



**SURLINE  
ELEMENTARTY  
SCHOOL  
Student Handbook  
2025-2026**

Mrs. Stacy Gildner, Principal, Mrs. Sara Deyarmond, Assistant Principal

DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

West Branch-Rose City Area Schools -The School of Choice for Educational Excellence...Your Future Begins Here!

# WEST BRANCH-ROSE CITY AREA SCHOOLS

## *Surline Elementary School*

*Stacy Gildner, Principal*

*Sara Deyarmond, Assistant Principal*

Mailing address:  
P. O. Box 308  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Phone: (989) 343-2190  
[gildners@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:gildners@wbrc.k12.mi.us)



Physical address:  
147 E. State St.  
West Branch, MI 48661  
Fax: (989) 343-2200  
[deyarmos@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:deyarmos@wbrc.k12.mi.us)

Dear Parents,

Welcome to West Branch-Rose City Area Schools. We are proud of our school and hope that you will share in our pride after getting to know a little more about us.

Surline Elementary was named after a great educator, Mr. Chester F. Surline who was the Superintendent of schools at our district for many years before his retirement in November 1973.

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year. This handbook summarizes and references 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 student handbook.

Because the handbook also contains information about student rights and responsibilities, each student is responsible for knowing its contents. Please take time to become familiar with this handbook and keep it available for you and your parent to use. It can be a valuable reference during the school year and a means to avoid confusion and misunderstanding when questions arise. Should you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, contact your School Principal who you will find listed in the staff Directory section of the handbook.

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 August 25, 2025. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines references herein are revised after June 30, 2025, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

Yours in Education,

**Stacy Gildner**

Stacy Gildner  
Principal  
Surline Elementary School

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## 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR 8/1/25

|  |   |                         |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| <b>August 20, 2025</b>                     | <b>OPEN HOUSE</b>                                 | <b>3:30 - 5:30</b>      |
| <b>August 25, 2025</b>                     | <b>FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS</b>           | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>August 29, 2025</b>                     | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>September 1, 2025</b>                   | <b>LABOR DAY / NO SCHOOL</b>                      | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>September 24, 2025</b>                  | <b>EARLY RELEASE</b>                              | <b>12:50 P.M.</b>       |
| <b>September 25, 2025</b>                  | <b>PICTURE DAY</b>                                | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>September 30, 2025</b>                  | <b>FAMILY NIGHT &amp; TITLE 1 PARENT MEETINGS</b> | <b>5:00 - 7:00 P.M.</b> |
|  | <b>SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT MEETING</b>                 | <b>8:00 A.M.</b>        |
| <b>October 22, 2025</b>                    | <b>PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES</b>                 | <b>5:00 - 8:00 P.M.</b> |
| <b>October 23, 2025</b>                    | <b>PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES</b>                 | <b>5:00 - 8:00 P.M.</b> |
| <b>October 24, 2025</b>                    | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>October 29, 2025</b>                    | <b>PUMPKIN CARVING ART/IND TECH/COMP SCI</b>      | <b>5:00-7:00</b>        |
| <b>October 30, 2025</b>                    | <b>EARLY RELEASE</b>                              | <b>12:50 P.M.</b>       |
| <b>October 31, 2025</b>                    | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>November 6, 2025</b>                    | <b>PICTURE RE-TAKES</b>                           | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>November 26-28, 2025</b>                | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>December 11, 2025</b>                   | <b>FAMILY NIGHT &amp; TITLE 1 PARENT MEETINGS</b> | <b>5:00-7:00 P.M.</b>   |
| <b>December 22, 2025 – January 2, 2026</b> | <b>CHRISTMAS VACATION</b>                         | <b>ALL WEEK</b>         |
| <b>January 5, 2026</b>                     | <b>SCHOOL RESUMES</b>                             | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>January 16, 2026</b>                    | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>January 28, 2026</b>                    | <b>EARLY RELEASE</b>                              | <b>12:50 P.M.</b>       |
| <b>February 9, 2026</b>                    | <b>NO SCHOOL</b>                                  | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |
| <b>February 25, 2026</b>                   | <b>EARLY RELEASE</b>                              | <b>12:50 P.M.</b>       |
| <b>March 25-26, 2026</b>                   | <b>PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES</b>                 | <b>5:00 - 8:00</b>      |
| <b>March 27 - April 6, 2026</b>            | <b>SPRING BREAK</b>                               | <b>ALL WEEK</b>         |
| <b>April 7, 2026</b>                       | <b>SCHOOL RESUMES</b>                             | <b>ALL DAY</b>          |

|                |  |                      |
|----------------|--|----------------------|
| April 29, 2026 | EARLY RELEASE/ FAMILY NIGHT & TITLE 1 PARENT MEE | 12:50 P.M.           |
| May 25, 2026   | NO SCHOOL /MEMORIAL DAY                          | ALL DAY              |
| June 9, 2026   | LAST DAY DISMISSAL 12:50                         | 8:50 AM - 12:50 P.M. |

**Dates and times and events are subject to change.**  
**Please contact Surline Elementary School at 989-343-2190 to verify.**

### **FALCON FIGHT SONG**

Go you Falcons, go to win this game.  
 Go you Falcons on and on to fame.  
 So that the proud, proud name of Ogemaw Heights  
 Shall ever be the team that's ready to fight.  
 Go you Falcons, ever brash and bold.  
 Go you Falcons for the brown and gold.  
 Because when you reach the Heights  
 You are at Ogemaw  
 That's why we fight, fight, fight!

### **District Mission Statement**

WEST BRANCH-ROSE CITY AREA SCHOOLS  
 THE SCHOOL OF CHOICE FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE...  
 YOUR FUTURE BEGINS HERE!

### **School Mission Statement**

Surline Elementary School staff is dedicated to providing students with the opportunity to become self-motivated, responsible, and successful learners in a safe environment using comprehensive educational programs.

### **Student Mission Statement**

I like me. I am responsible for the choices I make. I will do my best today. I will be safe, kind, and ready.

### **HOURS/DROP OFF AND PICK UP TIMES**

Classes begin at 8:40 a.m. and end at 3:45 p.m.

Students will be allowed to enter the building at 8:30 a.m. Students are expected to leave promptly at the end of the day unless participating in a school supervised activity. Students may not roam the halls or school before the 8:40 a.m. bell or after the 3:45 p.m. bell.

### **Bus Passes/Picking Your Child Up from School**

Parents may send in a note or phone the school office **before 3:00pm** to arrange for a bus pass. For any phone call received after 3:00 we can **NOT** guarantee your child will receive the message. Include the name, address and phone number of where your child will be going. If you are picking your child up from school and this is not an everyday occurrence, please call ahead and we will notify the teacher

**CLOSED CAMPUS**

The school is considered a closed campus. A closed campus means that students must stay on school grounds and visitors must have proper authorization by school authorities to visit. Students are not allowed to leave campus without being signed out of the office by an authorized adult. Any parent or guardian wishing to spend time in school or out of school on a trip needs to have an ICHAT form on file. ICHAT forms can be picked up from the main office.

**SCHOOL STAFF****SUPERINTENDENT**

Mrs. Gail Hughey

**SURLINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OFFICE STAFF**

Principal

Mrs. Stacy Gildner

Assistant Principal

Mrs. Sara Deyarmond

Student Success Coordinator

Mrs. Jaimie Secord

Secretary

Mrs. Kathleen Green

Secretary

Mrs. Kisha Hutchinson

**SPECIAL SERVICES STAFF**

Special Services Supervisor

Mrs. Sue Shepardson

Special Education Teacher

Ms. Quinci Bulow

Special Education Teacher

Mrs. Mariah Hewitt

Social Worker

Mrs. Julia Soba

Speech Therapist

Mrs. Katie Matthews

Occupational Therapist

Mrs. Patricia Woelke

**RESOURCE TEACHERS**

Academic Interventionist

Mrs. Elizabeth Chamberlain

Academic Interventionist

Mrs. Marilyn McCauley

Academic Interventionist

Mrs. Sue Mier

Academic Interventionist

Mrs. Elisabeth Kish

Counselor

Mrs. Diane Gillette

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

President

Mrs. Heather Kearns

Vice President

Mr. Gary Miller

Secretary

Mrs. Whitney Lehman

Treasurer

Dr. Alan Withers

Trustee

Mrs. Debra Abraham

Trustee

Mr. Scott Kartes

Trustee

Mr. Matt Biermann

Superintendent

Mrs. Gail Hughey

## **TEACHING & SUPPORT STAFF**

### **GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM (4 YEAR OLD PROGRAM)**

Mrs. Nelson  
Mrs. Williams  
Mrs. Watson  
Mrs. Ackerman

### **KINDERGARTEN / YOUNG 5's**

Mrs. Peters  
Mrs. Ferrell  
Ms. Rozenowski  
Mrs. Howard  
Mrs. Matthews

### **SECOND GRADE**

Mrs. Gingerich  
Mrs. Hines  
Mrs. Lewis  
Mrs. Reasner  
Ms. Moore

### **FOURTH GRADE**

Mr. Banyas  
Mr. Reasner  
Ms. LaBeau  
Mrs. Lawrence

### **COMPUTER EDUCATION**

Mr. Secord

### **MEDIA AIDE**

Mrs. Thorne  
Mrs. Siemienski

### **LUNCH / PLAYGROUND**

Angela Adams  
Vicky Marwick  
Kim Gildner  
Mary Vervoort  
Sheena McDaniel  
Richard Willett  
David Ochab  
Sheena Matthews

### **TITLE 1 PARAPRO**

Lisa Stewart  
Amanda Sullivan  
Debra Purdy  
Katie Carr

### **GSRP TEACHER ASSISTANT**

Riley Sabins  
Lisa Huber  
Brittney Barton

### **GSRP LUNCH**

Keri Ostrander

### **FIRST GRADE**

Mrs. Farro  
Mrs. DeLand  
Miss Elliott  
Miss Killackey  
Mrs. Schneider

### **THIRD GRADE**

Miss Gratopp  
Mr. Rotunno  
Mrs. Buhlman  
Mrs. Likavec  
Mrs. Mader

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Mr. Whetstone

### **ART EDUCATION**

Mrs. Koski

### **MUSIC EDUCATION**

Mrs. Dehart

### **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

Officer Beehler

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAPRO**

Jennifer Ostrander  
Terri Jones  
Mary Spencer  
Destiny Lingenfelter  
Megan Neubecker  
Rebecca Larkin  
Celeste Croxen  
Catherine Lenchner  
Nicole Wangler  
Kenneth Cannoy  
Yasmy Allbritton  
Brett Sundberg  
Shelby White  
Carrie Jameson

## **DISTRICT & BUILDING INFORMATION**

### **Central Administration Building**

| <b>Mailing address:</b>          | <b>Personnel:</b>   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| PO Box 308                       | Gail Hughey, Superintendent<br>Jennifer Winter, Curriculum Director |
| West Branch, MI 48661            | Tom Rea, Technology Coordinator                                     |
| <b>Physical address:</b>         | Russ Hall, Technology Support                                       |
| 960 S. M-33                      | Karyn Randall, Secretary  |
| West Branch, MI 48661            | Mary Moore, Accounts Payable  |
| <b>Telephone:</b> (989) 343-2000 | Ted Matuszak, Director of Finance                                   |
| <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2006       | Michele Daniels, Payroll Coordinator                                |

### **Chester F. Surline Elementary**

| <b>Address:</b>                | <b>Personnel:</b>                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 147 State St., PO Box 308      | Stacy Gildner., Principal           |
| West Branch, MI 48661-0308     | Sara Deyarmond, Assistant Principal |
| <b>Telephone:</b> 989-343-2190 | Kisha Hutchinson, Secretary         |
| <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2200     | Kathleen Green, Secretary           |

### **Special Education Department**

| <b>Mailing address:</b>          | <b>Personnel:</b>           |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| PO Box 308                       | Sue Shepardson, Coordinator |
| West Branch, MI 48661            | Gwen Florida, Secretary     |
| <b>Telephone:</b> (989) 343-2010 |                             |
| <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2006       |                             |

### **Food Service**

| <b>Address:</b>                  | <b>Personnel:</b>          |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 960 S M-33, PO Box 308           | Janis Phillips, Supervisor |
| West Branch, Michigan 48661-0308 | Jodie Mayhew, Secretary    |
| <b>Telephone:</b> (989) 343-2015 |                            |
| <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2240       |                            |

### **Transportation and Maintenance Office**

| <b>Address:</b>                  | <b>Personnel:</b>                         |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 224 N. Thomas Street, PO Box 308 | Jason Hall, Transportation Supervisor     |
| West Branch, Michigan 48661      | Leticia Butler, Secretary                 |
| <b>Telephone:</b> (989) 343-2240 | Bonnie Caverly, Transportation Dispatcher |
| <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2249       |   |

### **Athletic Department**

| <b>Address:</b>                   | <b>Personnel:</b>                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 960 S. M-33 PO Box 308            | Korey Kripli, Athletic Director   |
| West Branch, MI 48661             | Caitlin Baird, Athletic Secretary |
| <b>Telephone:</b> (989) 34Jo-2026 | <b>Fax:</b> (989) 343-2048        |
|                                   |                                   |



## CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

When a parent has a complaint or concern regarding an employee, please follow the chain of communication listed below:

### **Principal**

Principal  
Assistant Principal  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Teacher**

Teacher  
Principal  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Bus Driver**

Bus Driver  
Transportation Supervisor  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Classroom Aide**

Aide/Classroom Teacher  
Principal  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Cook**

Cook/Head Cook  
Food Service Supervisor  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Custodian**

Custodian/Maintenance Supervisor  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

### **Secretary**

Secretary  
Principal  
Superintendent  
Board of Education

## ACADEMICS

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each trimester. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring of the year; however, parents should not hesitate to request to arrange a conference at another time if there are questions or concerns.

### **Assessments**

During all testing, please ensure that your child gets plenty of rest and a nourishing breakfast. District-wide, these assessments are used to evaluate curriculum and instructional effectiveness. Individually, the tests are used to evaluate each student's progress and prepare for further instruction. Test results are shared with parents after each testing period.

### **Grading**

Instead of the traditional letter grades and percentages, "Scoring Scales" will be used, which will give teachers, parents, and students more of an understanding of how the student is performing towards their learning goals. Instead of knowing how many questions a student has right or wrong, parents will know what level of understanding their child has of a certain skill.

### **How Does It Work?**

Teachers plan each lesson around specific objectives from the curriculum and help students understand what those objectives mean. Lessons are planned with very specific goals in mind, goals which are made clear to students. Knowing the end goal helps teachers plan carefully, which, in turn, helps students effectively connect with their learning.

