumstance for a student's absence, parents should ask to speak with an administrator.

**The student should report to the office immediately upon returning to school. The student should bring a note from home. The note should contain the student's name, date(s) of absence, reason for absence, and a parent signature.**

If the absence was due to illness and a physician was visited, a medical excuse must be presented to the office within three days verifying the date(s) the student was too ill to attend.

Routine medical and dental appointments are excused absences. A student who has an appointment should bring a note to school from a parent verifying the appointment and the time the student is to leave school. This note must be presented to the office before school begins on the day to be excused. This student will be given a "Passport" which allows him/her to leave class at the designated time. The student must then report to the office and sign out. Upon return, the student must sign back in. A note from a physician's or dentist's office verifying the time to be excused must be presented to the office. Only the time of the appointment and appropriate travel time will be excused.

### 3. PROCEDURE FOR SIGNING IN-SIGNING OUT

Students arriving to school after 8:27 AM must report directly to the office and sign in; those arriving after 9:00 AM must provide a note from the parent explaining the reason for being late. Once a student arrives at school, he/she is expected to stay in the building until school is dismissed. If a student needs to leave the building for any reason, he/she must sign out through the office.

### 4. VACATIONS:

Parents who take children out of school for vacations must assume responsibility for unsatisfactory work or difficulty in school work caused by such absences. It is recognized that certain types of class work can only be accomplished through DIRECT student participation during regular class time, and, therefore, cannot be made up; students will, however, be held responsible for this material on tests, quizzes, and final exams. **Pre-arranged vacations are COUNTABLE** absences that are EXCUSED and COUNT toward the student's ten-day limit.

#### I. MAKE-UP-WORK:

- a. All missed work from an excused absence is the responsibility of the student and must be made up to receive credit. Work is to be made up in the number of days absent plus one or a zero will be given for that assignment.
- b. Missed work can be accessed through the HMS website under academic teams. Parents may come to school at 3:30 PM with their child's locker number and combination and go down to their locker for their books. Those without internet access can contact the office by 9:30 AM to request work be sent home after the second full day of absence.
- c. The following conditions will apply to students who receive suspension:
  1. Tests and quizzes will be made up and count academically.
  2. Daily assignments should be made up in a timely manner.

#### J. PASSES

All students should have a pass obtained from a teacher to be in the halls other than during passing times. Passes should be given to all students who are excused from class. It is the student's responsibility to secure a pass before he/she leaves the room. Students will not be admitted to Health Services without a pass. If it is passing time, the student must report to the next class to obtain a pass.

#### K. EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of severe weather or any type of an emergency that would warrant the closing of the schools, please do not call the schools. We have been instructed to listen to WJOB (Hammond) 1230 AM, WZVN (Merrillville) 107.1 FM, or WAKE (Valparaiso) 1500 AM for all area emergency closing information. We also post any emergency closing or late start information on our website at [www.highland.k12.in.us](http://www.highland.k12.in.us) and the emergency system calls all home phone numbers with any information.

## VI. SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

### IC20-33-8-10

#### Disciplinary powers of principals

Sec. 10. (a) A principal may take action concerning the principal's school or a school activity within the principal's jurisdiction that is reasonably necessary to carry out or prevent interference with an educational function or school purposes.

(b) Subsection (a) allows a principal to write regulations that govern student conduct.

*As added by P.L. 1-2005, SEC. 17.*

### IC 20-33-8-8

#### Duty and powers of school corporation to supervise and discipline students.

Sec. 8. (a) Student supervision and the desirable behaviour of students in carrying out school purposes is the responsibility of:

- (1) a school corporation; and
- (2) the students of a school corporation.

(b) In all matters relating to the discipline and conduct of students, school corporation personnel:

- (1) stand in the relation of parents to the students of the school corporation; and
- (2) have the right to take any disciplinary action necessary to promote student conduct that conforms with an orderly and effective educational system, subject to this chapter.

(c) Students must:

- (1) follow responsible directions of school personnel in all educational settings; and
- (2) refrain from disruptive behaviour that interferes with the educational environment.

*As added by P.L. 1-2005, SEC. 17.*

#### A. TARDY POLICY

A tardy is defined as a student not being inside the classroom when the class is scheduled to begin.

1st Tardy -Verbal warning

2nd Tardy -Options at teacher's discretion. This may include parent call, written assignment, team conference, before or after school detention, shortened passing times, or written warning to parent.

3rd Tardy -30 minute office detention

4th Tardy - 45 minute office detention

5th and Subsequent Tardies - Office detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion.

If a student is 5 or more minutes late to class, the absence may be considered unexcused and the student may be considered truant. The teacher should document the unexcused absence and submit a discipline referral.

