

**HOMER MIDDLE SCHOOL  
STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**

**School Year – 2023/24**

# **Student/Parent Handbook**

for

HOMER MIDDLE SCHOOL

*Welcome to Homer Middle School.*

*All the members of the staff and I are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it.*

Ryan Mulnix, MS Principal [568-4456]

Tamra Bagwell, Administrative Assistant [568-4456]

Mike Leskovich, Superintendent of Schools [568-4463]

**Adopted by the Board of Education on August 15, 2022.**

**Discipline Code adopted by the Board on August 15, 2022.**

**School Faculty**

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<b>NOTE:</b>	This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was printed in August 2016. If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal or Robert Wright, superintendent, or access the document on the District's website: <a href="http://www.homerschools.net">www.homerschools.net</a> by clicking on "Board of Education tab under DISTRICT" and finding the specific policy or administrative guideline in the Table of Contents for that section.
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## **FOREWORD**

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects. School administrators reserve the right to establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations for actions that are not covered in the student handbook that may arise. In all cases, rules, regulations, and possible consequences shall be as consistent as possible with previously established rules, regulations, and consequences for similar incidents.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of July 31, 2016. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after July 31, 2016 the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

## **MISSION OF THE SCHOOL**

The mission of the Homer Community Schools, in partnership with the community, is to create a positive culture that engages and encourages students to achieve excellence.

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

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

Ryan Mulnix	Ben Pierce
Principal	Student Support Specialist
568-4461 Ext. 1122	568-4461 Ext. 2112

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Board of Education recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members.

Through this policy, the Board directs the establishment of a Parental Involvement Plan by which a school-partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the District. The plan must encompass parent participation, through meetings and other forms of communication. The Parental Involvement Plan shall reflect the Board's commitment to the following:

	A.	<b>Relationships with Families</b>
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|--|--|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 1. | cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;                           |
|  |  | 2. | providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools; |

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|--|--|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 3. | providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers; |
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|  |  | 4. | providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities. |
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	B.	<b>Effective Communication</b>
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|  |  | 1. | providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children; |
|  |  | 2. | providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities;            |

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|--|--|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 3. | promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;         |
|  |  | 4. | communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable; |

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|--|--|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 5. | providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress;                                                                                    |
|  |  | 6. | providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions; |
|  |  | 7. | preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.                                                                     |

	C.	<b>Volunteer Opportunities</b>
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|  |  | 1. | providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities;                                                   |
|  |  | 2. | supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family involvement events. |

	D	<b>Learning at Home</b>
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|--|--|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 1. | offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school; |
|  |  | 2. | helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.                |

	E.	<b>Involving Families in Decision Making and Advocacy</b>
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|--|--|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 1. | involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;                                              |
|  |  | 2. | involving families in the development of its District-wide parent involvement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families. |

	F.	<b>Collaborating with the Community</b>
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|--|--|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | 1. | building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources;                       |
|  |  | 2. | coordinating and integrating family involvement programs and activities with District initiatives and community-based programs that encourage |



			and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development.
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## **Implementation**

The Superintendent will provide for a comprehensive plan to engage parents, families, and community members in a partnership in support of each student's academic achievement, the District's continuous improvement, and individual school improvement plans. The plan will be distributed to all parents and students through publication in the Student Handbook or other suitable means. The plan will provide for annual evaluation, with the involvement of parents and families, of the plan's effectiveness and identification of barriers to participation by parents and families. Evaluation findings will be used in the annual review of the Parent and Family Involvement policy and to improve the effectiveness of the District plan.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

The school day is from 8 am to 3 pm. Breakfast will be served beginning at 7:50 am.

### **Middle School Schedule**

First Hour: 8:00 am to 9:00 am  
Second Hour: 9:04 am to 9:54 am  
Third Hour: 9:58 am to 10:46 am  
Fourth Hour: 10:50 am to 11:42 am  
Fifth Hour: 11:46 am to 12:36 pm  
Lunch 12:36 pm to 1:06 pm  
Sixth Hour: 1:10 pm to 2:06 pm  
Seventh Hour: 2:10 pm to 3:00 pm

### **5TH Grade Schedule**

First Hour: 8:00 am to 9:06 am  
Second Hour: 9:10 am to 10:17 am  
Third Hour: 10:21 am to 11:28 am  
Fourth Hour: 11:32 pm to 12:36 pm  
Lunch 12:36 pm to 1:06 pm  
Sixth Hour: 1:10 pm to 2:06 pm  
Seventh Hour: 2:10 pm to 3:00 pm

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

## **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School Office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

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

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

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

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office and/or the school nurse will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the building principal. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

## **SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the

period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

## **SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT**

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the building principal. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or due to the makeup of the classroom and the students within it. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a pass or schedule change.