### **How Will We Know They Have Learned?**

Teachers use the information-gathering process known as formative assessment to determine what adjustments need to be made in the learning process in order to challenge each child to achieve. The formative assessment process gives teachers the detailed information they need to understand where each student is in their level of understanding, which is most critical factor for their continued learning. Students need regular feedback to know how they are performing and what they can do to reach their goals.

### **The Scoring Scales**

The Scoring Scales provide detailed information about what the teacher is looking for while assessing an objective on a scale of 0-4.0. This is where the real difference lies. You may remember from past school experiences that a 4.0 meant an "A". In the Scoring Scales, a 4.0 does not equal an "A" but is defined as going beyond what was taught in class. By our definition, the 3.0 level means that your child is achieving at grade-level and mastering expectations. The Scoring Scales take the guesswork out of where the students are and need to be and provide the essential information teachers need to create lessons, assignments, and assessments that reflect true grade-level objectives. The teacher can use that information to plan future instruction; the student can use that information to understand and adjust her learning; and parents can use that information to get an overall picture of their student's progress towards the learning goals. Having a specific target and being able to show a student's progress toward that target is what makes the Scoring Scales a powerful tool for teachers, students, parents, and caregivers.

### **Promotion, Placement, and Retention**

Board Policy 5410 - Promotion, Placement, and Retention and associated Administrative Guidelines provide the framework promotion, placement and retention decisions.

#### **Elementary School**

Promotion to the next grade is based on the following criteria:

- a. Current level of achievement
- b. Potential for success at the next level
- c. Emotional, physical, and/or social maturity

Note - It should be noted, however, that research does not indicate positive results for retention and in fact, it increases the likelihood that a child will drop out of high school.

### **Books and Supplies**

All necessary educational supplies will be provided by the school district. Books will be loaned to the students each year. It is the student's responsibility to take care of the assigned books and materials. The student will be charged for the replacement of any lost or damaged textbooks and/or library books. Additional supplies will be at the teacher's request.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are designated for each grade level. Information will be sent home prior to the trip. Payment (if any) should be returned to your child's classroom teacher as soon as possible. No student will be permitted to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip, which is signed at the beginning of each school year on the back of the enrollment card. No child will be denied the opportunity to go on a field trip because of its cost. If your child needs financial assistance in order to participate in a field trip or other school activity, please contact your school principal. Attendance rules, the Student Code of Conduct, and the Search and Seizure policy apply to all field trips. (See also Board Policy 2340 - Field and Other District Sponsored Trips, Board Policy 5500 Student Code, Board Policy 5771 - Search and Seizure, and associated Administrative Guidelines.)

### **CHEATING POLICY/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, A.I. ETC**

Students who conspire and act to gain an academic grade advantage over their classmates by cheating through any means, including, plagiarizing documents/school work, the use of A.I. will be subject to the following penalties.

1. The grade or points may be forfeited for the entire material in question.
2. The teacher or paraprofessional reports the incident to the office and the student will follow progressive discipline.

### **NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING HIV/AIDS EDUCATION**

WBRC Board of Education has established a program of instruction in health education which includes HIV/AIDS and other serious communicable disease prevention education.

According to the State School Aid Act, you have the right to review the materials and curriculum content to be used for HIV/AIDS education. The local board of education, in compliance with the statute, has made the materials and curriculum guides available for your review. Contact the district Curriculum Director, 960 S. M-33, West Branch, Michigan 48661 to review the materials.

This statute allows you to excuse your child from participation in the classes which include AIDS/HIV and other serious communicable disease instruction, if you choose. If you wish to exercise your right to excuse your child from instruction without penalty, please send a written notice to the principal of your child's school as soon as possible.

### **STATE OF MICHIGAN PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVE**

The Board strongly encourages and welcomes the involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) in all of the District's educational programs. It is recognized and appreciated that parents/guardians are the "first teachers" of their children, and that their interest and involvement in the education of their children should not diminish once their child enters the schools of the District. Accordingly, the Board directs, by the adoption of this policy, that the administration shall design a program/plan that will encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) participation that may include, but not be limited to: The development and review of instructional materials; input on the ways that the District may better provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with information concerning current laws, regulations, and instructional programs; and District offerings of training programs to instruct parent(s)/guardian(s) how to become more involved in their child's educational programs.

### **SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

WNEM TV 5 (Bay City/Saginaw)

WKJC-FM 104.7/ WIOS-AM Tawas

WJRT TV-12 (Flint)

The Promise FM 90.5 Gaylord

WWUP TV-10/Fox 32 (Cadillac)

106.1 Tawas / 91.3 The Rock

WEYI TV-25 / Fox 66

91.1 Cadillac

WBKB TV-11 Alpena

Facebook

Closings are also placed on the website and school messenger is used. This list is continually updated. You may also call the school (989)343-2190 or the Bus Garage (989)343-2240 for recorded information.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY/PROCEDURES**

Please call 343-2190, ext. 4001 (available 24 hours per day) to excuse your child's absence from school.

### **SURLINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

(SEE BOARD POLICY 5200 - ATTENDANCE AND ASSOCIATED GUIDELINES.)

West Branch-Rose City Area Schools recognizes the importance of attendance as an essential component for student success and achievement through the cooperative effort of parents, students,

and school personnel. Studies of student achievement in school show a high correlation between good attendance and academic success. Regular attendance at school is also important because the habits and attitudes that each student develops early in life will carry over into his or her future education and career. The school policy tries to teach students the value of regular attendance; however, the primary responsibility for ensuring regular attendance rests with the parent and student.

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

The following applies for the entire school year:

#### **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

Perfect attendance is being in school every day, with no tardies or early dismissals.

#### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

It is the parent's responsibility to verify their child's absence. The parent or guardian should call the school at **(989)343-2190, option 2** on the day that the student will not be in attendance, *(or in advance whenever possible)*. A message can be left when calling outside of the office hours of 8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday. If a student is signed out with more than half the school day remaining, the student will be marked absent for that half of the school day.

**It is the parent's responsibility to call, or send a note, to the school to verify their student is absent from school. Students may not leave school during the day without office and parent permission.**

If unable to call, the parent or guardian is to send a note with the student upon that student's return to school. In order for the absence to be considered as verified\*, the notification (call or note) must be received in the school office no more than one school day after the day the student returns to school.

\*Excused absences are those caused by the following reasons:

1. Illness of the student
2. A family medical emergency (includes the death of a close friend or a relative)
3. Pre-arranged approved absence (Vacation forms available in the office)
4. A medical appointment (doctor, dentist, etc.)
5. Subpoenaed court appearance
6. Suspension from school
7. Attendance at a funeral

An excused absence allows the student to make up work that was missed when they were absent. The student will be allowed one day for make-up for each day of excused absence. (For example, a student that is absent three days for an excused reason will be required to have turned in all make-up work on the fourth school day following his/her return to school). Students and/or parents are expected to collect homework before or during suspension and the student is to return with the work completed. Tests can be made up before school when the student returns. *(This may also apply to other items of work that must be completed at school.)* Absences for reasons such as oversleeping, missing the bus, being suspended from the bus, being out of town without prearranged permission, etc. are considered as **unexcused**.

## **TARDINESS**

A student who is not in their assigned location by 9:15 shall be considered tardy. Any student arriving late to school is to report to the school office before proceeding to class.

## **PRE-PLANNED ABSENCE**

Family trips are absences that are known in advance of the day(s) of the absence. These absences must be approved by the principal three (3) days in advance of the day of the absence, to determine whether they will be excused or unexcused. Vacation request forms may be obtained in the office and must be completed by the parent/guardian, the student's teacher, and authorized by the principal.

The following conditions should be met:

1. Vacations are to be taken with family members or legal guardians.
2. Personal, prior arrangement is made by the parent(s) with the principal.
3. Arrangements with teachers for make-up work are made prior to leaving.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Teachers will have individual guidelines to be followed for making up work in each class. Parents are responsible for knowing the guidelines and contacting the teacher to initiate makeup work. When an absence is anticipated, students are to see teachers in advance regarding any work that will be missed. Students can make up work for any type of absence, including suspensions, as long as each teacher's guidelines are followed.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

The following steps will be followed when a student accumulates 5, 10, 15 and 20 absences each school year, regardless of reason. (School-related absences and absences caused by suspensions will not be included in the accumulated absences).

- Step 1:** An **Attendance letter** will be sent to parents/guardians when a student accumulates **5 unexcused** absences for a semester.
- Step 2:** When a student accumulates **10 unexcused absences** for a semester, a required phone conference will take place with an administrator and may include the school resource officer and the student. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a plan to reduce/eliminate incidence of absenteeism.
- Step 3:** The point at which a student accumulates **15 unexcused absences** for a semester, a required in person meeting will take place between an administrator, school resource officer, the student, and the parent/guardian. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a plan to reduce/eliminate incidence of absenteeism.
- Step 4:** The point at which a student accumulates **20 unexcused absences** for a semester, the school may file for truancy/incorrigibility with the Ogemaw County Prosecuting Attorney. Parents will be notified of this possibility in writing, delivered by an Ogemaw County Sheriff's Deputy.

## **OGEMAW COUNTY TRUANCY COURT**

Truancy Court is a voluntary diversion program run by the Family Division of the Ogemaw County Probate Court. We all know that in order to be a successful student, good attendance is essential. In addition, attendance is mandated by the State of Michigan. There are numerous causes of absenteeism, and the Truancy Court will attempt to address the causes on a case-by-case basis. Instead of becoming involved with the formal court process, Truancy Court will be an alternative, which, if successfully completed, will avoid a formal court record. More importantly, Truancy Court will

help the child and the families succeed by offering assistance with the underlying cause of the absenteeism.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Accidents**

Only minimal first aid can be provided by school personnel. When a serious situation requiring immediate medical attention occurs, and a parent cannot be reached, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital.

### **VISITORS**

All visitors **must** sign in/out at the main office. Before volunteering in the classroom, any visitor must have an approved iCHAT on file. Forms will be sent home at the beginning of each school year, and each approval is valid for that entire school year. Additional forms can be requested at the main office. We welcome and encourage volunteers and visitors to our schools. Parents are considered visitors during the school day. As a safety measure, everyone must enter and exit through the main doors during school hours. All other doors will remain locked throughout the school day. All guests are required to report directly to the office where they will sign in, present their driver's license, and will be given a visitor badge to wear during the school day.

The following standards are required of all visitors:

- Visitors must wear a visitor badge during their stay.
- Visitors must check in at the office prior to visiting the school or playground.
- To avoid instructional interruptions, we ask that parents arrange classroom visits and volunteer opportunities with the teacher or administrator prior to the day of the visit.
- Visitors are asked to help maintain the consistency of the learning environment and are not allowed to observe in classrooms due to distractions and the importance of data privacy.
- Parents wishing to pick up their child(ren) from school prior to regular dismissal time must come to the office. The receptionist or office staff member will call your child to the office and ask you to sign him/her out.
- Only adults listed on enrollment cards as parents / guardians will be allowed to pick up a child. If a different adult will pick up a child, the child's parent / guardian must provide a signed note, email or verbal agreement and have it approved by the principal or designee. Must present a driver's license or another form of picture ID for identification purposes.

Students wishing to bring visitors from other schools must receive prior permission from the teacher and principal.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students that need to use a telephone may use the designated student-office telephone with staff permission. Students may use the telephone during the change of classes, lunch time, and before/after school.

### **CLOSED CAMPUS**

The campus at Surline Elementary School is closed. A closed campus means that students are not allowed to leave the school grounds without parent permission. Should a situation arise where a student must leave because of illness, funeral, or medical appointment, it will be necessary for an approved emergency contact person to pick up the student. If leaving any time before 3:45, students must be signed out at the office. Students must check into the office with a member of the secretarial staff if they arrive any time after 8:40 am, before going to class.

## **Backpacks**

Elementary school students frequently bring home information from the classroom and the office for parents/guardians to review. Please watch for this information in your child's backpack.

## **Valuables and Toys**

Items of value are not to be brought to school. This includes electronics, cell phones, walkmans, game boys, trading cards, etc. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or broken valuables. Guns, toy guns, swords, knives, and weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited on buses or school grounds.

## **Changes in Student Information**

The school will annually provide each child with an information card for emergency purposes. **Notify the office immediately any time there is a change of address, phone number or other emergency information.** In the event of an unforeseen emergency, it is very important for the school to be able to contact parents. Families will then also be assured of receiving all school-related mailings and robo calls. Only minimal first aid can be provided by school personnel. When a serious situation requiring immediate medical attention occurs, and a parent cannot be reached, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital.

## **Conferences**

WBRC Schools recognize the importance of families and teachers working together. Families and teachers communicate and build relationships at conferences. There are two reporting conferences during the school year. Please come prepared with any questions you have concerning your child's education and social adjustment. This is also an opportunity to meet with art, music, physical education, world language, specialists, or special services teachers.

## **Contacting Your Child**

If you need to contact your child during the school day, call your school's office. Students are not permitted to use cell phones during the day. It is important that you change to pick up designation on the PikMyKid app before 3:00 if changes in dismissal are needed. Please do not email teachers with end of the day messages as they may not be received on time. If you are unable to access the app, you may call the office before 2 pm to schedule a dismissal change.

## **Parent Problem Solving How To's**

Throughout the school year, situations regarding the programs at your elementary school may arise which cause concern for parents, teachers, students, or community members. The process described below is structured to promote resolving situations quickly to the satisfaction of all parties involved. This process also encourages those people closest to the situation to examine and develop solutions to concerns. A positive resolution of these situations enhances communication, builds trust between members of the school community, and benefits the educational program for the students. These are the steps designed to resolve problem situations quickly and satisfactorily. Please use these steps if you have a concern:

- **Step 1 – Contact the appropriate staff member:** The first step in resolving a concern is to discuss it with the staff member(s) involved, i.e. the teacher, associate principal, principal, etc. More than 95 percent of all concerns are resolved at this level.
- **Step 2 – Contact the principal:** If Step 1 does not resolve the concern, discuss it with the principal. He/she is the instructional leader in charge of the school and the person responsible for handling concerns regarding the school's operation/ The principal can share school information and explain policies, guidelines and procedures. He/she is open and willing to listen to your concerns.
- **Step 3 – Contact the appropriate district administrator:** If the previous steps have been unsuccessful, contact the appropriate district administrator or the superintendent. We sincerely hope that we can work together to solve problems as they arise. Please know we believe clear, open, honest, and two-way communication is the key to preventing problems, miscommunication, misinterpretations, or other concerns.