#### B. HALLWAY BEHAVIOR

- Staff members have jurisdiction over all students within the halls and in any other area outside of the classroom.
- No student is to be out of class without a pass.
- Students should keep moving. Do not block traffic by standing or sitting in groups.
- Pass through the halls quietly, no shouting or loud talking. Do not interrupt classes in session.
- No pushing, running, shoving, rough playing, kicking or punching of lockers.
- Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students should remain in the halls closest to their classrooms.

### **C. VANDALISM/ELECTRONIC VANDALISM**

Vandalism is the act of willful damage to property belonging to the school or to another person while under school jurisdiction. The student will be responsible for restitution (repair or replacement), as well as appropriate discipline. In addition, the student may be referred to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for invalidation or revocation of an operator's license or learner's permit should the vandalism involve the use of graffiti.

Electronic vandalism is the act of stealing or deliberately damaging any computer hardware or software or the unauthorized use of, or entry into, any computer program or system not intended for student use is prohibited. The student will be responsible for restitution (repair or replacement) and be subject to appropriate discipline.

### **D. BUS RULES**

The School Town provides bus transportation for students in designated bus zones. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the free school bus transportation. Bus drivers have supervision and authority over passengers and deserve the same respect as teachers and other school employees. Students are expected to show courtesy to the bus driver and to other students and to behave in a manner which promotes safety. All school rules apply to students from the time students leave their homes in the morning, until they return into their homes after school. Misconduct on a bus, or at a bus stop, may result in the loss of bus riding privileges and other disciplinary action. While riding on a school bus, students must adhere to the following rules:

1. Take a seat immediately and remain seated until instructed by the driver to leave the bus.
2. Keep doors and windows closed unless given permission.
3. Keep head, arms and hands inside the bus at all times.
4. Keep the bus clean by throwing all trash in a trash can.
5. Report bus or seat damage to the driver immediately. Students who damage the bus or seats will be required to pay for repairs.
6. Cooperate with the bus driver.
7. Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited at all times.
8. Bus drivers or school personnel may restrict the use of or confiscate any personal or school issued electronic device.
9. While on the bus, students are prohibited from using personal or school issued electronic devices to capture or record sounds or images (pictures, videos).

### **E. BREAKFAST AND LUNCHROOM**

1. MISBEHAVIOR IN THE CAFETERIA WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
2. Books and study materials should not be taken into the cafeteria during lunch hour.
3. Students may eat the school lunch or bring a lunch from home; milk, juice, and other items may be purchased to supplement the lunch. ALL FOOD MUST BE EATEN IN THE CAFETERIA AT ASSIGNED SEATS. No food or drinks may be taken from the cafeteria.
4. Students will be dismissed by table to enter the food line and also to exit the cafeteria.
5. Students are responsible for their own tray and garbage in the cafeteria. Trays are to be returned and all garbage and paper are to be placed in the trash container.
6. Because classes are in session, students are not permitted to leave the cafeteria until they are dismissed.
7. Students are not allowed to have food catered to the school.

### **F. CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

Teachers have different requirements for classroom behavior due to the type of class activities occurring in that classroom. Students should make themselves aware of what behavior is or is not considered acceptable by each of their teachers. A record of these unacceptable behaviors will be kept. Students are to leave the school building after school is dismissed. Only those students involved in an after-school activity are allowed to remain in the school. Students participating in an activity involving a staff member or coach have ten minutes to reach the assigned area. Upon dismissal from the activity, students are to leave the building immediately.

### **G. DISCIPLINARY ISSUES**

Reprimand, parent conference, detentions, suspension from after school activities, suspension, probation, referral to juvenile court, referral to special personnel in the school (counselors, assistant principal), and expulsion are options available to handle school discipline problems. Upon receipt of the 12<sup>th</sup> day per

semester or 15<sup>th</sup> day per year of suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, a student may be recommended for expulsion. Some behavior is much more serious than others and requires different approaches and clearly defined action. Further definitions are given on p. 28.

1. Chronic absenteeism
2. Arson - The willful and malicious burning, or attempt to burn, of any property of the school district.
3. Engaging in any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another person or urging of other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct includes coercion, harassment, bullying, hazing or other comparable conduct.
4. Bullying – A student is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students.

Direct bullying includes: hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, taunting, teasing, degrading racial or sexual comments, threatening, and obscene gestures.

Indirect bullying includes:

- Getting another person to assault someone
  - Spreading rumors
  - Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity
  - Cyber-bullying
5. Cheating - Any student caught cheating on homework, quizzes, tests or other assignments may receive a zero on that work. Any subsequent occurrences in the same class may result in a zero on the report card. This would include engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores. Plagiarism and theft of intellectual property (material found via the web that is considered to be the property of others.) is therefore not allowed. There will be consequences related to plagiarism and or the theft of information or property such as music, software, and research material obtained through Internet sources.
  6. Disrespect - The lack of proper respect or courtesy shown towards another person.
  7. Other acts of disruption to the educational process - Acts detrimental to the educational process or safety of others will be handled by the classroom teacher and/or administration (i.e., IPODs, hats, etc.)
  8. Falsely accusing any person of sexual harassment, or of violating a school rule and/or a state or federal law.
  9. Forgery - The act of fraudulently using or falsifying names, dates, addresses, or other information (i.e., parent notes, hall passes, false identification, permission slips, etc.)
  10. Gambling
  11. Insubordination - The failure to comply with reasonable rules and/or requests from school personnel or other persons in charge of students.
  12. Intimidation - verbal or nonverbal threat without physical contact
  13. Obscenity
  14. Physical Altercation - The act of participating in a physical altercation on school property, at any school-related activity, or going to or from school
  15. Possession and/or use of cigarettes or other tobacco products, lighters, matches, or other paraphernalia, drugs, or alcoholic beverages
  16. Reckless Misconduct - The act of behaving in a way that presents a possibility of harm to oneself, others, or damage to school or personal property.
  17. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage to property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
  18. Throwing or kicking snow or ice.
  19. Truancy
  20. Failing to completely and truthfully respond to questions from a staff member regarding school related matters including potential violations of the student conduct rules or state or federal law.
  21. Engaging in violence and/or threat of violence against any student, staff member, and/or other persons. Prohibited violent or threatening conduct includes threatening, planning, or conspiring with others to engage in violent activity.

## **H. TOBACCO ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

It is against School Town of Highland's policy for a middle school student to possess and/or use cigarettes, e-cigarettes or tobacco, including matches and/or lighters, on school property. This policy will be enforced on any school property, or at school activities, in the following manner:

1st violation: Student's parents will be called by an administrator and the student will be suspended for 3 days out-of-school.

Subsequent violations: Will result in suspension and/or expulsion.

## **I. DRIVING**

Indiana Public Law 121-1989 requires that Highland Middle School report to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles concerning students who are habitually truant and are between the ages of 13 and 15 and students of all ages who are suspended from school attendance for a second time during the school year or are expelled or excluded from school for misconduct. According to this law, the driver's license of any person under the age of 18 who is under expulsion or exclusion will subsequently be invalidated by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

## **J. ALCOHOL/DRUG USE/POSSESSION**

- A. The use, possession, or being under the influence of a controlled substance or look alike drug on school property or at a school related activity is prohibited at any time. Furthermore, the possession of any instrument, appliance, or paraphernalia designed or used for controlled substances is not permitted. Also, students are prohibited from leaving school grounds for the purpose of taking controlled substances of any kind, unless under the direction of a licensed medical doctor. Controlled substances may be, but are not limited to, alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants, or hallucinogens, whether prescription or sold over the counter (without prescription), including caffeine-based pills, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PRA), inhalants, or stimulants of any kind, with or without prescription, or any substance represented by the provider to be any of the listed substances.
- B. The sale or delivery of a controlled substance, or any substance represented to be a controlled substance, on school property or at any school related activity is prohibited at any time. Items considered to be controlled substances are listed under A. above.

## **K. ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

All electronics (except for school issued iPads) must be turned off between 8:12–3:18 unless students are permitted to use them in the classroom at the teacher's discretion. By bringing these devices on school grounds, students give the school administration consent to access voicemails, text messages, call logs, picture galleries, hard drives, memory cards, etc., to determine ownership (if lost) or when there is reason to believe they contain evidence of a school-rule or law violation. Such devices that are found will be confiscated and the student may face appropriate disciplinary action. Pictures may not be taken during the school day unless given permission by a teacher. The school is not responsible for any such devices that are stolen, lost, or damaged.

## **L. GANG POLICY**

Highland Middle School recognizes that the presence of gangs or gang-related activity causes a substantial disruption of school activities and, therefore, prohibits the existence of gangs or gang activities on school grounds or at any school activity.

It is prohibited to . . .

Use force, intimidation, threat, fear, or passive resistance to solicit other students for membership or encourage other students to engage in such conduct. Commit any act or use any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (handshakes, graffiti, gestures), that shows membership or affiliation. Wear any item (clothing or jewelry) which promotes or alludes to gang affiliation.

The presence of gangs, cults, and occults can cause a substantial disruption of the learning process and acceptable school activities. Therefore, the administration will attempt to prohibit this activity by restricting the following actions:

No student on or about school property or at any school activity shall:

1. Wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, or other such items identified and associated with gang, cult, and occult membership or affiliation.
2. Use hand signals, graffiti, gestures or other written communications showing membership or affiliation in a gang, cult or occult.
3. Use any speech or commit any act in promoting of gang, cult, or occult interests or activities including, but not limited to:
  - a. Soliciting others for membership in any gang, cult, or occult
  - b. Threatening or intimidating others
  - c. Inciting others to commit physical violence
  - d. Claiming gang affiliation

**M. DISRUPTIVE AND DANGEROUS ITEMS**

Students are not to bring any items to school that may cause a disturbance to the learning environment or create a safety hazard to themselves or others. Therefore, water guns, water balloons, smoke bombs, stink bombs, skateboards, rollerblades, legal or illegal fireworks, laser pointers/pens, and similar disruptive and/or dangerous items are not to be used or in the possession of students either inside or outside the building. At no time and under no circumstances are students to have weapons or any dangerous instruments in their possession, in their lockers, or on school property. Confiscated items may not be returned to their owner. Appropriate disciplinary action may follow.