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

## **EARLY DISMISSAL/SIGNING OUT**

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without parent contact. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

## **TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT**

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. If a student plans to transfer from Homer Middle School, the parent must notify the principal. Every attempt should be made to return all school property prior to transfer completion. School records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the building secretary for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the superintendent.

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

The Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form completed and signed by his/her parent in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each year. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student's educational program.

## **USE OF MEDICATIONS**

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b, and F1c must be filed with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- C. All medications must be registered with the principal's office.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Medication must be conveyed to school directly by the parent. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended. Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.
- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

### **Asthma Inhalers and Epi-pens**

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan developed by the school principal and/or school nurse and updated annually.

### **Non-prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications**

If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent authorization, s/he will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until authorization is received.

Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription and instructions from the child's physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication. The parent must also authorize any self-medication by his/her child.

### **CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS**

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

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

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines.

### **CONTROL OF NON CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

In the case of non-casual-contact, communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

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

### **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This



protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the building principal at 568-4456 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore, the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the building principal at 568-4456 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

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

Neither the Board nor its employee's shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:

- Student's Name
- Address
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Height and/or weight if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure
- Dates of attendance
- Date of graduation
- Awards received
- Honor rolls
- Scholarships
- School photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs
- School-assigned email account for the purpose of facilitating student registration for educational purposes

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may

wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) notice which can be found on the District Website under Board Policy.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

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

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

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

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

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

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

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

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

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

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

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

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc)

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

[FERPA@ED.Gov](mailto:FERPA@ED.Gov); and  
[PPRA@ED.Gov](mailto:PPRA@ED.Gov).

### **STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND SUPPLIES**

All basic texts are furnished to students for their use during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Textbooks are not to be used for the storage of student papers. Student's names and grades are to be written in books.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit. Some courses may require additional fees/supplies for large projects. This cost

is the responsibility of the student. A list of fees/fines are filed in the office. Each student should take care of financial obligations at the end of the school year.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit. Some courses may require additional supplies/fees for large projects. These costs are the responsibility of the student. A list of fees and fines are filed in the office. Each student should take care of financial obligations at the end of each school year.

Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of grades and credits.

### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

### **REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES**

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the School. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

### **MEAL SERVICE**

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes breakfast and lunch available to students for a fee to be determined by the Board of Education each school year. Ala carte items are available. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the principal.

Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes that s/he is eligible, contact Gerri Craddock, food service director.

### **EVACUATION PLAN**

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the school for any reason during the school day parents will be notified by school messenger as to the reason and the procedure for student release.

### **FIRE, LOCK DOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS**

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State. The alarm signal for tornadoes is different from the alarm signal for fires and lock down drills.

Lock down drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of two (2) times each school year. The alarm system for a school lock down is different from the alarm system for fires and tornadoes.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify parents by school messenger. Parents are responsible for having updated contact information on file. The following radio and television stations will also be contacted:

WWMT (TV3), WOOD (TV8), WOTV (TV41), WLNA (TV6), FOX 47 (TV47), FOX17 (TV17), WILX (TV10) WNWN (98.5 FM)  
Facebook and the School Website.

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

### **PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS**

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District's *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy* and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request.

### **VISITORS**

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the School, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

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

### **USE OF THE LIBRARY**

The library is available to students throughout the school day. Passes may be obtained from a student's teacher or from the librarian. Books on the shelves may be checked out for a period of two weeks. To check out any other materials, contact the librarian.

### **USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

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

### **LOST AND FOUND**

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

### **STUDENT SALES**

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the building principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

### **USE OF TELEPHONES**

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in an emergency, students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call. Students are not to use telephones to call parents to receive permission to leave school. Office personnel will initiate all calls on behalf of a student seeking permission to leave school.

### **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within twenty-four (24) hours of their receipt. The school has a central bulletin board located in the foyer which may be used for posting notices after receiving permission from the principal.