### **Registering your child**

If your child attended a West Branch Rose City School last year, they will automatically be registered for the current school year and you will receive information from your child's teacher prior to the beginning of the school year. Preschool children who are listed on census information will automatically be sent kindergarten registration information. If you are new in the area, please contact our school secretary for registration materials. You may either pick up the forms at the main office, or refer to our district website for printable forms.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards will be sent home approximately one week after each marking period ends.

### **Illness/Injury**

When should my child be kept at home, and when can he/she attend school?

- Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more – child should stay home until 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal
- Vomiting or diarrhea – child should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode
- Rash that may be disease-related or the cause is unknown – check with your health care provider before sending the child to school

If your child is ill at home, call the school attendance line daily to report the reason for absence. It is helpful if specific symptoms and/or diagnosis are reported.

When a student becomes ill or is injured at school, first aid and illness management will be provided and 911 will be called if it is needed. The parent/guardian will be contacted using the health and emergency information form. It is important that the names and phone numbers listed on the form are current and updated. Please list people who can pick the student up from school if you are not available. See Board Policy 5340 a, b,d

### **Immunizations Up-to-Date**

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 Central Office.

### **Medications**

Students are not usually permitted to administer their own medication at school. Parents requesting that prescription or non-prescription medication be administered during school hours are required to provide:

- Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, F1b, and F1c must be filled with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- All medications must be registered with the Principal's office.
- Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
  - Medication may 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 their person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.
- 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.



- 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 on time and for taking the prescribed medication.
- 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.

(See also Board Policy 5330 - Use of Medication, et seq.; Board Policy 5331 - Students with Special Health Care Needs; Board Policy 5335 - Care of Students with Special Health Care Needs, Board Policy 5500 - Student Conduct, Board Policy 5520 - Disorderly Conduct, Board Policy 5530 - Drug Prevention, and associated Administrative Guidelines.)

### **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 updated annually.

(See also Board Policy 5330 - Use of Medications, et seq.; Board Policy 5330.01 - Epinephrine Auto-Injectors; Board Policy 5335 - Care of Students with Chronic Health Conditions; and associated Administrative Guidelines.)

### **Non-Controlled Substances Policy**

In addition to the concern about the sale or delivery of controlled and noncontrolled substances there is the concern of possession or use of controlled substances, and look-a-likes (caffeine pills, diet pills etc.). Because of the possible danger to the health and safety of the students, the following policy is in effect:

1. It is against school policy to sell, deliver, possess or use a non-controlled substance which may be represented as a controlled substance.
2. Proof of any one of the following is evidence of the above:
  - The substance substantially resembles a controlled substance, in appearance or shape.
  - The substance is unpackaged or is packaged in a manner normally used for illegal delivery of a controlled substance (baggie, envelope, foil, etc.)
  - The substance is not labeled as required by the FDA.
  - The substance has been represented as a controlled substance

### **Restricted Activities**

Written doctor's excuses are required for students who need to be kept in from recess at elementary school or who need to miss physical education. The note must state how long the restriction will be in effect.

### **Allergies**

Animals and pets are not allowed to visit inside schools without principal permission and specific policy requirements. This policy is in place because of student and staff health needs and air quality issues. Some exceptions may be made; please check with the principal before bringing any animals into the classroom. Any food allergies should be communicated with the office secretary, classroom teacher and food service.

### **Communicable Disease**

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: 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.

(See also Board Policy 8450 - Control of Casual-Contact Communicable Diseases, et seq. And associated Administrative Guidelines.)

### **Direct 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 their 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.

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. 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.

### **Head Lice**

If a student is found to be infested with head lice, or to have nits, he/she will be sent home for treatment and a notification letter will be transmitted to the parent(s)/ guardian(s). Once a student is sent home, they will not be permitted to ride the bus or attend school until readmitted by office personnel. Parents should bring the student to the office for a recheck. If they are nit free they will be allowed to stay in school. The expectation would be for the child to be nit free and return to school within 1-2 days.

### **Health Conditions**

The office staff and teachers will work closely with students who have an acute or chronic health need such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, allergies, or other illness. Parents will want to notify the office and their child's teacher about their student's specific health needs. The student and parents will work with the school to determine how best to manage the health conditions and plan for any potential life-threatening emergencies.

### **Homebound or Hospital Instruction see Board Policy 2412**

Homebound or hospital instruction is provided for children who are absent from school due to prolonged illness or disability. Whenever a principal is notified that an enrolled student will be homebound or hospitalized for a medical condition which will extend beyond five (5) school days, the following procedure takes place:

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

Written notification must be accompanied by certification by the attending physician or a licensed physician's assistant of the student's condition and any limitations that will affect the student's ability to benefit from instruction.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

Students will be screened according to the Michigan Department of Health recommendations. Parents or teachers can also request vision or hearing screening any time if they have a concern about their child. If a student does not pass the vision or hearing screening procedure, the screening will be repeated. If the student does not pass the screening the second time, a physician referral notice will be sent to the parent. Parents are strongly encouraged to return the referral form to the school's Health Services office.

### **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Activities or student trips occurring after school and in the evening are managed under the same guidelines set for students during the regular school day.

## **STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

Inappropriate public displays of affection such as kissing, embracing and undue familiar body contact are not allowed. See discipline matrix for student violations.

## **PHOTO PUBLICATIONS**

As we do special school projects and activities, there may be opportunities for us to submit your child's photo and/or work for publication. This may include newsletters, newspapers, posters, contests, yearbooks, Facebook pages and the school website. This may include your child's name, grade, and school. If you would prefer not to have your child included, please send written notification to this effect to your child's principal, and we will respect your wishes.

## **INSURANCE**

The Board of Education does not provide insurance for the student body. Arrangements have been made with an insurance company for those who desire individual insurance. Applications are available in the school office. The deadline for application is September 30th. All new students will have the opportunity to purchase insurance.

## **BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM**

Our District provided free breakfast, lunch and dinner to all students. To be able to provide this wonderful service to all students **every** student will need to have their parents fill out a survey from food services. This survey allows us to be able to provide free meals to all students. The survey will be sent home at the beginning of each school year.

If you have any questions, please call the Food Service Department at 343-2015.

## **Lunchroom Expectations**

Use inside voices, appropriate manners and appropriate language.

- Wait your turn in line. Running, cutting, saving places or pushing in line will put you at the end of the line, creating a longer wait!
- Wait to scan your card until the person ahead of you is done so you aren't charged for their food.
- Read the menu choices ahead of time so you know what you want. You are allowed to go through the line only once and you cannot put back food (Health Dept. rule).
- Move your tray up to the "messy" items, so they don't drip or spill on the counter.
- Choose food for yourself and not for others.
- Clean up after yourself including the table and floor around your eating area.
- Remain in the lunchroom during your lunch period until given permission to leave.

Students who do not follow these rules may be requested to help clean the lunch room or lose the privilege of eating in the lunchroom. Students are expected to follow the directions given by the supervising adults in the lunchroom. Lunchroom supervisors are present for the protection, safety and well-being of all students.

## **Packed/Cold Lunch**

Students may bring lunch from home if they choose not to eat food from the lunch room. Food may **not** be brought in glass containers such as glass pop bottles; however, unopened containers of juice may be brought to lunch. Water is the only opened beverage that may leave the cafeteria. Juice that has been opened will need to be finished or disposed of before leaving the lunch room.

## **RECESS**

Students will have approximately 30 minutes for recess and will go outside for recess. Should there be a request for a child to stay indoors, a doctor's request/ permission must be provided and should state how long the restriction is to remain in effect. It is important that children be prepared to go outside with appropriate outdoor clothing: boots, mittens, gloves, jackets, snow pants, and hats. Note: If students are in need of winter clothing, please contact the school counselor. All playgrounds are adult supervised and have the necessary equipment

needed for recess activities. Students should not bring their personal equipment (balls, bats, footballs, frisbees, etc.) from home.

### **Weather**

The decision on whether or not to keep the students indoors is made each day prior to lunch. The following weather conditions necessitate the students to remain inside for recess with alternative recreation provided: it is raining, the temperature drops below 0 degrees, or the wind-chill is below 0 degrees. Other weather circumstances could also lead to students remaining inside for recess.

### **Playground Behavior**

Specific behaviors are necessary to provide a safe environment on the playground. These guidelines are shared with all students, posted in classrooms, and will be reinforced by the playground supervisors. If students choose inappropriate behavior on the playground, specific consequences may occur.

### **Fundraising**

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines (See Board Policy - 5830 Student Fund-Raising and associated Administrative Guidelines). The following general rules will apply to all fundraisers.

- Crowdfunding activities are governed by Board Policy 6605 and Associated Guidelines
- Students involved in the fund-raiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds
- Students must not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members without the approval of the student's teacher
- Students may not participate in fundraising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults
- Students may not engage in house-to-house canvassing for any fundraising activity
- Students who engage in fundraisers that require them to exert themselves physically beyond their normal pattern of activity, such as "runs for.....", will be monitored by a staff member in order to prevent a student from overextending himself/herself to the point of potential harm.
- Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the Principal.

### **Money**

If you send money to school with your child, please put it in an envelope and write on the envelope your child's full name, teacher's name, grade level and the purpose for which the money is sent (fundraiser, lunch, book order, etc.).

### **FIRE/TORNADO/SECURITY DRILLS**

Fire drills are required by law. Pupils must evacuate the building when the alarm sounds. Follow the directions as given by your teacher and the signs in the rooms. All pupils should be 200 feet from the building and remain orderly.

For tornado drills, each classroom has a designated location for students. In the sheltered area, students are to sit quietly until the "All Clear" is given. During an actual tornado watch, students will not be released from the building, except to parents who come to the office. Two tornado drills will be conducted each year. Students will be instructed to move to designated areas and get into a safe position. Six fire drills will be conducted throughout the year. Students are expected to vacate the building swiftly and quietly with their classroom teacher. Two security drills will be held each year.

## **Evacuation/Crisis Procedure**

In the event of an emergency evacuation, you will be notified by school messenger where to go to pick up your children.

## **Emergencies**

During emergency procedures or evacuation, students, visitors, and volunteers are required to:

- Follow all emergency directions given by school officials.
- Report to the designated area for attendance and further instruction.
- Report any suspicious activity/behavior, concern or information immediately to school officials.

## **Police Liaison**

WBRC Schools employs a School Liaison Officer who visits regularly to develop relationships with students and teach safety programs. Officers also assist school staff with some student behavior investigations. The Police Liaison Officer works cooperatively with the school district to review district crisis management plans and site emergency procedures so that there is a coordinated response to emergencies by the school district and emergency responders.

## **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 will be made over the school PA system.

Lockdown 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 signal for a lock down will be made over the school PA system. (See also Board Policy 8420 - Emergency Situations at School and associated Administrative Guidelines.)

## **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* (Board Policy 8405) and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request

## **Homework/Study Time**

Homework/study time policies vary from grade to grade, among the teachers, and from subject to subject. Literacy is the foundation of all student achievement; it is our expectation that all students spend at least 15 minutes each day reading. Occasionally, parents misunderstand the difference between homework and "unfinished work" or "make-up work". Unfinished work and make-up work are not considered to be homework/study time by the school. Rather they are an individual responsibility that the student is expected to complete on his/her own time.

## **Library**

Our library provides a broad selection of books for the use of the students in grades K-4. In the event that a library book is lost, parents will be required to pay the replacement cost.

## **Lost and Found**

Please label all items of clothing. Students always have access to the lost and found area at their school. Parents are encouraged to look through the lost and found items on conference days and times they visit the

school. If you do not find a lost item, please ask in the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to St. Vincent at various times throughout the year.

### **Parties and Treats**

Each teacher will plan classroom specific parties throughout the year. We would prefer not to distribute invitations to parties being held outside of school unless all of the children in the class are being invited. This will prevent any hard feelings on the behalf of anyone not receiving an invitation. Any invitations being distributed at school should be given to the classroom teacher to be delivered. If you desire to provide a treat for the class on your child's birthday, please make arrangements with the individual teacher. Birthday treats are not allowed to be distributed in the cafeteria. Flowers and balloons will not be delivered to children until the end of the day. Please be mindful of student allergies in the classroom. Your child's teacher will notify you if necessary.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students are expected to participate in physical education classes. Students are to be prepared for class with appropriate shoes and clothing. Exceptions will be made for the following reasons.

1. Temporary illness.
2. Temporary injury
3. A physical problem as shown by a written statement from the student's doctor.
4. Permission granted by the teacher or principal.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP/SIGN OUT STUDENTS**

Students will not be permitted to leave the building with persons other than those listed on the enrollment card unless a note or phone call has been received, stating the identity of the person designated. The parent or designee must sign the child out of the office and write the reason and time for the child leaving and/or returning. The person picking up the student may be asked to show valid identification.

## **ENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

### **NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Parents wishing to enroll their child(ren) at Surline Elementary School should contact the office at (989)343-2190 and ask about the enrollment process. Enrollment forms may be printed online from the WBRC website, or obtained directly from the main office(preferred). Upon receiving completed paperwork and required documentation, students will be enrolled and parents will be notified of the assigned start date.

### **STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

Parents wishing to transfer their student to another school will obtain from the office a "Withdrawal" form. This is to be completed by the parent/legal guardian. The purpose of the form is to assure that all books, equipment or other loaned items have been returned and to give the new school an immediate look at the student's current grades. Student records will be mailed to the new school upon receipt of enrollment confirmation from the new school.

**FERPA REQUIREMENT STATEMENT:** All educational records are provided directly to any new school in which a student intends to enroll.

### **TITLE I PROGRAMS**

In accordance with the federal requirements, the West Branch-Rose City Area Schools Board of Education encourages parent(s)/guardian(s) participation in Title I programs. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall be offered substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children by this policy. The Board directs that the following actions be implemented by the administration to insure compliance with federal law and to invite parents to become involved highly in the education of

their children: The involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement of Title I programs/services through participation on building School Improvement Teams; Invitations to parent(s)/guardian(s) to attend at least one annual meeting for Title I parents, with additional meeting opportunities being available as needed, designed to provide Title I information and program services, and to solicit parent(s)/guardian(s) suggestions on program development, planning, evaluation and operation; Assistance to parent(s)/guardian(s) in understanding Title I, including the providing of information in a language understandable to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) if practicable; Parent(s)/Guardian(s) notification of Title I student selection and criteria for selection; Information regarding child's achievement and progress; A provision for input by Title I staff at regularly scheduled parent/guardian-teacher conferences and any additional communication as requested by the Title I staff or parent(s)/guardian(s); Opportunities to enhance parent(s)/guardian(s) capacity to work with children in the home on school learning; Professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement strategies; Ongoing communication between school and parent(s)/guardian(s); and Other appropriate activities (i.e. Family Math Nights, parent(s)/guardian(s) sessions, science, theater, etc.)