**N. DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

Overt displays of affection are not appropriate school behavior in the building, on school grounds, on the bus, or at any school-related activity and will not be condoned.

**O. HARASSMENT**

Threats, coercion, or harassment which includes, but is not limited to, racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual remarks by students at Highland Middle School is prohibited. A student who is a victim of harassment or related activities is expected to report such actions to an administrator, teacher, or other designated authority. Any student who is involved in any form of harassment of another student is in direct violation of school discipline guidelines and such action will result in disciplinary action.

**P. CHEWING GUM**

Chewing gum is allowed in the building at teacher discretion.

**Q. EXTORTION**

The act of extorting or attempting to borrow any money or anything of value unless both parties enter into the agreement freely and without the presence of either an implied or expressed threat.

**R. SAFETY**

The act of tampering with or misusing a fire extinguisher, alarm system, or other safety equipment. The placing of fraudulent 911 emergency calls is also a violation of this policy.

**S. BULLYING (I.C. 20-33-8-13.5)**

Bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviours that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property;
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

This rule applies regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when both the student committing bullying and the targeted student attend a school within the school corporation.

Any student or parent who has knowledge of bullying or any student who feels he/she has been bullied should immediately report the conduct to school personnel. This report may be made anonymously through a form on the district's website.

School personnel will investigate all reports of bullying. The school will communicate to all parties involved, as needed and/or required by district policy.

School personnel will provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student(s) and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior. If the bullying behavior is a violation of law, it will be reported to law enforcement.

Intentional false reporting of bullying will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Violation of this rule prohibiting bullying will result in any appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Unlawful Activity (I.C. 20-33-8-15)**

A student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

- The unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
- The student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property including an unlawful activity during evenings, weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

### **Intimidation (I.C. 34-45-5-21)**

A person who communicates a threat to another person, with the intent:

- A. That the other person engage in conduct against the other person's will;
- B. That the other person be placed in fear of retaliation for a prior lawful act; or
- C. Of causing
  - a. A dwelling, a building, or another structure; or
  - b. A vehicle to be evacuated, commits intimidation, a Class A misdemeanor.

However, the offense is a Class D felony if:

- A. The threat is to commit a forcible felony;
- B. The person to whom the threat is communicated is:
  - a. a law enforcement officer;
  - b. a judge or bailiff of any court;
  - c. a witness (or the spouse or child of a witness) in any pending criminal proceeding against the person making the threat; or
  - d. an employee of a school corporation.
- C. The person has a prior unrelated conviction for an offense under this section concerning the same victim; or
- D. The threat is communicated using property, including electronic equipment or systems, of a school corporation or other governmental entity; and

The offense is a Class C felony if, while committing it, the person draws or uses a deadly weapon.

"Threat" means an expression, by words or actions, of an intention to:

1. Unlawfully injure the person threatened or another person, or damage property;
2. Unlawfully subject a person to physical confinement or restraint;
3. Commit a crime;
4. Unlawfully withhold official action or cause such withholding;
5. Unlawfully withhold testimony or information with respect to another person's legal claim or defense, except for a reasonable claim for witness fees or expenses;
6. Expose the person threatened to hatred, contempt, disgrace, or ridicule;
7. Falsely harm the credit or business reputation of the person threatened; or
8. Cause the evacuation of a dwelling, a building, another structure, or a vehicle.

## **T. EXPULSION**

Expulsion is disciplinary action whereby a student is suspended from school attendance for longer than ten (10) days. It will be recommended that a student be expelled from a class or classes when he or she has been assigned any combination of **12 In-School Suspension** days, or Out-of-School Suspension days during the course of a semester. Students may also be expelled from school for the following violations of the Student Code of Conduct: possession/use of alcoholic beverages, drug use/possession, drug sale and/or delivery, possession/use of weapons, and false alarms, as well as violations listed in Appendix A and Appendix B. Expulsion means loss of credit and failing grades recorded on the student's transcript. In accordance with the due process procedures outlined in this policy, a student may be expelled from school for a period no longer than the remainder of the current semester plus the following semester, with the exception of a violation of Rule B1 and Rule B2 listed under the Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion in this policy (Appendix B). When a principal recommends to the superintendent (or designee) that a student be expelled from school, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The superintendent (or designee) may conduct an expulsion meeting, or may appoint one of the following persons to conduct the expulsion meeting:
  - a. legal counsel;
  - b. a member of the administrative staff who did not expel the student during the current school year and was not involved in the events giving rise to the expulsion.
2. Upon receipt of the 12<sup>th</sup> day per semester or 15<sup>th</sup> day per year of suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, a student may be recommended for expulsion.
3. The request to appear at the expulsion meeting will be in writing, delivered by certified mail or by personal delivery, and contain the reasons for the expulsion and contain the procedure for requesting an expulsion meeting.
4. At the expulsion meeting, the principal (or designee) will present evidence to the charges against the student. The student or parent will have the opportunity to answer the charges against the student and to present evidence to support the student's position.
5. If an expulsion meeting is held, the person conducting the expulsion meeting will make a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting, take any action found to be appropriate, and give notice of the action taken to the student and the student's parents.