## SECTION II - ACADEMICS

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extracurricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent. Attendance rules apply to all field trips.

### GRADES

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

The school uses the following grading system:

93-100	A
92-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-83	B
82-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-73	C
72-70	C-
69-67	D+
66-63	D
62-60	D-
59 -0	F

F = Failure

I = Incomplete

G= Credit

H= No Credit

## **Grading Periods**

Students shall receive a report card at the end of each marking period indicating their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term.

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

An incomplete is given only when a student has been unable to complete the required work because of illness, emergency in the family, or death in the family. Failure to complete work for any other reason does not merit an incomplete, and students will be given a lowered grade. When an incomplete is given, the student is allowed a prescribed period of time to complete the work. If the incomplete is not removed within the prescribed time, the mark becomes an F.

## **PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION**

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

Students must be passing ALL four (4) core classes (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) at the end of the school year to go into the next grade. Passing is considered a 60% or above for the YEAR grade in each core class. Students who do not have 60% or above for the YEAR may still pass IF they pass the core class final exam with 60% or above.

Students who fail two or more core classes will be retained for the next school year and repeat the grade. (Example: A student fails Math and Science in 6<sup>th</sup> grade; the student will re-take all 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes for the next school year.

Students who fail one core class will be expected to take a credit recovery course to “make up” the missed class in order to be moved on to the next year.

## **HOMEWORK**

The assignment of homework can be expected. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the State mandated test and graduation.

Homework will not generally be used for disciplinary reasons but only to enhance the student's learning.

## **COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

Before any student may take advantage of the School's computer network and the internet, s/he and his/her parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. Copies of the School District's *Student Network and Internet*



*Acceptable Use And Safety Policy* and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed to the school office.

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

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

All Homer Middle School students will be administered the M STEP Assessment in the spring. Subject matter to be assessed include Reading/ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) determines exact subject matter to be assessed by grade level. The assessment window is also determined by MDE. Currently ALL Middle School students are assessed in Reading/ELA and Math. Social Studies is assessed in Fifth and Eighth Grades and Science is assessed in Sixth. All MSTEP assessments will be administered on-line.

Parents and students will be notified by notes, media publications and school messenger regarding exact assessment dates.

Additional group tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Classroom tests will be used to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected or prepared by teachers to assess how well the students have achieved specific objectives.

Students may receive credit toward high school graduation who successfully completes, prior to entering high school, a State mandated curriculum requirement, provided the course meets the same content requirements as the high school course, and the student has demonstrated the same level of proficiency on the material as required of the high school students.

Vocational and interest surveys may be given to identify particular areas of student interest or talent. These are often given by the guidance staff. If necessary, intelligence tests, speech and language evaluations, individually administered achievement tests, and other special testing services are available to students needing these services.

Students will not be required, as part of the school program or District curriculum, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information of a personal nature in accordance with Board policy and Federal guidelines.

Depending on the type of testing and specific information requested, parent (or student) consent may need to be obtained. Homer Middle School will not violate the rights of consent and privacy of a student participating in any form of evaluation.

## **SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

### **SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Homer Middle School provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities. A curricular-related activity may be for credit, required for a particular course, and/or contain school subject matter.

A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's extracurricular participation.

The Board authorizes many student groups that are sponsored by a staff member. Authorized groups include:

**FFA**  
**Band**  
**Choir**

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

**Art Club**  
**Drama Club**  
**Quiz Bowl**  
**Student Council**

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

#### **School Dances and Activities**

Homer Middle School activities are public parties. They are sponsored or approved by the office to meet the social needs of members of the middle school. Parents are always welcome guests.

It is necessary to observe rules and regulations in the conduct of school parties.

- Homer Middle School students only. No visitors will be admitted unless prior permission is obtained from the principal at least 48 hours in advance of the activity. Any guest must be in middle school and not to exceed the age of 16.
- Once a student has entered, he/she may NOT leave and return
- Anyone misbehaving will be required to leave.
- All school rules are in effect.
- Middle School students may NOT attend high school activities and dances. High School students may NOT attend middle school activities and dances.
- Unexcused absences and/or removal from class may cause a student to forfeit his or her rights to attend extracurricular activities during the week.
- Use of, being in possession of or under the influence of tobacco, alcoholic beverages or drugs will not be allowed. Any student violating this rule will have his/her parents notified immediately.