### **WRITTEN PLANS/POLICIES**

The West Branch-Rose City Area School District, as a recipient of Title I funds, hereby adopts the following policy statement regarding the development of a District-wide plan for parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement in the development of a Title I plan, and directs the administration to: Involve parent(s)/guardian(s) in the development of the plan; Develop a plan that provides for the involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) in the Title I activities of the school; provide the necessary technical, research, staff and administrative support to schools in the planning and implementing of effective parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance; To integrate and coordinate the plans/policies for parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement in Title I programs with parent(s)/guardian(s) involvement in other programs, including but not limited to Head Start; To review and evaluate the District's plan annually and to share the results of that review and evaluation with the Board; To assure that the policy/plan contains a compact that outlines how parent(s)/guardian(s), the school staff and students will share the responsibility of improved student achievement; and To distribute the District plan to parent(s)/guardian(s) of participating children and to the local community.

### **MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM (MEP) PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) INVOLVEMENT**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of students in the MEP will be involved in, and regularly consulted, about the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of the program.

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) INVOLVEMENT**

In accordance with federal law, parent(s)/guardian(s) of LEP students will be provided notice regarding their child's placement in and information about the District's LEP program. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be notified about their rights regarding program content and participation including the right to choose among programs if alternatives are available. The notice must also include an explanation of the value of the program in terms of academic development, mastery of English, and the achievement of promotion and graduation standards. The notice will also include an explanation of the right to remove the child from an LEP program and to place the child in the regular program. The notice must be in a format that families can comprehend and, if possible, in a language that is understood by the family.

Approved:

MASB Rec.

LEGAL REF: 20 USCA 6318 (No Child Left Behind Act); MCL 380.1294 (PA 107 of 2004)

Adopted: December 20, 2004

Policy #S-44

## **Section 504**

It is the policy of the West Branch-Rose City Area Schools to provide a free and appropriate public education to each handicapped student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the handicap. It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are handicapped within the distinction of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1978 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Due process rights of handicapped students and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced. Under this policy, a handicapped student is one who (a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including learning, (b) has a record of such impairment, or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Students may be handicapped under Section 504 and this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

## **Special Services**

The West Branch-Rose City Schools offer a complete range of special education services. If you feel your child may qualify for special services according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), contact the building counselor first. You may contact the Special Services Department directly at 989-343-2010 if you feel it is necessary or urgent.

West Branch-Rose City Schools offer a complete range of educational services. If you feel your child may need some additional help, contact the Special Education Department at 343-2010.

## **I.E.P.C. Rights**

If a student has been referred for Special Education Services by a teacher, administrator, counselor or by him/herself, the following will take place before a student is placed in a Special Education Program.

1. The parents and student will be invited to a screening meeting and if testing is appropriate, a permission form will be signed by the parents.
2. The parent or student (if over 18 years of age) will be requested, in writing, to attend an Individual Educational Planning Committee meeting to develop an educational plan for the student.
3. The committee will meet and make its educational recommendation. The committee will consist of: parents, student, teachers, administrator, school psychologist or any appropriate support staff.
4. If the parents or student (if over 18 years of age) disagree with the recommended placement, they have a right to a hearing to contest a recommended placement.

## **TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS**

Surline Elementary School receives funding through many resources, one of which is Title I. By accepting this federal funding, we are also required to follow the No Child Left Behind legislation. One requirement is to provide parents with the opportunity to request information regarding the professional qualifications for our staff. As the Surline Elementary School principal, I am happy to do this because I believe we have superb and highly qualified staff. If you are interested in reviewing the certification and credentials for our staff members, this information is available in the office at your request.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **STUDENT CODE OF TECHNOLOGY USE**

#### **7540.03 - STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY**



Technology directly affects the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. Educators are expected to continually adapt their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to incorporate the latest technologies. The Board of Education provides Information & Technology Resources (as defined in Bylaw 0100) (collectively, "District Information & Technology Resources") to support the educational and professional needs of its students and staff. With respect to students, District Information & Technology Resources afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board provides students with access to the Internet for educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students. The District's computer network and Internet system does not serve as a public access service or a public forum, and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its stated educational purpose.

The Board regulates the use of District Information & Technology Resources in a manner consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, the District's educational mission, and articulated expectations of student conduct as delineated in the Student Code of Conduct. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct govern students' use of District Information & Technology Resources and students' personal communication devices when they are connected to District Information & Technology Resources, including online educational services/apps, regardless of whether such use takes place on or off school property (see Policy 5136).

Students are prohibited from using District Information & Technology Resources to engage in illegal conduct (e.g., libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, etc.) or conduct that violates this Policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct (e.g., making personal attacks or injurious comments, invading a person's privacy, etc.). Nothing herein, however, shall infringe on students' First Amendment rights. Because its Information & Technology Resources are not unlimited, the Board may institute restrictions aimed at preserving these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers.

Students have no right or expectation to privacy when using District Information & Technology Resources (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, messages/e-mails, and records of their online activity).

While the Board uses various technologies to limit students using its Information & Technology Resources to only use/access online educational services/apps and resources that have been pre-approved for the purpose of instruction, study, and research related to the curriculum, it is impossible to prevent students from accessing and/or coming in contact with online content that has not been pre-approved for use by students of certain ages. It is no longer possible for educators and community members to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the curriculum according to adopted guidelines and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them) when significant portions of students' education take place online or through the use of online educational services/apps.

Pursuant to Federal law, the Board implements technology protection measures that protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, and/or are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). At the discretion of the Board or the Superintendent, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The Board also utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate,

and/or harmful to minors. The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using District Information & Technology Resources, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under CIPA. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be disciplined.

The Superintendent or designee may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online educational services/apps containing appropriate material, if access to such sites has been mistakenly, improperly, or inadvertently blocked by the technology protection measures. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protection actions of the technology protection measures.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to online content and/or services/apps that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to content that they and/or their parents may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable, or controversial. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet.

Principals are responsible for providing training so that students under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Pursuant to Federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- A. safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- B. the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information;
- C. the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking", "harvesting", "digital piracy", "data mining", etc.), cyberbullying, and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online; and
- D. unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally-identifiable information regarding minors.

Staff members shall provide guidance and instruction to their students regarding the appropriate use of District Information & Technology Resources and online safety and security as specified above. Additionally, such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior including interacting with others on social media, including in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. Furthermore, staff members will monitor the online activities of students while they are at school.

Monitoring may include, but is not necessarily limited to, visual observations of online activities during class sessions; or use of specific monitoring tools to review browser history and network, server, and computer logs.

All students who use District Information & Technology Resources (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying guidelines. (See Form 7540.03 F1)

In order to keep District Information & Technology Resources operating in a safe, secure, efficient, effective, and beneficial manner to all users, students are required to comply with all District-established cybersecurity procedures including, but not limited to, the use of multi-factored authentication for which they have been trained. Principals are responsible for providing such training on a regular basis and measuring the effectiveness of the training.

Students will be assigned a District-provided school e-mail account that they are required to utilize for all school-related electronic communications, including those to staff members, peers, individuals, and/or organizations outside the District with whom they are communicating for school-related projects and assignments. Further, as directed and authorized by their teachers, they shall use their school-assigned e-mail account when signing-up/registering for access to various online educational services/apps.

Students are responsible for good behavior when using District Information & Technology Resources – i.e., behavior comparable to that expected of students when they are in physical classrooms and school buildings and at school-sponsored events. Because communications on the Internet are often public in nature, general school rules for behavior and communication apply. The Board does not approve any use of its Information & Technology Resources that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Students may only use District Information & Technology Resources to access or use social media if it is done for educational purposes in accordance with their teacher's approved plan for such use.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Public school districts are not required to furnish transportation for the pupils that reside within the district; as a result, the privilege of riding the bus is one that can be withdrawn. The following rules apply to all students who ride the school bus:

1. Students are to follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Students are to remain in their seats while the bus is moving.
3. Students are to refrain from writing on, littering, or damaging the bus.
4. Students are to keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
5. Pushing, shoving, fighting, swearing and making loud noises are prohibited.
6. Students may carry cell phones but they are not allowed to use them while riding the bus.

Any student, while a passenger on a District transportation vehicle, who is guilty of an infraction listed under the Serious and Severe degrees of misbehavior in the Discipline Code MAY be given a consequence as listed in the Discipline Code as well as being denied transportation. In the event this occurs, the length of time transportation privileges are withdrawn will be determined by the Building Principal and Transportation Supervisor

The driver has the responsibility of controlling the actions of the students while they are on the bus. Misbehavior (the violation of bus rules) will result in verbal warning(s) by the driver. In addition, the driver may require the student(s) to use a particular seat on the bus. If misbehavior continues, the driver will submit a written Bus Conduct Report to the Transportation Supervisor and the following procedure will generally be used:

Step #1 Warning

Step #2 Call Parent

Step #3 One Day Bus Suspension - Action Taken by Administrator

Step #4 Three Day Bus Suspension

Step #5 Five Day Bus Suspension

Step #6 Per Administration

A Bus Suspension means that the student is suspended off all of the buses. In the case of an unexpected day off, the Bus Suspension will be extended.

**SEVERE CLAUSE:** The order of consequences may be skipped and an immediate suspension given if the severity of the offense is sufficient enough to warrant such action in the opinion of the Transportation Supervisor.

### **Walking to School**

Children should be instructed to walk on the sidewalk whenever possible. Where there is no sidewalk, children should walk on the shoulder of the road, facing the oncoming traffic. This is in accordance with state law and city ordinance.

A crossing guard will be on duty at the intersection of Houghton Avenue and Burgess Street for those children living south of Houghton Avenue. Please make sure your child leaves home in time to take advantage of the crossing guards. They are there for your child's protection.

### **Arrival and Departure of Students by Automobile**

Parents who wish to drop off or pick up their children at school will use the carline and PikMyKid app or student number. For your convenience and the safety of the children, we have created a valet service. Staff members will assist your children out of the vehicle as needed and direct them to the entrance where they will be welcomed by staff. Please have your children exit on the passenger side of your vehicle. **Please do not drop your students off before 8:30 a.m.**

There is NO parking on First Street. Thomas Street is now a one way street for exit only. There is visitor parking on Thomas Street for handicap use during the day.

**DO NOT PARK - in the bus loading area, behind the school, or in the drop off zone during AM or PM arrival/dismissal times.**

### **Parents in the Building**

- Parents will not be allowed in the building before 3:45 pm without first signing in to the office.
- Parents are allowed to go to classrooms if they have a **scheduled appointment** or volunteer time.

### **Drop Off Procedure**

- Students will be dropped off at the **front door main entrance**.
- Students who arrive at school early will be able to wait for the bell in the cafeteria. Doors will open at 8:30 am
- Staff will be at the front entrance to assist students.

### **Pick Up Procedure**

- The car line and PikMyKid app or student number will be used for pick up.
- All changes to student pick up must be entered into the PikMyKid app by 2:00 pm. For those unable to access the app, any changes **MUST** be phoned into the office **no later than 2 pm** on the day of change.
- Dismissal through the car line will begin at 3:45 pm.
- Walkers will be released out the front of the building and must use crossing guard routes to cross streets. Walker release time will be 3:45 pm.
- If an elementary student needs to meet an older sibling after school, they will be considered a walker and will need to meet in the front of the building. Release times have been arranged so the older sibling will be released 5 minutes before the elementary student to facilitate this meeting.
- Students will be released to the bus at 3:45 pm. Once students are on a bus, they will not be allowed back off. No parents will be allowed in the bus parking lot.

- If a student needs to ride a bus other than their typically scheduled route, a bus pass will be required and issued by the office. Parents will need to call the office before 2 pm on the day the pass is needed.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

### **Parent-Teacher Organizations**

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is composed of parents working to enhance your child's school experience. The group sponsors family-oriented social and/or academic activities during the year and also organizes a wide variety of parent volunteer programs. The PTO plans events that serve as fundraisers with money used for programs and curriculum supplements that directly benefit students. We are very fortunate to have an active Parent-Teacher Organization at Surline Elementary School. Meetings are held monthly, dates and times will be posted in newsletters and on our website. Additional special meetings are sometimes scheduled as needed. Watch for information to come home with your child regarding PTO activities. We are always looking for new members; so please consider joining as a way to become involved in your child's school.

### **Continuous Improvement Team**

Our school continuous improvement team meets monthly to evaluate current programs, assess data to find building needs and continuously works to improve the programs and tools used in the education of our students. Parents are welcome to join these meetings and can contact their office for more information.

### **School Volunteer Opportunities**

Surline Elementary school offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities that can vary by school and school year depending on need. Some of the possibilities include volunteering in the classroom, computer room, art classes, on the playground, or at lunch. Parents can also help with "Box Tops for Education," vision and hearing screening, School Improvement, Book Fairs, Santa's Workshop, field trips and the PTO. If you are unable to make it to school, there are some opportunities to work on projects from home.

### **Procedures**

Volunteer (I-CHAT) forms will be available at your school at the beginning of the school year. Please fill one out and return it at any time. Volunteers are required to follow the school security sign-in procedures. Staff are instructed to ask if they can help any visitor without a volunteer badge. This procedure has been developed in response to safety concerns. As you work with staff and students, information of a confidential nature may be shared with you. The problems, abilities, relationships, and confidences of students, their parents and staff should never be discussed with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know. Like teachers, volunteers are bound by a code of ethics to keep confidential matters within the school.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is the desire of the West Branch-Rose City Area Schools to provide the students with a safe and orderly learning environment. In order for that environment to exist, it is necessary to establish and enforce rules and regulations that will guide discipline within the schools of the district. As a result, the following policy has been developed with the assistance of representatives from the various constituent groups within the district (Board of Education, central office, building administration, teachers, parents and students).

### **AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A DISCIPLINE CODE**

The authority of the Board of Education to establish the policies and regulations contained in this Discipline Code is based upon the State of Michigan revised School Code.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION**

### **IN THE CLASSROOM**

In each class, the teacher is the educational leader and is there to help you learn by participating in a variety of activities. Classroom rules, consequences, and rewards will be posted in each classroom. Students are not to leave a classroom without permission from the teacher. When there is a substitute teacher, aide, or volunteer the same classroom expectations apply. Substitute teachers, aides and volunteers will be treated with respect.