### **Appeal Rights -**

The Board of School Trustees has voted not to hear any expulsion appeals. Instead, appeals of expulsion must be filed with the appropriate court.

If the student or the student's parent requests an appeal of this determination, the discipline action stated above shall continue in effect unless the appropriate court takes action otherwise.

## **U. PERSONAL SEARCH**

Students have the right to be safe and secure at school and to pursue their education in a safe and disciplined environment. In order to ensure the security of the school and the safety of the students, faculty, administration and staff, students and objects in the possession of students such as a coat, jacket, purse, briefcase, back-pack, or gym bag, will be subject to random administrative inspections, including those conducted with metal detectors or law enforcement. Refusal to cooperate with a reasonable request for such administrative inspection may result in disciplinary action.

School authorities may seize any contraband, substance, or article that is illegal, or any material or object which violates a school rule or poses a hazard to the safety and good order of the school. Students are not to bring these items to school or to any school – sponsored function.

- 1 Authority to Conduct a Search – The law allows school authorities to search students, their lockers, their motor vehicles and personal property when they have reasonable suspicion that a particular student is in possession of something prohibited by school rules or by law. The administration reserves the right to rely on anonymous tips that are given on a good faith basis to

conduct school searches. Refusal to cooperate with a reasonable request for such administrative inspection may result in disciplinary action.

2. Locker/Storage Area Inspections (IC 20-33-8-32) – All lockers and other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school district and are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search. No student shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker or storage area except with a lock provided by or approved by school authorities. Unapproved locks shall be removed and destroyed.
3. Personal Searches – A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal, unauthorized or contraband items.
4. Motor Vehicle Searches – Motor vehicles which are driven by students and parked on or near school property during regular school hours or during school activities are subject to being searched when school officials have reasonable suspicion that the vehicle contains illegal, unauthorized or contraband items.

## **v. Non-discrimination – Section 504 Policy**

The School Town of Highland does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Director of Personnel & Pupil Services  
9145 Kennedy Avenue Highland, IN 46322  
(219) 9247400

For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, see list of OCR enforcement offices for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call (800) 421-3481

## **Civil Rights Nondiscrimination – Grievance Procedure**

### **A. LEVEL ONE**

1. All complaints must be in writing to the immediate supervisor or principal.
2. The complaint shall stipulate the act or omission, the date of same, and the parties involved.
3. The supervisor or principal shall initiate investigation of the circumstances of the complaint within six (6) calendar days of the receipt of the written complaint.
4. The supervisor or principal shall render a decision within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the written complaint.
5. The complainant shall have six (6) calendar days to react to the decision before it becomes final.
6. If the complainant disagrees with the decision of the supervisor or principal and submits in writing to the supervisor or principal, a Level Two procedure shall be enacted.

### **B. LEVEL TWO**

1. The supervisor or principal shall submit the written disagreement statement and all related information to the superintendent within three (3) calendar days of receipt.
2. The superintendent or designee shall review all materials and schedule a meeting within six (6) calendar days of receipt of the written disagreement and all related information. The participants shall be the complainant, the supervisor or principal, and the superintendent or designee. Other witnesses may be called with mutual prior notice of three (3) calendar days.

3. The superintendent shall make a decision within six (6) calendar days of the final meeting of parties. This decision shall be final.

**NOTE:** By mutual agreement, circumstances of calendar availability may result in extension of stipulated time allowances if a request is made in writing by either party and so agreed to by the parties.

**If the alleged violation, interpretation, or application is of a corporate nature, such as a written rule, regulation, or policy, Level Two is initiated immediately.**

## **DRESS CODE POLICY**

We ask for the support of our parents in ensuring that students come to school properly groomed and dressed. Proper attire is defined as clothing that is clean, does not create a health or safety hazard and is not distracting or demeaning to other students.

### **General Guidelines**

- Any clothing, shoes or accessories that may pose a health/safety risk or is a disruption to the educational environment is not allowed.
- Clothing that is excessively ripped, tattered or has holes revealing undergarments or skin is not allowed.
- Clothing that is sheer/see-through or stretches to reveal skin is not allowed.
- Clothing containing references to gangs, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, violence, profanities, religious/racial slurs or anything offensive is not allowed.