## **NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Non-school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The applicant for permission can be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

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

No non-district-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

## **ATHLETICS**

Homer Middle School provides a variety of athletic activities in which students may participate providing they meet any eligibility requirements that may apply. A student's use of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and participation. The following is a list of activities currently being offered. For further information, contact Brad Roth, the Athletic Director, at 568-4461.

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Football**

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Football**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball**

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball**

**6-8<sup>th</sup> Cross Country**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys and Girls Basketball**

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys and Girls Basketball**

**Wrestling**

**6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Boys and Girls Track and Field**

All athletic programs of the District shall comply with the concussion protocols of the Michigan High School Association, the requirements of state law, and Department of Community Health guidelines regarding concussion awareness training and protection of youth athletes.

All athletes at the beginning of each sport will receive eligibility for participation requirements and code of conduct protocol.

## **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT**

The school does not encourage students to take jobs outside of school that could interfere with their success in school. If a student believes that s/he must maintain a job in addition to going to school, s/he must first make contact with the middle school office to discuss any legal requirements and obtain any needed documents.

## **SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT**

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **School Attendance Policy**

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Many important learnings result from active participation in the classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study. Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit Homer Middle School wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

#### Truancy

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant will receive no credit for school work that is missed. After twelve (12) days of truancy in any grading period, a student will be considered a "habitual truant" which can result in a hearing before a judge in a court of law and/or a report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

#### Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school for one or more of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed school work and/or tests:

##### Illness

Recovery from accident

Required court attendance

Professional appointments

Death in immediate family

Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

Parents/guardians must provide an explanation for their child's absence as soon as possible, preferably on the morning the child is absent. Verification can be done via note, phone call to 568-9000 or email to [tbagwell@homerschools.net](mailto:tbagwell@homerschools.net) explaining the reason for the absence. If the absence can be foreseen and the "good cause" must be approved by the principal, the parent should arrange to discuss the matter as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up for the missed school work.

Students who are excusably absent for more than eight (8) days in a grading period, regardless of the reasons, will be considered "frequently absent". If there is a pattern of frequent absence for "illness", the parents will be required to provide a statement from a physician describing the health condition that is causing the frequent illness and the treatment that is being provided to rectify the condition. Without such a statement, the student's permanent attendance record will indicate "frequent unexplained illness", a possible sign of poor work ethic and irresponsible behavior.

During the next grading period, a "frequently-absent" student will be placed on "attendance watch" to monitor whether or not the pattern continues. If it continues, the student may be denied the opportunity to participate in non curricular school activities and events and a notation made on his/her grading record.

### **Suspension from School**

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused or unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from the office beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school. The student will be given credit for properly-completed assignments and a grade on any made-up tests.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant and the student and his/her parents shall be subject to the truancy laws of the State.

If a student, under the age of eighteen (18), is truant for more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total days of truancy during a semester, s/he will be considered a "habitual" truant and will be reported to the proper authorities.

### **Notification of Absence**

If a student is going to be absent, the parents must contact the school at 568-9000 to provide an explanation. If prior contact is not possible, the parents should provide a written excuse (either paper or email) as soon as possible. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

An excused absence allows the student to make up all possible work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of school work such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

Homer Middle School considers skipping as staying out of school/classes or any part of the school day without specific knowledge and/or permission of both the parents and school. Skipping of any sort will result in the student's suspension from school until the parents confer with the building principal and appropriate disciplinary action can be decided upon. Students should not anticipate any second chances. Suspension action will become effective at 3:00 pm on the day the student is notified. The student will hand-carry the suspension notice to the parent. The parent will also receive a phone call.

### **Tardiness**

HMS expects that students will be on time to classes not only at the beginning of school, but throughout the day as well. It is expected that each student will use the restroom, get a drink, and go to their locker during their passing time. The Tardy Policy will begin fresh at the beginning of each marking period and will be followed in each individual classroom. The policy is as follows:

**1st and 2nd tardy** - verbal warning by the teacher

**3rd tardy** - lunch detention given by the classroom teacher

**4th tardy** - the teacher will contact the parent concerning chronic tardiness (4 or more tardies in a marking period) AND a discipline referral will be filled out and sent to the principal

**5th tardy** - Administration will: contact parent/guardian, after school detention or multiple lunch detentions, administration may schedule a parent/guardian conference with the student and more stringent discipline prescribed

### **Vacations During the School Year**

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the principal and the student's teacher(s) to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip.