### **DRESS CODE**

The students of Rose City School are expected to attend school properly attired in accordance with good taste and the accepted standards in the West Branch-Rose City Area communities. The purpose for a dress code is to maintain an atmosphere that will not interfere or disrupt any student's educational process and recognize that in society there are appropriate and inappropriate clothes. If any student is not properly attired, they will be asked to change their clothes, or call home for a change of clothes.

Recommended dress and grooming guidelines:

- Bare midriffs, tops that expose undergarments, and halter tops are not considered appropriate and should not be worn.
- Tops with spaghetti straps are not acceptable.
- Skirts, dresses, or shorts may be worn, provided they are not shorter than where the student's fingertips fall when standing in a natural position with their arms at their sides.
- The absence of footwear will be considered a health hazard and will not be permitted.
- Attire with obscene language, offensive sayings, offensive designs, anything pertaining to or associated with gangs, violence, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or of a sexual nature are inappropriate and will not be allowed.
- Swimwear, beachwear, sleepwear, see-through, extremely tight or revealing clothing will be considered distracting and inappropriate.
- Reasonable cleanliness of body and apparel is expected as a matter of health.
- Undergarments are not to be exposed.
- Specific health and safety standards may be required in physical education, technology education and science.
- Any apparel or grooming not covered herein will be regulated at the principal's discretion.
- Only flags of the United States of America, the state of Michigan, and the school flag may be displayed or worn on clothing.

Students who refuse to cooperate will be referred to the administration, which will make the final determination as to what is appropriate and/or what discipline to take. Students who refuse to correct or change the appropriate clothing will be disciplined according to the policy on Persistent Misbehavior.

### **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Students will not be permitted to use cell phones or any personal electronic devices (including personal computers, tablets, e-readers, telephones, mobile devices or other web-enabled devices of any type) during school hours. This includes classes, breaks, lunchtime, and any other school-related activities. We kindly request your support and cooperation in ensuring that your child adheres to this policy. Personal Communication Devices must be powered completely off (not just placed into vibrate or silent mode) and stored in student lockers.

Students shall have no expectation of confidentiality with respect to their use of PCDs on school premises/property.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the PCD. If multiple offenses occur, a student may lose his/her privilege to bring a PCD to school for a designated length of time or on a permanent basis.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their PCDs. The Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, or damage to, or misuse or unauthorized use of PCDs brought onto its property. Parents/Guardians are advised that the best way to get in touch with their child during the school day is by calling the school office. Students may use school phones to contact parents/guardians during the school day.

### **LOCKERS**

Students will be issued a locker upon enrollment in school. The lockers are the property of the school and they are subject to periodic inspection by administrators. Nothing is to be put on the outside of the locker door. Students will be fined for any damages or alterations to lockers. Students should keep their locker clean and free of food. Students are responsible for cleaning their locker at the end of the school year. NO STICKERS OR ITEMS WITH STICKERS OR TAPE ARE ALLOWED INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE LOCKER. It is highly recommended that articles of personal value not be kept in lockers.

### **HALLWAY AND CAFETERIA CONDUCT**

Conduct during class change should be orderly. Running and horseplay are not permitted. Boisterous, rude acts such as slamming lockers, barging through doors, loud exchanges and shoving others will not be tolerated. Students will have 20 minutes for lunch. Students will keep the entrances and exits to the commons clear during lunch. Students are expected to remove their trays and clean up after eating. Rude behavior such as cutting in front of others and throwing food will result in disciplinary action. Students who throw food or other objects may be suspended. Students shall remain seated during lunch period. Voice level of 3 will be used.

## **DISCIPLINARY CODE**

### **PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE**

West Branch-Rose City Area Schools views discipline as a joint effort between parents, students and staff to create an orderly and safe environment conducive to learning and to encourage behavior that promotes citizenship through responsibility for one's own actions and respect for the rights of others.

(See also Board Policy 5500 - Student Conduct, Board Policy 5600 - Student Discipline, Board Policy - 5610.02 - In-School Discipline, Board Policy 5611 - Due Process Rights, and associated Administrative Guidelines.)

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 discipline and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after the review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply 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. (See Section 4)

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 (2) types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

### **Informal Discipline**

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It includes:

Writing assignments - Think Sheet, Fix-it Ticket

Change of seating or location

In-School restriction - loss of privilege

CKH Reset

### **What is a CKH Reset?**

It is not detention, but a refocusing on our school's social contracts. Our CKH reset program gives your child the opportunity to reflect on his/her behavior in a positive and productive way. Through the use of videos, social stories, writing, and conversation, your child is reminded of the importance of following the "social contracts" throughout our school.



## **Formal Discipline**

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, short-term suspension for up to ten (10) school days, long-term suspension for more than ten (10) school days but less than a permanent expulsion and expulsion from school. 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 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.

If a student commits a crime while at school or at a school-related event, the student 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 Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **Student Behavior**

The behavior of students directly affects their ability to learn the subject matter presented. It is expected that students will behave in a manner that will not be disruptive either to themselves or to others. School supervision is provided by a variety of people who work in various capacities; such as the teacher, the bus driver, the lunchroom / playground supervisor, etc. It is important that your child follow the particular rules and directions of the persons involved with their supervision throughout the day.

While we hope that all children will participate in school activities in an acceptable manner, there are times when this does not occur. In the event that a child's behavior is disruptive to the learning environment, they may not be able to continue participation.

### **Staff will:**

- Create a balanced approach for all learning
- Treat students in a caring and respectful manner
- Communicate effectively with parents about student growth and development
- Create a climate for learning that includes
  - Opportunities for students to explore and construct their learning through multiple paths
  - Co-creating classroom rituals that maximize learning bell-to-bell
  - Create a climate that respects differences and allows for multiple perspectives

- Foster opportunities for students to develop academically and socially

### **Students will:**

- Participate fully in the learning experience, including curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular, from the moment he/she is on the bus until she/he is returned home, at all district activities and events.
- Treat other students and staff with respect
- Behave in a way that promotes independence and provides an equal opportunity learning environment for others.

### **Parents will**

- Effectively communicate with school staff including but not limited to returning documents send by the school when necessary
- Foster and encourage positive behavior
- Know and support school policies and procedures included attendance policies
- Model respectful behavior
- Assist in organizational skills to help students be successful.

## **DEGREES OF MISBEHAVIOR AND CONSEQUENCES**

### **GENERAL MISBEHAVIOR:**

These types of violations are cumulative per teacher and will generally be handled and documented by the teacher or Student Success Coordinator. He/she may discuss the problem with the student and the behavior team. Examples of behaviors associated with this level of misbehavior include, but are not limited to:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Disrespect of School Personnel               | Displaying disrespect for any school personnel  |
| Disrespect of School Property                | Non-permanent defacement of property  |
| Disrupting Class                             | Causing a disturbance that interferes with teaching and learning  |
| Dress Code Violation                         | Wearing clothing specified in the Dress Code as being inappropriate   |
| Having a possession of prohibited items      | Having possession of prohibited item including pop or energy drinks, locker locks etc.  |
| Leaving the classroom without permission     | Students are expected to stay in the classroom and under the supervision of an adult - If the need arises for them to leave the classroom, they need to have permission to do so. |
| Lying  | Intentionally representing something as being true, but is actually false.  |
| Possession of Personal Entertainment Devices | Students should not be in possession of electronic devices at school without special teacher permission. Cell phones may be in lockers and off during school hours.               |
| Profanity                                    | Use of profanity that is non-aggressive and not personally directed, and/or possessing obscene material.  |
| Horseplay                                    | General misbehaviors such as pushing, shoving, wrestling, etc., that may or may not result in unintentional harm to those involved  |
| Throwing Objects                             | Throwing or flinging of objects in school (i.e. rubber bands, books, pencils, etc.)   |
| Verbal Harassment                            | Spoken ideas of a harassing or demeaning nature, including teasing, taunting, and or racial slurs.  |

The consequences for violating provisions of the General category of the discipline code are generally handled per staff member, and are as follows:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>1ST OFFENSE</b> | Verbal Warning - Reteach appropriate behavior - Student/Teacher conference |
| <b>2ND OFFENSE</b> | Written referral to be signed and returned                                 |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>3RD OFFENSE</b> | Written referral and phone call home  |
| <b>4TH OFFENSE</b> | Referral to office - loss of privilege associated with misbehavior (also see persistent behavior below) |

### **PERSISTENT MISBEHAVIOR**

Patterns of misconduct are considered “persistent misbehavior.” Upon reaching this level, the teacher will refer the student to the administrator. School staff, parents, and the student will collaborate to create changed behavior.

Upon reaching the level of Persistent Misbehavior, the administrator has the discretion of more severe discipline including but not limited to suspensions. Discipline action and student misbehavior are handled on a cumulative basis for the full school year.

### **SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOR**

These types of violations are generally handled by the administrator. Consequences are more severe than those for general misbehaviors. Examples of behaviors associated with this level of misbehavior include, but are not limited to:

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Physical Contact                 | Physical action that is malicious in intent where another student may or may not be injured  |
| Bullying                         | A pattern of behavior asserting power or control over another person   |
| Cheating                         | Plagiarizing, cheating, unauthorized access or tampering with educational materials  |
| Fighting                         | Purposeful physical confrontation between two or more parties, which may result in injury  |
| Forgery                          | Intentionally using another person's name or misrepresentation of self   |
| Gross Obscenities                | Possession of profane materials or objects   |
| Indecent Exposure                | Exposing body parts which should not be shown in a public setting  |
| Insubordination                  | Ignoring or refusing to comply with directions or instructions given by school staff   |
| Persistent Misbehavior           | Patterns of misconduct are considered “persistent misbehavior.” Upon reaching this level, the teacher will refer the student to the administrator. School staff, parents, and the student will collaborate to create changed behavior.                             |
| Possession of Drug Paraphernalia | Possession of drug paraphernalia, including lighters or any tobacco related items  |
| Profanity II                     | Profanity that is personally directed and used with aggression   |
| Sexual Harassment                | A pattern of behavior that uses words, pictures, gestures, or other actions relating to sexual activity, a person's gender, or a person's sexual orientation that is meant to cause embarrassment, discomfort, or a reluctance to participate in school activities |
| Theft (Larceny)                  | Stealing from any person or place within the school or at any school-related activity  |
| Threats                          | Threats of violence or physical harm   |
| Vandalism                        | Defacement or damage of property   |

With serious types of violations, the teacher will refer the student to the administrator. Parents will be notified of any consequence given. A parent contact is required for all suspensions. In addition, a report may be filed with the police (or courts) at any time when serious infractions occur.

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 1 | 1-day suspension up to a 3-day suspension  |
| Step 2 | 1-day suspension up to a 5-day suspension  |
| Step 3 | 3-day suspension up to a 10-day suspension |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 4 | Suspension with a possible recommendation for expulsion. |
|--------|--|

## SEVERE MISBEHAVIOR

This type of violation is the most serious and will be handled by the administrator. In addition to the school consequences, the administration may decide to involve the police (or courts) whenever a severe infraction occurs. Examples of behaviors associated with this level of misbehavior include, but are not limited to:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Possession, Use, or Delivery of Controlled Substances  | Possession, use, or delivery of tobacco products, alcoholic products, prescription medicines, marijuana, vape, E cigarettes or other illegal drugs   |
| Possession, Use, or Delivery of Non-Controlled Substances                                    | Possession, use, or delivery of non-prescription medication, including aspirin, vitamins, diet pills, caffeine pills, cough medicine, etc.   |
| Possession, Use, or Delivery of "Look-Alike" Substances, possession of "look alike" weapons. | Possession, use, or delivery of any substance that substantially resembles a controlled or non-controlled substance in either appearance, shape, or is packaged in a manner normally used for illegal delivery (e.g. baggie, envelope, foil, etc.) |
| Possession of knife or blade or other sharp weapon like object                               | Possession of a knife with a blade less than 3 inches long.  |

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Step 1 | 3 day suspension up to a 10-day suspension with a parent conference required |
| Step 2 | Suspension with a possible recommendation for expulsion                      |

## BEHAVIOR WARRANTING EXPULSION EXPULSION CATEGORY

Procedures outlined herein do not diminish the due process rights under federal and state law of a pupil who has been determined to be eligible for special education programs and services. Expulsion can only be authorized by action of the superintendent. An expulsion may result in a report being made to the police and a referral being made to Michigan Department of Human Services. An expulsion can be for a period of time up to 180 consecutive school days. The following cases result in expulsion (these are in addition to previously identified instances which may result in expulsion):

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Arson  | Destruction or partial destruction of property by using fire   |
| Assault Involving a Weapon                     | Assault with any weapon  |
| Chronic Persistent Misbehavior                 | Student has displayed a history of serious and/or severe misbehavior.  |
| Major Vandalism                                | Major defacement of property   |
| Making a Bomb Threat                           | Any bomb threat to the school or to school property  |
| Physical Assault Against a Staff Member        | Physical assault against a staff member  |
| Pulling a Fire Alarm Under False Circumstances | Intentionally pulling a fire alarm   |
| Possession of a Dangerous Weapon               | Defined as a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over 3 inches in length, pocket knife opened by mechanical blade, an iron bar, or brass knuckles. |
| Sale or Delivery of Any Control Substance      | Sale or delivery of any controlled substance while in school, on school property, or while attending school activities   |

**PLEASE NOTE:** Restitution may also be sought when property is damaged.

**The building administration has the right and discretion to deviate from the designated sequence of consequences and impose any of the set-forth disciplinary measures or any other available disciplinary measure without first imposing a less or more severe type of discipline and, in addition, may refer a particular incident of misconduct to the appropriate law enforcement agency.**

**DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS AND STUDENT MISBEHAVIOR ARE HANDLED ON A CUMULATIVE BASIS FOR THE FULL SCHOOL YEAR FOR ALL LEVELS.**

### **PARENT NOTIFICATION**

When a student is suspended from school, the administrator (or designee) will notify the parent or guardian by telephone. If a parent is not able to be reached by telephone, an emergency contact person from the student's enrollment card will be called.

### **DRUG – FREE ZONE**

Public Act 174 of 1994, effective September 1, 1994, amends the Michigan Public Health Code by extending the 500 foot "drug free zone" surrounding school property to 1,000 feet. Under the amended provision, an individual 18 years and over who delivers cocaine, narcotics, or certain other illicit substances to a minor student within the proscribed 1,000-foot drug-free zone around the school property shall be punished by at least two years in prison and up to three times the term of imprisonment and fine (or both) that would otherwise apply.