### **Tops**

- All tops must go to shoulders and be long enough in the front and back to not reveal skin or undergarments
- All tops are to be appropriately fitting, not excessively tight or loose nor revealing of skin or straps.

### **Bottoms**

- All bottom garments are to be appropriately sized, not sagging, and cover undergarments.
- Shorts, skirts and dresses must be past finger tips when shoulders are in normal position.

### **Headwear**

- Not allowed: hats, caps, full bandanas, do-rags, sunglasses, etc. Exceptions are allowed for medical and religious reasons.
- Hoods must be down.

### **Footwear**

- Not allowed: heeled shoes, bedroom slippers or any other shoes without a hard bottom. *Some classes may have specific footwear requirements for safety.*

Any form of clothing which is considered contrary to good hygiene, safety requirements or is disruptive to the educational process will not be permitted. The school administration reserves the

right to approve or disapprove any items not addressed in the dress code policy.

*September 9, 2015*

## APPENDIX A

### STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Jurisdiction for any form of disciplinary action at Highland Middle School applies when a student is:

1. on school grounds immediately before, during, and after school hours or at any other time the school is being used,
2. off school grounds at a school related activity, or
3. traveling to or from school or at a school-related activity.
4. a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity (I.C. 20-33-8-15) on or off school grounds if:
  - a. the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
  - b. the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property; Including an unlawful activity during the weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

Student misconduct could result in, **but is not limited to**, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, referral to appropriate law enforcement agency, and/or payment of damages, depending on the circumstances and merits of the case.

#### EXPULSION

A ten (10) day suspension from school with recommendation to the Superintendent for expulsion and referral to legal authorities may occur for the following infractions:

1. **Alcoholic Beverages** - The use, possession, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages on school property or at any school-related activity is prohibited at any time.
2. **Drug Use/Possession** - The use, possession, or being under the influence of a controlled substance on school property or at a school related activity is prohibited at any time. Furthermore, the possession of any instrument, appliance, or paraphernalia designed or used for controlled substances is not permitted. Also, students are prohibited from leaving school grounds for the purpose of taking controlled substances of any kind, unless under the direction of a licensed medical doctor. Controlled substances may be, but are not limited to, alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants, or hallucinogens, whether prescription or sold over the counter (without prescription), including caffeine-based pills, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PRA), inhalants, or stimulants of any kind, with or without prescription, or any substance represented by the provider to be any of the listed substances.
3. **Drug Sale or Delivery** - The sale or delivery of a controlled substance, or any substance represented to be a controlled substance, on school property or at any school-related activity is prohibited at any time. Items considered to be controlled substances are listed under #2., Drug Use and Possession above.
4. **Possession/Use of Weapons** - The act of possessing, using, or threatening to use any weapon, firearm, explosive (i.e., fireworks, smoke bombs), animal capable of causing serious bodily injury, or instrument (i.e., knife, laser, stun gun), capable of inflicting bodily injury, or related paraphernalia (i.e., "How-to"Manuals, etc.).
5. **False Alarms** - The act of initiating or circulating a report of warning of fire, bombing, or other catastrophes.

## Appropriate Discipline

Student misconduct could result in, but is not limited to detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, referral to appropriate law enforcement agency, and/or payment of damages, depending on the circumstances and merits of the case. In addition to school consequences, physical fights will also result in a referral to the police. **The principal's discipline decision is final. Other than disciplinary action involving a recommendation for expulsion, the decision of the building principal is final. There is no appeal process.**

1. **Academic Dishonesty** - Any student caught cheating on homework, quizzes, tests or other assignments may receive a zero on that work. Any subsequent occurrences in the same class may result in a zero on the report card.
2. **Arson** - The willful and malicious burning, or attempt to burn, of any property of the school district.
3. **Computer Piracy/Misuse** - The act of stealing or maliciously damaging any computer hardware or software or the unauthorized use or entry into any computer program not intended for use is forbidden.
4. **Display of Affection** - Overt displays of affection are not appropriate school behavior in the building, on school grounds, or at any school-related activities and will not be condoned.
5. **Disrespect** - The lack of proper respect or courtesy shown towards another person.
6. **Dress/Appearance** - Articles of clothing which express recognition of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, cults, or gangs are not acceptable dress in school or at school-related activities. Extremely short shorts, cut-offs, or skirts, tank tops, tube tops, camies, sagging pants, and halters are not to be worn. Chains or articles of wear that have raised, metal studs are not permitted at any time.
7. **Electronic Devices** - Students are not to use electronic devices unless they are school issued or with the permission of the teacher during the school day. Devices that are found will be confiscated and the student may face appropriate disciplinary action. The school is not responsible for any devices that are stolen, lost or damaged.
8. **Electronic Vandalism** - The act of willful damage to computer hardware, software, or network connections belonging to the school. The student will be responsible for restitution, repair and/or replacement, as well as appropriate discipline.
9. **Extortion** - The act of extorting or attempting to borrow any money or anything of value unless both parties enter into the agreement freely and without the presence of either an implied or expressed threat.
10. **Food Fight** - The willful and intentional throwing of food and/or beverage items or containers.
11. **Forgery** - The act of fraudulently using or falsifying names, dates, grades, addresses, or other information (i.e. parent notes, hall passes, false identification, etc.).
12. **Gambling** - The act of being involved with the betting or wagering of money or anything of value. This includes, but is not limited to, cards, dice, and sporting events.
13. **Gangs** - The presence of gangs, cults, and occults can cause a substantial disruption of the learning process and acceptable school activities.
14. **Harassment** - Threats, coercion, or intimidation towards another person through verbal statement, gestures, or physical contact.