### **Make-up of Tests and Other School Work**

Students who are excusably absent from school or who have been suspended shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact the office as soon as possible to obtain assignments. Make-up work due to suspension must be completed within one (1) day after returning to school. Students will be given the number of days of excused absence within which to make-up work.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to excused absence, s/he may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If s/he misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the office and/or the guidance office to arrange for taking the test.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

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

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The School will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a School activity. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

A major component of the educational program at Homer Middle School is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

## **Expected Behaviors**

Each student shall be expected to:

Abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;

Respect the civil rights of others;

Act courteously to adults and fellow students;

Be prompt to school and attentive in class;

Work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability, or ethnic background;

Complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;

Help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;

Act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

## **Dress and Grooming**

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines. There appears to be a definite relationship among good grooming, good work habits and proper school behavior. Any type of attire which attracts undue attention to the wearer, and thus causes a disturbance in the school, is in bad taste and not acceptable. Hair must be neat, well-groomed and modestly styled so as not to attract attention to the student. Clothes and body must be neat and clean at all times. Shoes must be worn. Cut-offs, halter tops, tank tops, bare midriffs and muscle shirts are not acceptable for school dress. Hats and hoods are considered apparel for outside and shall not be worn in the building. Shorts of appropriate length, halfway down the thigh or longer, are allowed in school year round. Skirt length must also adhere to the mid-thigh rule. Students who wear unacceptable clothing will be asked to change. Final decision on acceptability lies with the building principal.

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting.

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

## **Unacceptable Behavior**

Students who initiate, advocate or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or which are disruptive to the school environment are not tolerated.



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

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

Harassment and bullying are also considered unacceptable behaviors. See Student Discipline Code section 29 for further clarification.

### **Care of Property**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

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

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the school staff's responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

### **EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

(Organized by Rule Number)

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

#### **1. Use of drugs**

A student's use or sale of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and extracurricular participation.

The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3.1 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic and extracurricular participation. The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited.

Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

## **2. Use of tobacco**

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco and/or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, vaping or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco or nicotine, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

## **3. Student disorder/demonstration**

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is a need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

## **4. Possession of a weapon**

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item
- B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long

- C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

## **5. Use of an object as a weapon**

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to expulsion.

## **6. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence**

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

## **7. Purposely setting a fire**

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and may subject the student to expulsion.

## **8. Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District**

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and may subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

## **9. Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District**

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

## **10. Extortion**

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

## **11. Gambling**

Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **12. Falsification of school work, identification, forgery**

Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false I.D.'s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **13. False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats**

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **14. Explosives**

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **15. Trespassing**

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **16. Theft**

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the principal. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

## **17. Disobedience**

School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in suspension or expulsion.

## **18. Damaging property**

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **19. Persistent absence or tardiness**

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to retention.

## **20. Unauthorized use of school or private property**

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guidelines. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **21. Refusing to accept discipline**

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

## **22. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules**

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

## **23. Displays of affection**

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes embracing, kissing, cuddling or other displays of affection that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

## **25. Violation of individual school/classroom rules**

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

## **26. Violation of bus rules**

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules and acceptable conduct.

## **27. Disruption of the educational process**

Any actions including use of laser pointers, swimming and snowballing, or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

## **28. Harassment**

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal communication device (PCD) and computer), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal, or Ben Pierce - Student Support Specialist. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

### **Harassment**

- A. submission to such unwelcome conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- B. submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- C. the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

**Sexual Harassment**, may include, but is not limited to:

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

[Note: An inappropriate boundary invasion by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life is sexual harassment. Further, any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State law. M.C.L. 722.621 et. seq.]

### **28a. Hazing**

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm.

Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- A. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
- B. physical punishment or infliction of pain
- C. intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
- D. dangerous activity;
- E. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
- F. forced detention or kidnapping;
- G. undressing or otherwise exposing initiates.

### **28b. Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior**

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

### **Notification**

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.



Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

### **Implementation**

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

### **Procedure**

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit and should be completed within (3) school days after a report or complaint is made.

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

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

The Violence Prevention Rubric for how various types of bullying will be dealt with at Homer Middle School can be found in Appendix A

**Non-Retaliatio**n**/False Reports**

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

**Definitions**

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student’s educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone or personal communication device (PCD)) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

	A.	substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
	B.	adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district’s educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;

	C.	having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
	D.	causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

	A.	Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
	B.	Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
	C.	Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

"Intimidation/Menacing" includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as:  
 Harassment, see Board Policy 5517;  
 Hazing, see Board Policy 5516.