"School property" is defined as a "building, playing field, or property used for school purposes to impart instruction to children in grades kindergarten through 12, when provided by a public, private, denominational, or parochial school, except those buildings used primarily for adult education or college extension courses.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS- Board Policy 5610**

The Board of Education is continually concerned about the safety and welfare of District students and staff and, therefore, will not tolerate behavior that creates an unsafe environment, a threat to safety or undue disruption of the educational environment.

### **Safe and Supportive Schools (Neola Policy 5517.04)**

West Branch Rose City Schools believes each student, regardless of age, race, gender, ability level, religious beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation (actual or perceived), or physical attributes, deserves the right to be educated in an environment that does not interfere with their educational opportunities or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges. To that end, acts of bullying towards another student or groups of students will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in a swift and serious manner.

According to the Michigan Department of Education, bullying means any intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive in nature. Furthermore, there is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior and the conduct is **repeated or forms a pattern**. The act of cyber-bullying which refers to bullying others by using technology or other electronic devices, or retaliation for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about bullying or knowingly making a false report about bullying in any form are prohibited as well. **Bullying does not refer to a one-time argument or disagreement between students.**

Our intent is to create and maintain a safe and welcoming environment by taking a proactive rather than reactive approach. To prevent or stop bullying or cyberbullying behaviors we will provide ongoing training around anti-bullying techniques and strategies for all staff and students.

If bullying occurs on any district property (i.e. school building, school grounds, bus stop, walking route to and

from school, school bus, school related vehicles) or at any school-related function, school-sponsored activity, event, or trip, the incident should be reported to the building's principal who will begin an investigation as soon as possible. If bullying/cyber-bullying takes place off of school property and impacts the educational process, it should be reported to the school. In the event an act of cyber-bullying has occurred the same protocol will be followed.

If the result of the investigation concludes bullying or cyberbullying took place the offender(s) could receive consequences ranging from written conduct reports to loss of privileges during the school day to in or out of school suspensions depending on the severity of the incidents.

### **DUE PROCESS**

The Board of Education recognizes that exclusion from the educational programs of the District, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in this District and one that cannot be imposed without due process since exclusion deprives a child of the right to an education. The Board also recognizes that it may be necessary for a teacher to remove a student from class for conduct which is disruptive to the learning environment and that such removals are not subject to a prior hearing, provided said removal is for a period of less than twenty-four (24) hours. However, if an emergency removal may result in a suspension, then due process must be ensured.

In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, appropriate due process rights described in Policy 5611 and AG 5610 must be observed. The principal shall check to make sure the student is not classified as disabled under Section 504. Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with their rights under Federal law.

For purposes of this policy, suspension shall be either short-term (not more than ten (10) days) or long-term (for more than ten (10) days but less than permanent expulsion) removal of a student from a regular District program. The Superintendent may suspend a student for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days.

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise defined in Federal and/or State law, expulsion is defined as the permanent exclusion of a student from the District. Students who are expelled may petition for reinstatement as provided below.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL OR SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION**

A student may be removed from a class, subject, or activity for one (1) day by authorized staff for certain conduct as specified in the Code of Conduct, or he/she may be given a short-term suspension by the Superintendent.

### **WEAPONS, ARSON, CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT**

In compliance with State and Federal law, and unless a different determination is made after consideration of the factors identified above, the District shall expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon, other than a firearm, in the District's weapon-free school zone (except as noted below), commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a school building or on school property, including school buses and other District transportation, or pleads to, is convicted of or is adjudicated of criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the District.

In compliance with State and Federal law, the District shall expel any student who possesses a firearm in the District's weapon-free school zone in violation of State law, unless the student can establish the mitigating factors relating to possession of a dangerous weapon set out below, by clear and convincing evidence.

For purposes of this policy, a "dangerous weapon" is defined by law 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. This definition also includes other devices designed to (or likely to) inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term "firearm" is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive, the frame, or the bearer of any such weapon, as well as a firearm muffler, firearm silencer, or any such destructive device.

The District need not expel a student for possession of a dangerous weapon, including a firearm, if the student can establish in a clear and convincing manner the following mitigating factor(s) to the satisfaction of the Board the:

- A. object or instrument was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct (or indirect) delivery to another person for use as a weapon; or
- B. weapon was not knowingly possessed; or
- C. student did not know (or have reason to know) that the object or instrument in his/her possession constituted a dangerous weapon; or
- D. weapon was possessed at the suggestion, request, direction of, or with the express permission of the Superintendent or the police.

There is a rebuttable presumption that expulsion for possessing the weapon is not justified if the Board determines in writing that the student has established that he or she fits under one of the exceptions above by clear and convincing evidence, and that the student has no previous history of suspension or expulsion.

For expulsions for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct, or assault upon an employee, volunteer, or contractor, the Superintendent shall provide that the expulsion is duly noted in the student's record, the student is referred to the Department of Human Services or Department of Community Health within three (3) school days after the expulsion, and the parents are informed of the referral. Furthermore, if a student who is expelled is below the age of sixteen (16), the Superintendent shall ensure notification of the expulsion is given to the Juvenile Division of the Probate Court. In compliance with Federal law, the Superintendent shall also refer any student (regardless of age) expelled for possession of a dangerous weapon to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system serving the District. In addition, the Superintendent shall send a copy of this policy to the State Department of Education and shall include a description of the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of the student for possessing a firearm or weapon in the District's weapon-free school zone, together with the name of the District, the number of students so expelled, and the types of firearms or weapons brought into the weapon-free school zone.

A student expelled under this policy for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct, or assault upon an employee, volunteer, or contractor may apply for reinstatement in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal guardian, adult student, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after sixty (60) school days from the date of expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before ninety (90) school days from the expulsion date.
- B. If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for a reason other than possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal guardian, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement at any time, but the student may not be reinstated before ten (10) school days from the expulsion date.

- C. If the student is in grade six (6) or above at the time of the expulsion, the parents, legal guardian, adult student, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after 150 school days from the date of the expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before 180 school days from the expulsion date.
- D. The parent, adult student, or emancipated minor shall submit the request for reinstatement to the Superintendent.
- E. Within ten (10) school days after receiving the petition, the Board shall appoint a committee consisting of two (2) Board members, a school administrator, a teacher, and a school-parent representative. During this time period, the Superintendent shall prepare and submit for consideration by the committee information concerning the circumstances of the expulsion and any factors mitigating for or against reinstatement.
- F. Within ten (10) school days after being appointed, the committee shall review all pertinent information and submit its recommendation to the Board. The recommendation may be for unconditional reinstatement, conditional reinstatement, or non-reinstatement, based on the committee's consideration of the following the:
  - 1. extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of harm to students or school staff;
  - 2. extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of school or individual liability for the Board or school staff;
  - 3. age and maturity of the student;
  - 4. student's school record before the expulsion incident;
  - 5. student's attitude concerning the expulsion incident;
  - 6. student's behavior since the expulsion and the prospects for remediation.
- G. The degree of cooperation and support the parent has provided and will provide if the student is reinstated (if the request was filed by a parent), including, but not limited to the parent's receptiveness toward any conditions placed on the reinstatement. Such conditions, for example, might include a written agreement by the student and/or a parent who filed the reinstatement request to accomplish the following:
  - 1. abide by a behavior contract involving the student, his/her parents, and an outside agency;
  - 2. participate in an anger management program or other counseling activities;
  - 3. cooperate in processing and discussing periodic progress reviews;
  - 4. meet other conditions deemed appropriate by the committee;
  - 5. accept the consequences for not fulfilling the agreed-upon conditions.

The Board shall make its decision no later than the next regular Board meeting following the committee's submission of its recommendations. The Board's decision shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

In the event a student who has been permanently expelled from another school requests admission to this District, in making its decision, the Board shall follow the same procedure it has established in paragraphs A-G, above, for the reinstatement of a student.

Students expelled for reasons other than dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct, or assault upon an employee, volunteer, or contractor may also petition the Board for reinstatement. The Board may, at its discretion, consider the petition in accordance with the procedures set forth above or upon any standards and with any procedures it determines appropriate under the circumstances.

The Superintendent shall ensure Board policies and procedures regarding a student's rights to due process are followed when dealing with a possible suspension or expulsion under this policy.



### **STUDENTS SUBJECT TO LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION**

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 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 transcription of the hearing, if the 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 superintendent during which the student may be represented by their parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of the student's choice.

Within 10 days (as in AG 5610) 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 parents 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.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

While recognizing that students may require disciplinary action in various forms, the Board does not condone the use of unreasonable force and fear as an appropriate procedure in student discipline.

Staff shall not use physical force or violence to compel obedience. If all other means fail, staff members may always resort to the removal of the student from the classroom or District through suspension or expulsion procedures.

Within the scope of their employment, all staff may use reasonable force and apply restraint to accomplish the following:

- A. restrain or remove a student who refuses to comply with a request to behave or report to the office;
- B. quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to self or others;
- C. obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within the control of the student, for either self-defense; or
- D. the protection of persons or property.

In accordance with State law, corporal punishment shall not be permitted. If any staff member (full-time, part-time, or substitute) deliberately inflicts, or causes to be inflicted, physical pain upon the student (by hitting, paddling, spanking, slapping, or any other kind of physical force) as a means of discipline, the staff member may be subject to discipline and possibly criminal assault charges. This prohibition also applies to volunteers and those with whom the District contracts for services.

The Superintendent shall provide guidelines, including a list of alternatives to corporal punishment.

#### Removal, Suspension, and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

The District shall abide by Federal and State laws in matters relating to discipline, suspension, and expulsion of disabled students.

Adopted June 12, 2012

Revised 6/19/17

Revised 12/17/18

#### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE – Board Policy 5771**

Search of a student and the student's 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 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.

(See also Board Policy 5771 - Search and Seizure and associated Administrative Guidelines)

#### **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The Board also authorizes the use of canines, trained in detecting the presence of drugs or devices, when the Superintendent has reasonable suspicion that illegal drugs or devices may be present in a school. This means of detection shall be used only to determine the presence of drugs in locker areas and other places in the school where such substances could be concealed. Canine detection must be conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities or other certified organizations and is not to be used to search students unless either a warrant or parental permission has been obtained prior to the search.

## **STUDENT PERSON AND POSSESSIONS**

The Board recognizes that the privacy of students or his/her belongings may not be violated by unreasonable search and seizure and directs that no student be searched without reasonable suspicion or in an unreasonable manner. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction, the student's age, and the student's disciplinary history.

This authorization to search shall also apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board.

Reasonable suspicion that a communication device has been used to violate District policies or administrative guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary action and may result in the communication device being confiscated.

Administrators are authorized to arrange for a breath-test instrument, according to the Superintendent's guidelines, for the purpose of determining if a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. It is not necessary for the test to determine blood-alcohol level, since the Board has established a zero tolerance for alcohol use.

Except as provided below, a request for the search of a student or a student's possessions will be directed to the principal. S/He shall attempt to obtain the freely-offered consent of the student to the inspection; however, provided there is reasonable suspicion, s/he may conduct the search without such consent. Whenever possible, a search will be conducted by the principal in the presence of the student and a staff member other than the principal. A search prompted by the reasonable belief that health and safety are immediately threatened will be conducted with as much speed and dispatch as may be required to protect persons and property.

Search of a student's person or intimate personal belongings shall be conducted by a person of the student's gender, in the presence of another staff member of the same gender, and only in exceptional circumstances when the health or safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened.

The principal shall be responsible for the prompt recording in writing of each student search, including the reasons for the search; information received that established the need for the search and the name of informant, if any; the persons present when the search was conducted; any substances or objects found and the disposition made of them; and any subsequent action taken. The principal shall be responsible for the custody, control, and disposition of any illegal or dangerous substance or object taken from a student.

The Superintendent shall prepare administrative guidelines to implement this policy.

## **FERPA**

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT STUDENT RECORDS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **Purpose**

The Board of Education of the WBRC Area Schools recognizes the importance of maintaining records for all students in attendance. While a student's educational interests require the collection, retention,

and use of information about the student, the student's right to privacy requires careful custodianship and limitations on access to education records. The maintenance and disclosure of student records by this institution are governed by state and federal law, particularly the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 USC 1232g, and its implementing regulations, 34 CFR 99.1 et seq.

### **Annual Notification of Rights**

FERPA affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to education records. Those rights include the following:

1. Right to Inspect: A parent or eligible student has the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the district within 45 days of the district's receipt of a written request for access.
2. Right to Request Amendment: A parent or eligible student has the right to request the amendment of the student's education record(s) that are believed to be inaccurate or misleading.
3. Right to Consent to Disclosure: A parent or eligible student has the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. Right to Complain: A parent or eligible student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with FERPA requirements.
5. Right to Obtain Copies of this Policy: A parent or eligible student has the right to obtain copies of this policy upon request.

\*All educational records are provided directly to any new school in which a student intends to enroll.

### **Disclosure of Education Records**

The district will disclose information from a student's education record only with the written consent of the parent or eligible student, except that disclosure without consent may be made:

1. To school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records.
2. To officials of other schools where a student seeks or intends to enroll.
3. To federal and state officials in connection with their duties to audit or enforce legal conditions relative to federal or state supported programs.
4. To the United States Attorney General.
5. To comply with the federal legislation "ESSA", the district is required to release student disciplinary records concerning suspensions and expulsions to any private or public school to which a student is transferring for enrollment purposes.
6. In connection with a student's request for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine eligibility for aid, the amount or conditions of the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
7. To state juvenile justice system officials as permitted by state law.
8. To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the district for the purposes of predictive testing, student aid, and instructional improvements.
9. To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.
10. To parents who claim the student as a dependent for income tax purposes.
11. To comply with a court order or lawfully-issued subpoena. The district shall make reasonable attempts to notify the parent or eligible student of such disclosure prior to disclosure.
12. To appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency that threatens the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
13. For designated directory information.
14. To the parents of a non-eligible student or to a student.
15. As necessary for the district to either prosecute a legal action against the student or parent or to defend itself against a lawsuit initiated by a parent or eligible student.

### **Student Directory Information Notification**

West Branch-Rose City Area Schools has adopted a policy designated to assure parents and students the full implementations, protections and enjoyment of their rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. A copy of the school district's policy is available for review in the office of Superintendent, 960 S. M-33, West Branch, MI 48661.

This law requires WBRC to designate as "directory information" any personally identifiable information taken from a student's educational records prior to making such information available to the public.

WBRC has designated the following as directory information:

Student name and address, telephone number, e-mail address, photographs, date and place of birth, major fields of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degree and awards received, the most recent previous school attended and other similar information.

This letter informs you of your right to withhold release of students' directory information. A form for this purpose is available through each building office. The objection needs to be reviewed annually. If you have no objection to the use of student information, you do not need to take any action.