15. **Inappropriate Behavior in the Cafeteria** - Messing tables and/or floor, failure to return trays, horseplay, running to lunch, crowding in line, and the like.
16. **Indecent Exposure** - Improper exposure of personal body parts.
17. **Insubordination** - The failure to comply with reasonable rules and/or requests from school personnel or other persons in charge of students.
18. **Intimidation** - The act of taunting or threatening another person.
19. **Loitering** - A student is considered loitering when he or she is not in his or her assigned area.
20. **Misuse of Safety Equipment** - The act of tampering with or misusing a fire extinguisher, alarm system, or other safety equipment. The placing of fraudulent 911 emergency calls is also a violation of this policy.
21. **Obscenity** - The act of engaging in conduct, in oral or written form, or in pictures, caricatures, or gestures, including clothing, jewelry, or hair style, which is profane, indecent, lewd, vulgar, or otherwise offensive to the general standards and purposes of the school and/or community. **This includes language that is racially, culturally, or otherwise insensitive.**
22. **Other Acts of Disruption** - Acts detrimental to the educational process or safety of others will be handled by the classroom teacher and/or administration (i.e., Walkman radios, hats, etc.)
23. **Physical Altercation** - The act of participating in a physical altercation on school property, at any school-related activity, or going to or from school.
24. **Plagiarism** - To use the writing or ideas of another as one's own without proper acknowledgment.
25. **Sexual Harassment** - The use of sexually-related verbal statements, gestures, or physical contact.
26. **Stealing** - Taking anything that belongs to the school or to another person at any time on school property or at any school-related activity.
27. **Tardy** - A student is tardy when he or she is not inside the classroom when class is scheduled to begin.
28. **Tobacco Products** - The use or possession of tobacco products (i.e., cigarettes, chew, snuff) or related paraphernalia (matches, lighters, etc.) is prohibited at any time on school property or at any school-related function. Furthermore, students are prohibited from leaving school grounds for the purpose of using tobacco products at any time.
29. **Truancy** - A student is truant when he or she is somewhere on school property without proper authorization or is absent from school for an invalid reason.
30. **Vandalism** - The act of willful damage to property belonging to the school or to another person while under school jurisdiction. The student will be responsible for restitution (repair or replacement) and subject to appropriate discipline.
31. **Verbal Altercation** - Participating in a verbal argument with another person on school property, at any school-related activity, or going to or from school.

The following examples are not inclusive and are not the only acts or conditions for which disciplinary action is warranted, nor do they in any way limit this policy. All violations are subject to Indiana Code 20-33-8-14: Grounds for Expulsion or Suspension (Appendix B). **ALL DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS WILL ACCUMULATE FOR THE ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR.**

## APPENDIX B

### INDIANA CODE Student Due Process

#### 20-33-8-14: Grounds for Expulsion or Suspension.

(A). The grounds for expulsion or suspension are student misconduct or substantial disobedience and apply when a student is:

- (1). on school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group,
- (2). off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event, or
- (3). travelling to or from school or a school activity, function or event.

(B). In addition, students will be recommended for expulsion under the following provisions of Indiana Law:

- (1). 20-33-8-16(c) Possession of a Firearm.
  - a. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any firearm on school property.
  - b. The following devices are considered to be a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code:
    - any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
    - the frame or receiver of any weapon described above;
    - any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
    - any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter, mine, or any similar device;
    - any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter;
    - any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
  - c. The penalty for possession of a firearm will be ten (10) days suspension and expulsion from school for one (1) calendar year. The length of the expulsion may be reduced by the Superintendent if the circumstances warrant such reduction.
  - d. The Superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.
- (2). 20-33-8-16(e) Possessing a Deadly Weapon.
  - a. No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any deadly weapon on school grounds.
  - b. The following devices are considered to be deadly weapons as defined in I.C. 35-41.1-8;
    - A weapon, laser or electronic stun weapon, equipment, chemical substance, or

other material that, in the manner it is used or could ordinarily be used, is readily capable of causing serious bodily injury.

- An animal readily capable of causing serious bodily injury and used in the commission, or attempted commission, of a crime.