M.C.L. 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011)  
 Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education  
 Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

## **29. Possession of a Firearm, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct**

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or

criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students shall be subject to disciplinary action (Suspension/Expulsion) as required by statute for such specified offenses as physical and verbal assault (see Policy 5610.01).

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the principal's office.

### **Criminal acts**

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

### Safety Concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards, scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

### Profanity

Any behavior or language, which in the judgment of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **DISCIPLINE**

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the School shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

### **Informal Discipline (Minor Behavioral Rubric)**

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It includes:

- Change of seating or location;
- Lunch-time **and/or** after-school detention;
- In-school restriction;

### Detentions

A student may be asked to stay after school by a teacher, after giving the student and his/her parents one (1) day notice. The student or his/her parents are responsible for transportation.

### In-School Discipline

The write-up process is a tool developed for teachers to keep classrooms a learning environment without disruption. If a student chooses not to follow classroom expectations, and the instructor has exhausted all means to control the issue, following the Minor Behavioral Rubric including parental contact, then the write-up process applies.

When a student is sent out of class with a write-up, they are to report directly to the office. The principal and teacher may mutually agree that an infraction not advance to the next level will therefore repeat the previous step. A second write up will involve a meeting with the parent, teacher and principal. A third write up will result in a 3 day suspension from school. A fourth write-up may result in the student being removed from that classroom for an extended period of time OR having the parent/guardian come and sit in the classroom for at least a day.

The following rules shall apply to in-school restriction.

Students are required to have class assignments with them.

Students are not to communicate with each other unless given special permission to do so.

Students are to remain in their designated seats at all times unless permission is granted to do otherwise.

Students shall not be allowed to put their heads down or sleep.

No phones, headphones, games, etc. shall be allowed in the room/office

A specific schedule will be followed when serving an in-school restriction

### **Formal Discipline**

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, and expulsion from school. Students removed/suspended includes participation in athletic, extra-curricular and social events. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense.

If a student is suspended, the parents may appeal the suspension, in writing, to the superintendent and a formal appeal hearing will be held.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to attend. The superintendent then takes testimony and determines if a recommendation to expel is to be made to the Board of Education. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

Students involved in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as band and athletics can lose their eligibility for violation of the School rules.

If a student commits a crime while at school or a school-related event, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the community's legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime)

#### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

#### **Suspension from School**

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the

length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the superintendent. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

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

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, she/he may make-up work missed while on suspension with work due within one (1) day of return to school.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

### **Long-term suspension or expulsion from school**

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- \* the charge and related evidence;
- \* the time and place of the Board meeting;
- \* the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion;
- \* a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- \* a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- \* a statement that the student and/or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired students or parents;
- \* a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;
- \* a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction;
- \* the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if Board/hearing officer approved.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within five (5) days after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to

representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

Homer Middle School makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the principal.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.).

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION**



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

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

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

### **STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES**

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.

A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

## **SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION**

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**

The school provides transportation for all students who live outside the Homer Village limits. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the transportation supervisor at 724-9333.

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

The building principal may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the principal's approval of a note from the parent stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

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

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

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

#### Previous to loading (on the road and at school)

Each student shall:

be on time at the designated loading zone five (5) minutes prior to scheduled stop);

stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the school transportation;

line up single file off the roadway to enter;

wait until the school transportation is completely stopped before moving forward to enter;

refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe to cross;

go immediately to a seat and be seated.

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

#### During the trip

Each student shall:

- remain seated while the school transportation is in motion;
- keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the school vehicle at all times;
- not litter in the school vehicle or throw anything from the vehicle;
- keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle;
- be courteous to the driver and to other riders;
- not tamper with the school vehicle or any of its equipment.

#### Leaving the bus

Each student shall:

- remain seated until the vehicle has stopped;
- cross the road, when necessary, at least ten (10) feet in front of the vehicle, but only after the driver signals that it is safe;
- be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver.

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

### **VIDEOTAPES ON SCHOOL BUSES**

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. Actual videotaping of the students on any particular bus will be done on a random-selection basis.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded on videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

### **PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS**

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

### **SELF-TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**

Parking on school property is a privilege which can be revoked at any time. Students who are provided the opportunity to ride school transportation are encouraged to do so. Students and their parents assume full responsibility for any transportation to and from school not officially provided by the school.