## **West Branch-Rose City Area Schools Board of Education Policy on Bullying**

### **BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS – Board Policy**

#### **5517.01**

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.

#### **Reporting**

No later than May 30, 2015, the District shall submit to the Department of Education a copy of this Policy.

The District shall report incidents of bullying to the Department of Education on an annual basis according to the form and procedures established by the Department of Education.

Should this Policy be amended or otherwise modified, the District shall submit a copy of the amended or modified Policy to the Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days after adopting the modification.

#### **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.

A student may also submit a report or complaint to any of the above designated individuals through email, voicemail, regular mail or by leaving a sealed note addressed to the individual at that person's office or desk. The student may submit a report or complaint anonymously, but this may affect the ability to fully investigate the matter, when the complaining student is not available to provide additional information during the course of the investigation.

The identity of a student who reports bullying, hazing or aggressive behavior, as well as those students who provide information during an investigation will remain confidential to the extent possible and to the extent allowable by law. Only school personnel directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or responsible for remedying any violations will be provided access to the identity of the complaining student(s) and student witnesses, and then only to the extent necessary to effectively deal with the situation.

The identity of the student who files the report or complaint will not be voluntarily shared with the alleged perpetrator(s) or the witnesses unless the student (and his/her parent/guardian) give written

permission to do so. Any investigation report will likewise not be voluntarily produced with the names of the reporting student(s) or witnesses. However, under certain circumstances, the District may be required by law to disclose the report and/or the student(s) names. Also, under certain circumstances, the identity of the reporting student may become obvious even without disclosure by school personnel.

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. While reports may be made anonymously, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report without other corroborating evidence.

The Principal (or other designated administrator) 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 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.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the Principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517 - Anti-Harassment.

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.

### **Non-Retaliation/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.

### **Prevention/Training/Restorative Practices**

The Superintendent may establish a Bullying Prevention Task Force and/or a program or other initiatives involving school staff, students, clubs or other student groups, administrators, volunteers,

parents, law enforcement, community members, and other stakeholders, aimed at the prevention of bullying or other aggressive behavior.

The District may provide, and all administrators, school employees, contracted employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students may undertake training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and other aggressive behavior.

The District may provide, and all students may undertake, annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying, cyber bullying and other aggressive behavior.

The District may utilize restorative practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community in the correction of bullying behavior, which may include victim-offender conferences that:

- A. are initiated by the victim;
- B. are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least fifteen (15), by the victim;
- C. are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team");
- D. would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

### **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 written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying (i.e. any electronic communication, including, but not limited to electronically transmitted acts, such as internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless handheld device) 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 Policy 5517;

Hazing, see Policy 5516.

## Equal Education Opportunity

Dear Parent/Eligible Student:

The West Branch-Rose City Area Schools has a tradition of "Educational Excellence." These two words speak of the commitment our staff makes to each child's education. Our programs are built on strong curriculum, dedicated staff, and a learning environment conducive to academic success, regardless of ability.

This document will inform you of Board of Education and Statutory policies. Procedures related to students and your rights through provisions of these policies and procedures are explained. It is important that you read the information carefully.

Sincerely,

Gail Hughey, Superintendent

**Notice of Non-Discrimination - Refer to NEOLA policy 2260 located on the district website under *Board of Education***

### Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Board of Education of the West Branch-Rose City Area School District does not discriminate based on a person's Protected Class(es) in its education programs and activities and does not tolerate unlawful harassment or retaliation. Protected Classes include race, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions; sexual orientation; and gender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information, and any other legally protected characteristics.

Inquiries about applicable Federal and/or State laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of Protected Classes may be referred to the District Compliance Officer and/or Federal and/or State agencies that have jurisdiction over such unlawful conduct (e.g., the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"), the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"), and the Michigan Civil Rights Commission ("MCRC").

The District Compliance Officers are:

Ted Matuszak

Director of Finance

[960 S. M-33](#), P.O. Box 308

West Branch, Michigan 48661

(989) 343-2002

[matuszat@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:matuszat@wbrc.k12.mi.us)

Jennifer Winter

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

[960 S. M-33](#), P.O. Box 308

West Branch, Michigan 48661

(989) 343-2033

[winterj@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:winterj@wbrc.k12.mi.us)

The Board's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at <https://go.boarddocs.com/mi/wbrc/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

To report information about conduct that may constitute prohibited discrimination, harassment or retaliation or make a complaint of prohibited discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please refer to <https://www.wbrc.k12.mi.us/our-district/title-ix-compliance/>

Contact information for applicable Federal and State agencies is available here:

OCR: <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr>

U.S. Department of Justice - Civil Rights Division: <https://www.ada.gov/>  
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: <https://www.eeoc.gov/>  
Michigan Civil Rights Commission: <https://michigan.gov/mdcr/commission>

[Title IX K-12 Training, Neola 7/24/24](#)  
[Title IX Training Certification 2025](#)  
[Title IX: Training, Clark Hill 2025](#)  
[Title IX Sexual Harassment Coordinator Training Investigation Report](#) (Sample)  
[Board Policy 2266](#)

## **Non-Discrimination and Student's Complaint Procedure Grievance Procedure for Students**

### **Section I**

Any person believing that the West Branch - Rose City Area School District, or any part of the school organization, has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (4) Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, may bring forward a complaint, which shall be referred to as a grievance, to:

Civil Rights Coordinator  
West Branch - Rose City Area Schools  
P.O. Box 308  
West Branch, MI 48661  
989.343.2000

### **Section II**

The person who believes a valid basis for grievance exists shall discuss the grievance informally and on a verbal basis with the Civil Rights Coordinator who shall, in turn, investigate the complaint and reply with an answer within five (5) business days. If the complainant feels the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, he or she may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

#### **Step 1**

A written statement of the grievance, signed by the complainant, shall be submitted to the Civil Rights Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answers to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply, in writing, to the complainant within five (5) business days.

#### **Step 2**

A complainant wishing to appeal the written (or Step 1) decision of the local Civil Rights Coordinator may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Board President within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Board President shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days.

#### **Step 3**

If still unsatisfied, the complainant may appeal through a signed, written statement to the Board of Education within five (5) business days of receiving the Board President's response in Step 2. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board of Education shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within forty (40) days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) days of this meeting. The decision of the Board of Education shall be final.

## **District Assurances**

- The Civil Rights Coordinator will provide the complainant with a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.
- A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the Civil Rights Coordinator's office.
- The District strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against persons who utilize this Grievance Procedure.
- When acts of discrimination and/or harassment are found, the District will take immediate steps to impose appropriate discipline, prevent its recurrence and remedy its discriminatory effects on the victim and others, as appropriate.
- A person or their representatives may, at any time, contact the enforcement offices if you wish to file a complaint or need assistance on a problem or assistance to prevent civil rights problems. Contact the OCR headquarters office if you have a question on national policy, to make a Freedom of Information request for information that is national in scope, or to request publications or other assistance that is not available online.

The local Coordinator, upon request, will provide the complainant with a copy of the district's grievance procedure and investigate all complaints in accordance with this procedure.

A copy of each of the Acts and the regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the Civil Rights Coordinator's office.

Students and parents and representatives of education institutions may, at any time, contact the enforcement offices if you wish to file a complaint or need assistance on a problem or assistance to prevent civil rights problems. Contact the OCR headquarters office if you have a question on national policy, to make a Freedom of Information request for information that is national in scope, or to request publications or other assistance that is not available online.

The OCR office for Michigan is located at: Cleveland Office

Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750  
Cleveland, OH 44114-2602  
Telephone: 216-522-4970  
FAX: 216-522-7573  
TDD: 877-521-2172  
Email: [OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov)

The OCR National Headquarters is located at: U.S. Department of Education

Office for Civil Rights  
Customer Service Team  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-1100  
Telephone: 800-421-3481  
FAX: 202-246-6840  
TDD: 877-521-2172  
Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

### **Informal Complaint Procedure**

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to quickly stop inappropriate behavior and facilitate resolution through informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who believes s/he has been unlawfully discriminated or retaliated against. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint.

The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the parties (the alleged target of the discrimination and individual(s) alleged to have engaged in the discrimination) agree to participate in it.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

All complaints involving a District employee or any other adult member of the School District community against a student will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a student feels that s/he is being unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against and s/he is able and feels safe doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the person who engaged in the allegedly discriminatory/retaliatory conduct that it is inappropriate and must stop. The complaining individual should address the alleged misconduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The COs are available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the individual if requested to do so. An individual who is uncomfortable or unwilling to inform the person who allegedly engaged in the unlawful conduct of his/her concerns is not prohibited from otherwise filing an informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful discrimination, such as sexual discrimination, the CO may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A student who believes s/he has been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: (1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; (2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or (3) directly to one of the COs.

All informal complaints must be reported to one of the COs who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The School District's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students who believe they are being unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against with a range of options aimed at bringing about a prompt resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the student claiming unlawful discrimination/retaliation, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the student about how to communicate his/her concerns to the person who allegedly engaged in the discriminatory/retaliatory behavior.
- B. Distributing a copy of Policy 2260 – Non-Discrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the individual whose behavior is being questioned works or attends.
- C. If both parties agree, the CO may arrange and facilitate a meeting between the student claiming discrimination/retaliation and the individual accused of engaging in the misconduct to work out a mutual resolution.

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the CO or designee will exercise his/her authority to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15)

business days of receiving the informal complaint. Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, parties may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

### **Formal Complaint Procedure**

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one (1) of the parties requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or if the student elects to file a formal complaint initially, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

A student who believes s/he has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation (hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant") may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing, with a teacher, Principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the CO, Superintendent, or another District employee who works at another school or at the District level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful discrimination, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs. If a Complainant informs a teacher, Principal, or other District employee at the student's school, Superintendent, or other District employee, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of discrimination/retaliation, that employee must report such information to the CO within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process, the CO should keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: the identity of the individual believed to have engaged in, or be engaging in; the discriminatory/retaliatory conduct; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the CO shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter, the CO will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the CO will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further discrimination or retaliation, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or schedule for the Complainant and/or the person alleged to have engaged in the misconduct. In making such a determination, the CO should consult the Complainant to assess his/her agreement to the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the CO may still take whatever actions s/he deems appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent.

Within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint, the CO or designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation.

Simultaneously, the CO will inform the individual alleged to have engaged in the discriminatory or retaliatory conduct (hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent") that a complaint has been received.

The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and provided with a copy of any relevant policies and/or administrative guidelines, including Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination. The Respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the CO or designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of discrimination/retaliation within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other information presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness that is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the CO or designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent that summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful discrimination/retaliation as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation. The CO's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In determining if unlawful discrimination or retaliation occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used. The CO may consult with the Board's legal counsel before finalizing the report to the Superintendent.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within five (5) business days of receiving the report of the CO or designee, the Superintendent must either issue a final decision regarding whether the charges have been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and the Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within five (5) days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent shall issue a final written decision as described above.

If the Superintendent determines the Complainant was subjected to unlawful discrimination/retaliation, s/he must identify what corrective action will be taken to stop, remedy, and prevent the recurrence of the discrimination/retaliation. The corrective action should be reasonable, timely, age-appropriate and effective, and tailored to the specific situation.

The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful discrimination/retaliation regardless of whether the student alleging the unlawful discrimination/retaliation pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

The Complainant may be represented, at his/her own cost, at any of the above described meetings/hearings.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Complaint with the Office for Civil Rights or the filing of a court case. Use of this internal complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

The School District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the Complainant, the Respondent(s), and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. All Complainants proceeding through the formal investigation process will be advised that their identities may be disclosed to the Respondent(s).

During the course of a formal investigation, the CO or designee will instruct each person who is interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of an investigation is expected not to disclose to third parties any information that s/he learns and/or provides during the course of the investigation.

### **Sanctions and Monitoring**

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful discrimination/retaliation by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop and prevent further misconduct. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases where unlawful discrimination/retaliation is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the School District community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, or participates as a witness in an investigation is prohibited. Specifically, the Board will not retaliate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any Federal or State civil rights law, or because that individual made a charge, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws, or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws.

### **Education and Training**

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful discriminatory practices. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as all information, provided regarding the Board's policy and discrimination in general, will be age and content appropriate.



The District will endeavor to assist the student and/or his/her parents in their access to District programs by providing notices to the parents and students in a language and format that they are likely to understand.

Materials approved by the State Department of Education describing the benefits of instruction in Braille reading and writing shall be provided to each blind student's individualized planning committee. The District shall not deny a student the opportunity for instruction in Braille, reading, and writing solely because the student has some remaining vision.

### **Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials**

All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy must retain all information, documents, electronically stored information, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created and received as part of an investigation, which may include, but not be limited to:

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/grievances/ statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- B. any narratives that memorialize oral reports/allegations/ complaints/grievances/statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- C. any documentation that memorializes the actions taken by District personnel related to the investigation and/or the District's response to the alleged violation of this policy;
- D. written witness statements;
- E. narratives, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness interviews/statements;
- F. e-mails, texts, or social media posts that directly relate to or constitute evidence pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy (i.e., not after-the- fact commentary about or media coverage of the incident);
- G. notes or summaries prepared contemporaneously by the investigator in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.), but not including transitory notes whose content is otherwise memorialized in other documents;
- H. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and other documentation that memorializes oral disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of this policy;
- I. dated written determinations/reports (including summaries of relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence) and other documentation that memorializes oral notifications to the parties concerning the outcome of the investigation, including any consequences imposed as a result of a violation of this policy;
- J. documentation of any interim measures offered and/or provided to complainants and/or the alleged perpetrators, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates the no contact orders were issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt of the no contact orders;
- K. documentation of all actions taken, both individual and systemic, to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;
- L. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student and/or Employee Handbooks or Codes of Conduct);
- M. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment;

The information, documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal and/or State law (e.g., student records).

These investigative records and materials created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, and Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT**

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT – Board Policy 5517**

#### **General Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all School District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the School District community as well as third parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

The District may offer counseling services to any person found to have been subjected to unlawful harassment, and, where appropriate, the person(s) who committed the unlawful harassment. For purposes of this policy, "School District community" means students, administrators, and professional and support staff, as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.

For purposes of this policy, "third parties" include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on School District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the School District community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off School District property).

#### **Other Violations of the Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Board will also take immediate steps to impose disciplinary action on individuals engaging in any of the following prohibited acts:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation.
- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of unlawful harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of unlawful harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating harassment charges comprises part of one's supervisory duties.