- c. The penalty for possession of a deadly weapon will be ten (10) days suspension from school and expulsion from school for a period of not more than one (1) calendar year.
- d. The Superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.

(3). 20-33-8-17. Legal Settlement.

A student may be expelled from school if the student's legal settlement is not in the attendance area of the school corporation where the student is enrolled.

(4). 20-33-8-15

A student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if:

- (a) the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function; or
- (b) the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property;  
Including an unlawful activity during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

## **STAFF/STUDENT E-MAIL AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The computing systems, networks and related facilities in the School Town of Highland are intended to support the School Town mission statement

"Through motivations, challenge, and recognition, we pledge to teach the knowledge and skills essential to respond effectively to the demands of an ever changing world."

To this end, the School Town's growing technology provides unequalled opportunities to explore and use a varied and exciting set of resources including computer programs, CDs, electronic mail, and Internet. With the Internet use also comes a potential for abuse. It is expected that the School Town of Highland faculty will blend thoughtful use of the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access from school to Internet resources should be structured in ways which point students to those sites which have been evaluated prior to use. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to learning objectives. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies, and other possibly offensive media. The purpose of this policy and subsequent Internet contract is to make sure that all who use the network services, including students, parents, and faculty, realize that the educational value of student Internet access is the joint responsibility of the students, parents and employees of the School Town of Highland.

The most important prerequisite for someone to use the network services is that he or she takes full responsibility for his or her own actions. The School Town of Highland will not be liable for the actions of anyone while using the network locally or on the Internet. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their actions. In addition, the school system takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through the Internet, either through the school equipment or personal equipment from a remote location, and stored on School Town file servers.

This complete policy and accompanying procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, and other members of the community.

## **RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE E-MAIL USER**

The content and maintenance of a user's electronic mailbox is the user's responsibility. Each e-mail user will:

1. Read the School Town of Highland Staff/Student E-mail and Internet Acceptable Use Policy, complete a School Town of Highland Network Resources Contract, and obey the provisions of that agreement. In addition to the form, student users of the internet must have their parent or guardian read through the Policy and sign the bottom of the contract.
2. Use the e-mail system for its intended educational purposes only. Commercial use of e-mail is prohibited. Use of the Internet for partisan political purposes is prohibited.
3. Never deliberately or wilfully disrupt the services of the e-mail system or damage any of the software, hardware, or security associated with the network.
4. Respect the rights and privacy of others on the network. This would include but not limited to viewing mail without permission, sending mail under another person's name, tampering/changing another person's password without consent, or sending harassing messages.
5. Check the e-mail daily, delete unwanted messages, and keep the remaining number of messages to a minimum in the mailbox since they taken up file server storage space. Messages should be deleted after one month.
6. Never assume that your e-mail cannot be read by anyone except yourself since copies can be forwarded or sent as carbon copies. Never send or keep anything that you would not mind seeing in the daily newspaper.
6. Use proper e-mail etiquette when composing messages. Refrain from using derogatory or discriminatory statements based on race, religion, sex or statements that may constitute sexual harassment.
8. Not communicate in any way that violates School Town of Highland policies and/or local, state, or federal laws and regulations.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR E-MAIL AND INTERNET**

The administration/network manager has the responsibility to maintain the integrity of the network by employing any or all of the conditions listed below. The administration has the responsibility and right to:

1. Access and delete old e-mail message files to improve the working capacity of the system.
2. Log e-mail and Internet use and require additional user maintenance procedures when necessary.
3. Deny an e-mail or Internet account to anyone for any violation of this policy.
4. Monitor any or all downloaded files to the school file servers, and remove those deemed educationally inappropriate.
5. Require log sheets to be filled in by the users on Internet use when and if necessary.

### **PENALTIES FOR E-MAIL OR INTERNET VIOLATIONS**

1. The use of the School Town of Highland E-mail and its network connection to the Internet is a privilege which may be revoked at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited to:
  - using abusive, derogatory or objectionable language in either public or private messages
  - sending messages that are likely to result in the loss of a recipient's work or system software or another's personal work, both locally or remotely
  - placing unauthorized information on the network
  - disrupting the network through the abuse of hardware or software
  - using maliciously the network through the mail, harassment, profanity, vulgar statements or discriminatory remarks
  - downloading, copying, using, or installing illegally copyrighted software
  - allowing anyone to use an account other than the account holder
  - displaying conduct on the Internet that detracts from the good reputation of the School Town of Highland
2. Internet/E-mail users will be liable for any and all repair costs arising from damage to hardware or software caused by negligent or deliberate actions on the part of the user.
3. Employees of the School Town of Highland who do not follow the provisions of responsible network use shall be subject to disciplinary actions which may include termination of employment.
4. Student Internet users who purposely abuse the hardware, software, or network services shall be subject to whatever disciplinary action is deemed appropriate by the administration, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.