When the school provides transportation, students shall not drive to school-sponsored activities.

Unless written permission is granted by their parents and approved by the principal.

Approved parent drivers may not transport other students to a school-sponsored activity without written permission from the parents of passenger students and approval by the principal.

### **USE OF MOTORIZED UTILITY VEHICLES**

Because of the clear and present danger of accidents, the Board of Education prohibits the use of motorized utility vehicles by students on school grounds or for school activity purposes.

#### **24. Cell Phone and Possession of Personal Communication Devices (PCD)**

***Please see the Technology Violation Rubric in the appendix of this handbook.***

Students may use their personal communication devices, including computers, tablets, electronic readers, cell phones and/or web enabled devices of any type. Students are permitted to use their PCD before and after school and during lunch period. Homer Middle School Students are not permitted to use devices during passing time. Students must refrain from communication with students who are in class during the lunch period. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action.

Students may not use the PCD during instruction time. This means devices must be turned off or placed on silent and put away before entering the classroom. Teachers may ask students to put their devices in hanging pockets or other docking areas during the class period. Devices may not be used outside of the classroom during instruction time. For example, leaving for the restroom, locker, and library is still instruction time.

Teachers may permit the use of devices for academic activities related to curriculum and will notify students when this type of use is authorized.

When a device is in use in the classroom, students WILL NOT:

Answer an incoming SMS (text) message or phone call

Be on any social media site (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Access or play any game or access any entertainment site on their device

Access or use any application (app) on their device unless expressly instructed to by the instructor

Take any picture or video that the instructor has not expressly asked you to take

Upload any picture or video taken in any class to any social media site or website  
SMS (text) message or email any picture or video taken in class to any person, including themselves.

Access any type of mobile web browsing for any reason unless directed by the instructor  
Take any picture, video or text any class assignments or assessments without permission.

Devices that are used without permission will be confiscated by the classroom teacher/staff member.

1<sup>st</sup> offense—verbal warning and confiscated for the remainder of the class period

2<sup>nd</sup> offense—confiscated device and sent to the office, returned at the of the day to the student

3<sup>rd</sup> offense - confiscated device, sent to the office, parent/guardian must pick up after school

4<sup>th</sup> offense—loss of use of PCD for one week or longer

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy.” A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to and including day suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion. “Sexting” is prohibited at any time on school property or at school functions. Sexting is the electronic transmission of sexual messages or pictures, usually through cell phone text messaging. Such conduct not only is potentially dangerous for the involved students, but can lead to unwanted exposure of the messages and images to others, and could result in criminal violations related to the transmission or possession of child pornography. Such conduct will be subject to discipline and possible confiscation of the PCD.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during any assessment is also prohibited. If a student is caught transmitting images or messages during testing, s/he will fail the assessment and could be suspended. S/He could also face automatic withdrawal from the class depending on the severity of the incident. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and expulsion is a possibility, even on the first offense.

## School Songs

### ALMA MATER

The Orange and the Black  
Through the four long years of high school  
Midst the scenes we love so well  
And the mystic charms to knowledge  
We vainly seek to spell  
When we win athletic victories  
On the football field or track,  
Then we work for dear old Homer High  
And the Orange and the Black.

When the cares of life overtake us,  
Mingling fast our locks with gray,  
Should our dearest hopes betray us,  
False fortunes fall away.  
Then we'll banish cares and sadness  
And turn our memories back  
And recall the days of gladness  
'Neath the Orange and the Black.



### FOOTBALL FIGHT SONG

March, march on down the field  
Fighting for Homer  
Break through that \_\_\_\_\_ line  
With strength to defy  
So give a loud cheer for Homer's team  
We're out to win again  
\_\_\_\_\_ team may fight 'til the end  
But Homer will win  
Fight!

### BASKETBALL FIGHT SONG

Homer High will win this game  
Listen to our cheer  
Go Trojans!  
Shout the glory of our name  
Spread it far and near  
Go Trojans!  
Alma Mater praise to thee  
And our team mates too  
Marching on to victory  
Let's Go! Trojans! Go!  
Fight!

**Appendix:**

Minor Behavioral Rubric

Major Behavioral Rubric

MS Discipline Referral Form