## **Definitions**

### **Bullying**

Bullying rises to the level of unlawful harassment when one or more persons systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees and the bullying is based upon one (1) or more Protected Classes, that is, characteristics that are protected by Federal civil rights laws. It is defined as any unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment; cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school or work performance or participation; and may involve:

- A. teasing;
- B. threats;
- C. intimidation;
- D. stalking;
- E. cyberstalking;
- F. cyberbullying;
- G. physical violence;
- H. theft;
- I. sexual, religious, or racial harassment;
- J. public humiliation; or
- K. destruction of property.

### **Harassment**

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- A. places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or an employee's work performance; or
- C. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, "sexual harassment" is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or status in a class, educational program, or activity.
- B. Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of either gender against a person of the same or opposite gender.

Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment may take a variety of forms. Examples of the kinds of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations.
- B. Unwanted physical and/or sexual contact.
- C. Threats or insinuations that a person's employment, wages, academic grade, promotion, classroom work or assignments, academic status, participation in athletics or extra-curricular programs or events, or other conditions of employment or education may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.
- D. Unwelcome verbal expressions of a sexual nature, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; the unwelcome use of sexually degrading language, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls.
- E. Sexually suggestive objects, pictures, videotapes, audio recordings or literature, placed in the work or educational environment, which may embarrass or offend individuals.
- F. Unwelcome and inappropriate touching, patting, or pinching; obscene gestures.
- 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.
- I. Inappropriate boundary invasions by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life.
- J. Verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes unlawful sexual harassment. Sex-based or gender-based conduct must be sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects, limits, or denies an individual's employment or education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive employment or educational environment, or such that it is intended to, or has the effect of, denying or limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activities.

NOTE: Sexual conduct/relationships with students by District employees or any other adult member of the School District community is prohibited, and any teacher, administrator, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual conduct with a student may also be guilty of the criminal charge of "sexual battery." The issue of consent is irrelevant in regard to such criminal charge and/or with respect to the application of this policy to District employees or other adult members of the School District community.

### **Race/Color Harassment**

Prohibited racial harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's race or color and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs, nicknames implying stereotypes, epithets, and/or negative references relative to racial customs.

### **Religious (Creed) Harassment**

Prohibited religious harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's religion or creed and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or

offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's religious tradition, clothing, or surnames, and/or involves religious slurs.

### **National Origin/Ancestry Harassment**

Prohibited national origin/ancestry harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's national origin or ancestry and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin or ancestry, such as negative comments regarding customs, manner of speaking, language, surnames, or ethnic slurs.

### **Disability Harassment**

Prohibited disability harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's disability and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as negative comments about speech patterns, movement, physical impairments or defects/appearances, or the like. Such harassment may further occur where conduct is directed at or pertains to a person's genetic information.

### **Reports and Complaints of Harassing Conduct**

Students and other members of the School District community and third parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, supervisor or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Anti-Harassment Compliance Officer within two (2) school days.

Members of the School District community, which includes students, or third parties who believe they have been unlawfully harassed are entitled to utilize the Board's complaint process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the complaining individual's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints of harassment under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of alleged bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior, the Principal believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal shall report the act of bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. While the Compliance Officer investigates the allegation, the Principal shall suspend his/her Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the Compliance Officer's written report. The Compliance Officer shall keep the Principal informed of the status of Policy 5517 investigation and provide him/her with a copy of the resulting written report.

### **Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers**

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as "Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers" for the District. They are hereinafter referred to as the "Compliance Officers."

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Ted Matuszak                | Jennifer Winter                        |
| Director of Finance         | Director of Curriculum and Instruction |
| 960 S. M-33                 | 960 S. M-33                            |
| P.O. Box 308                | P.O. Box 308                           |
| West Branch, Michigan 48661 | West Branch, Michigan 48661            |

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually on the School District's website.

The Compliance Officers will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful harassment, to assist students, other members of the District community, and third parties who seek support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the student, other member of the School District community or third party in those instances where concerns have not resulted in the filing of a formal complaint and where all parties are in agreement to participate in an informal process.

Compliance Officers shall accept complaints of unlawful harassment directly from any member of the School District community or a visitor to the District, or receive complaints that are initially filed with a school building administrator. Upon receipt of a complaint either directly or through a school building administrator, a Compliance Officer will begin either an informal or formal process (depending on the request of the person alleging the harassment or the nature of the alleged harassment), or the Compliance Officer will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. In the case of a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or will oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All members of the School District community must report incidents of harassment that are reported to them to the Compliance Officer within two (2) business days of learning of the incident.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful harassment of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one of the Compliance Officers within two (2) business days. Additionally, any Board employee who observes an act of unlawful harassment is expected to intervene to stop the harassment, unless circumstances make such an intervention dangerous, in which case the staff member should immediately notify other Board employees and/or local law enforcement officials, as necessary, to stop the harassment. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer or designee must contact the student, if age eighteen (18) or older, or the student's parents if under the age eighteen (18), within two (2) school days to advise s/he/them of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged misconduct, including the obligation of the Compliance Officer or designee to conduct an investigation following all the procedures outlined for a formal complaint.

### **Investigation and Complaint Procedure**

Any student who believes that s/he has been subjected to unlawful harassment may seek resolution of his/her complaint through either the informal or formal procedures as described below. Further, a process for investigating claims of harassment or retaliation and a process for rendering a decision

regarding whether the claim of legally prohibited harassment or retaliation was substantiated are set forth below.

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment or retaliation, time lines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. Once the formal complaint process is begun, the investigation will be completed in a timely manner (ordinarily, within fifteen (15) business days of the complaint being received).

The informal and formal procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

### **Informal Complaint Procedure**

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to stop inappropriate behavior and to investigate and facilitate resolution through informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who believes s/he has been unlawfully harassed or retaliated against. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed may initiate their complaint through this informal complaint process, but are not required to do so. The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the parties (alleged target of harassment and alleged harasser(s)) agree to participate in the informal process.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed or retaliated may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

However, all complaints of harassment involving a District employee or any other adult member of the School District community against a student will be formally investigated. Similarly, any allegations of sexual violence will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a student feels that s/he is being unlawfully harassed and s/he is able and feels safe doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. Such direct communication should not be utilized in circumstances involving sexual violence. The complaining individual should address the allegedly harassing conduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The Compliance Officers are available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the individual if requested to do so. An individual who is uncomfortable or unwilling to inform the harasser of his/her complaint is not prohibited from otherwise filing an informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful harassment, such as sexual harassment, the Compliance Officer may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A student who believes she/he has been unlawfully harassed may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: (1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; (2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or (3) directly to one of the Compliance Officers.

All informal complaints must be reported to one of the Compliance Officers who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below on his/her own, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The School District's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students who believe they are being unlawfully harassed with a range of options designed to bring about a resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the student claiming unlawful harassment, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the student about how to communicate the unwelcome nature of the behavior to the alleged harasser.
- B. Distributing a copy of the anti-harassment policy as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the individual whose behavior is being questioned works or attends.
- C. If both parties agree, the Compliance Officer may arrange and facilitate a meeting between the student claiming harassment and the individual accused of harassment to work out a mutual resolution. Such a meeting is not appropriate in circumstances involving sexual violence.

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the Compliance Officer or designee will exercise his/her authority to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the informal complaint. Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, parties may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

### **Formal Complaint Procedure**

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one of the parties has requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or if the student elects to file a formal complaint initially, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

A student who believes s/he has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant," may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing, with a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or another District employee who works at another school or at the district level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment and retaliation, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. If a Complainant informs a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, Superintendent, or other District employee, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of harassment or retaliation, that employee must report such information to the Compliance Officer or designee within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process, the Compliance Officer should keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: the identity of the individual believed to have engaged in, or be engaging in, offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.



If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the Compliance Officer shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further harassment or retaliation, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or schedule for the Complainant and/or the alleged harasser. In making such a determination, the Compliance Officer should consult the Complainant to assess his/her agreement to the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the Compliance Officer may still take whatever actions s/he deem appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent.

Within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer or a designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the Complainant has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation.

Simultaneously, the Compliance Officer will inform the individual alleged to have engaged in the harassing or retaliatory conduct, hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent," that a complaint has been received. The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and provided with a copy of any relevant administrative guidelines, including the Board's Anti-Harassment policy. The Respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the Compliance Officer or a designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of harassment/retaliation within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other information presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness that is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer or the designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent that summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful harassment as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful harassment. The Compliance Officer's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In determining if discriminatory harassment or retaliation occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used. The Compliance Officer may consult with the Board's legal counsel before finalizing the report to the Superintendent with Superintendent approval.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within ten (10) school days of receiving the report of the Compliance Officer or the designee, the Superintendent must either issue a final decision regarding whether the complaint of harassment has been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and the Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10)

school days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent shall issue a final written decision as described above.

The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful harassment/retaliation regardless of whether the student alleging the unlawful harassment/retaliation pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

The School District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. All Complainants proceeding through the formal investigation process will be advised that their identities may be disclosed to the Respondent.

During the course of a formal investigation, the Compliance Officer or his/her designee will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of a harassment investigation is expected not to disclose any information that s/he learns or that s/he provides during the course of the investigation.

### **Sanctions and Monitoring**

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful harassment by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent further such harassment. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases where unlawful harassment is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the School District community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

### **Retaliation**

Any act of retaliation against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation is prohibited.

### **Allegations Constituting Criminal Conduct: Child Abuse/Sexual Misconduct**

State law requires any school teacher or school employee who knows or suspects that a student under the age of eighteen (18) or that a person with a disability receiving services as a student from the school regardless of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering a physical or mental wound, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of a child to immediately

report that knowledge or suspicion to the county children's services agency. If, during the course of a harassment investigation, the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe or suspect that the alleged conduct reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the Complainant, a report of such knowledge must be made in accordance with State law and Board Policy.

Any reports made to a county children's services agency or to local law enforcement shall not terminate the Compliance Officer or a designee's obligation and responsibility to continue to investigate a complaint of harassment. While the Compliance Officer or a designee may work cooperatively with outside agencies to conduct concurrent investigations, in no event shall the harassment investigation be inhibited by the involvement of outside agencies without good cause after consultation with the Superintendent.

### **Education and Training**

In support of this Anti-Harassment Policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful discriminatory practices. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as information provided regarding the Board's policy and harassment in general, will be age and content appropriate.

### **Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials**

All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy shall retain all documents, electronically stored information ("ESI"), and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created and/or received as part of an investigation, which may include but not be limited to:

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/grievances/ statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- B. any narratives that memorialize oral reports/allegations/ complaints/grievances/statements/responses pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy;
- C. any documentation that memorializes the actions taken by District personnel related to the investigation and/or the District's response to the alleged violation of this policy;
- D. written witness statements;
- E. narratives, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness interviews/statements;
- F. e-mails, texts, or social media posts that directly relate to or constitute evidence pertaining to an alleged violation of this policy (i.e., not after-the- fact commentary about or media coverage of the incident);
- G. notes or summaries prepared contemporaneously by the investigator in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.), but not including transitory notes whose content is otherwise memorialized in other documents;
- H. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and other documentation that memorializes oral disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of this policy;
- I. dated written determinations/reports (including summaries of relevant exculpatory and inculpatory evidence) and other documentation that memorializes oral notifications to the parties concerning the outcome of the investigation, including any consequences imposed as a result of a violation of this policy;
- J. documentation of any interim measures offered and/or provided to complainants and/or the alleged perpetrators, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates the no contact orders were issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt of the no contact orders;

- K. documentation of all actions taken, both individual and systemic, to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;
- L. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student and/or Employee Handbooks or Codes of Conduct);
- M. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment;

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal (e.g., FERPA, ADA) and/or State law (e.g., R.C. 3319.321) – e.g., student records and confidential medical records.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, and Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

## **Title IX Compliance**

### Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Board of Education of the West Branch-Rose City Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"), or both.

### Title IX Coordinators and Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers

Ted Matuszak  
Director of Finance  
960 S. M-33, P.O. Box 308  
West Branch, Michigan 48661  
(989) 343-2002  
[matuszat@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:matuszat@wbrc.k12.mi.us)

Jennifer Winter  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
960 S. M-33, P.O. Box 308  
West Branch, Michigan 48661  
(989) 343-2033  
[winterj@wbrc.k12.mi.us](mailto:winterj@wbrc.k12.mi.us)

Contact information for OCR is available here: <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr>

## **AHERA**

The West Branch-Rose City Area School District has implemented an "Asbestos Management Plan," as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). This plan has been approved by the Michigan Department of Public Health (MDPH). The management plan contains information regarding the locations of asbestos containing materials (ACM) in all school buildings, the condition of the ACM and a plan for dealing with ACM. At least once each year the District will inform you in a similar manner about asbestos activities including: re-inspections, periodic surveillance, response actions, and post-response action activities. The following activities are currently planned for the District:

**Re-inspections:** A re-inspection of all District buildings is required by law every three years after implementation of the management plan. Our next re-inspection is scheduled for July, 2022.

**Periodic Surveillance:** Once every six months, ACM must be visually inspected for changes in condition. This has been and will be performed by certified, trained personnel.

**Post-Response Actions:** Routine custodial maintenance.

**Response Actions:** These are activities designed to reduce or eliminate the potential for asbestos hazards. In general, the asbestos-containing materials (ACM) present in District buildings include:

Bus Garage – Floor tile.

Ogemaw Heights High School Annex – Floor tile

Ogemaw Heights High School – Floor tile and fire doors.

Surline Schools – Floor tile

Rose City Schools – Floor tile

**Planned response actions include:** Maintaining floor tile in all buildings which will pose no threat to public health. This is in accordance with the State approved "Management Plan." All ACM will be repaired, if damaged, and maintained by District maintenance personnel in accordance with the District Operations and Maintenance program (O & M) as designated by AHERA. If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this process, please contact the District designated person, Scott Kearns, at (989) 343-2240.

**Pesticide Control Act**

Public Act 131 of 1993, amends the Pesticide control Act to require school administrators to notify parents/guardians of children attending that school of their right to be informed prior to application of pesticides at that school. A monthly inspection will be done on the first weekend of each month and sprayed if needed. For information on pesticide application, contact the maintenance supervisor.

**Annual Water Quality/Consumer Confidence Report**

Surline Elementary School is in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, 1976 PA 399, as Amended, has prepared and has available for review of the annual water quality report. The report is available for review by contacting: Scott Kearns, Maintenance Coordinator WBRC Area Schools, 224 Thomas Street, West Branch, MI 48661. (989) 343-2240