

GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH HANDBOOK



2020-2021

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The Board of Education prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its educational programs or activities, and does not tolerate harassment of any kind. Equal educational opportunities shall be available to all students and shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

MSS WEBS TE AND SOQ AL MEDI A

On the Web - [http:// www. gahannaschod s. org/ schod/ s/ midd e_schod_south/ schod/ midd eschod_south. aspx](http://www.gahannaschod.s.org/schod/s/midd e_schod_south/schod/midd eschod_south.aspx)
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On Instagram- @Gahanna_South

DI STRI CT WEBS TE AND SOQ AL MEDI A

On the Web - [www. GahannaSchod s. org](http://www.GahannaSchod.s.org)
On Facebook - [www.facebook.com/ GahannaJeffersonSchods](http://www.facebook.com/GahannaJeffersonSchods)
On Twitter - @GahannaJeffersn
On Instagram- @GahannaJeffersn
On YouTube - Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schods



Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools

"WHERE STUDENTS COME FIRST"

**VISION
MISSION
BELIEFS**

OUR VISION

What do we wish to become?

Our vision is to build relationships with students, parents and our community to ensure student learning is our most important investment and priority.

OUR MISSION

Why do we exist?

Our mission is to inspire, nurture, and empower all students to love learning.

OUR BELIEFS

Collective commitments:

TO ENSURE SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ECONOMY, WE BELIEVE...

1. Significant learning happens when students form significant relationships.
2. It is essential that all students develop empathy, an appreciation for diversity, strong character, and a deep sense of Lion pride.
3. Success is born out of reflection, perseverance, learning from setbacks, and the right level of support in the classroom and the community.
4. Learning opportunities must be equitable, relevant, and enable effective communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, character development and citizenship.
5. All students need to engage in deep learning that joins academic achievement, character and high quality work, involving rigorous writing, reading, and problem solving.
6. Assessments are best when they engage students in understanding and improving their learning, motivating them to increase the quality of their work.
7. Learning can happen anywhere, and we embrace opportunities beyond the classroom by way of worksite visits, mentorships, internships, and service.
8. Learning is best when teachers connect the art and science of teaching and are given opportunities to develop autonomy, mastery and purpose in the service of improving their craft.
9. Flexible learning environments are important to foster the development of creators, innovators, and problem solvers in an ever-changing world.
10. When students are given a voice and choice in their learning, they will yearn to lead and make the world a better place.



www.
GahannaSchools.org

GAHANNA-JEFFERSON GRADUATE PROFILE

We educate each student to become a global citizen who is serious about learning, is appreciative of the arts, is culturally aware of social issues, and is sensitive to the diversity among us. As a global citizen, a Gahanna-Jefferson student will be:

A Responsible Community Member

- Possesses integrity and a well developed work ethic
- Respects self, others, and the environment
- Values diversity
- Is character driven and goal oriented
- Contributes to society through service and civic duty
- Promotes positive health and wellness through responsible decision making

A Collaborative Team Member

- Respects others' opinions and contributions
- Contributes to teamwork and/or demonstrates leadership qualities
- Displays open mindedness and is flexible
- Expresses individuality and is passionate about beliefs

A Comprehensive Problem Solver

- Thinks creatively, critically and independently
- Identifies problems and accesses resources
- Creates and implements a plan of action
- Reflects, evaluates, and plans next steps

An Effective Communicator

- Listens actively
- Writes well for various purposes
- Adapts public speaking to different audiences
- Interprets and conveys information logically

A Proficient Technology User

- Navigates a variety of tools efficiently and creatively
- Uses technology morally and ethically
- Chooses appropriate resources according to the task

Each student will receive a rigorous academic foundation in English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, foreign language, fine arts, speech, technology applications, physical and health education and optional courses. Each student will be able to pursue educational opportunities relevant to individual interests. The relationships the student develops with peers, staff and community members throughout the GJ journey will support the transition from student to global citizen.

PURPOSE

This handbook with information about the school is designed to acquaint you with many of the opportunities and responsibilities that are yours as a student at Gahanna Middle School South. The staff is here to help you get the best education possible. The building reflects the support of the community to help achieve that goal. We trust you will share with the community its pride in this fine facility and endeavor to keep it a building that we can all be proud of. We trust that your years in the middle school will be rewarding and satisfying.

PHILOSOPHY

The Gahanna Middle School South philosophy addresses itself to the growth of the total student. The primary focus is the development of academic skills. These skills can best be achieved with self-discipline (student awareness of appropriate behavior), healthy development (emotional and physical growth), and concern for the student's ability to become contributing members of the society in which they live and work, with special emphasis on career opportunities and character education.

The staff of Gahanna Middle School South, through individual instruction and team approach efforts, desires to see each student develop at a rate commensurate with his/her abilities and awareness. The curriculum integrates academic and cultural courses so that the school environment closely relates to life and the world outside of the school building. When each student leaves the middle school, it is the goal of the staff that they will be equipped with the critical thinking skills and self-confidence necessary to meet the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities they will encounter as they become young adults.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Gahanna Middle School South is to cultivate an environment that provides opportunities which challenge and inspire students to become knowledgeable, responsible, respectful, and caring citizens who value lifelong learning. To accomplish this, we believe that all students, parents, staff, and community members must become actively involved in the learning process. We strive to challenge, inspire, and prepare...together!

GMSS will actively engage in the following processes:

- meeting individual academic needs
- adopting global awareness/celebrating diversity
- broadening and developing organizational and study skills
- strengthening the ability to access, evaluate, and synthesize information
- exercising problem solving and higher level thinking skills
- enhancing technological facilities and skills
- practicing conflict management and peer mediation
- exploring career options
- encouraging community interaction
- promoting good citizenship
- providing extra-curricular activities
- updating curricular activities
- Hazing

GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH LIBRARY/ MEDIA CENTER

Library Information Center (LIC)

It is the policy of Gahanna Middle School South (GMSS) LIC to provide students with the knowledge to use the LIC and to learn how to access a variety of information services and items that will enable them to use both our facility and others elsewhere. The GMSS Library Information Center is an extension of the classroom. The LIC provides an area for both teacher directed activities and independent research and study. All students are encouraged to become familiar with the LIC and its services.

On-Line Services

All students have access to the GMSS On-Line Catalog in both their classrooms and from home. The catalog may be accessed from home by going to the Info website at www.info.org. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on "Find Your Library Catalog." Then click on

"Gahanna-Jefferson City" and find GMSS. You will then be able to access CAT and CAT Jr. The catalog may be accessed from home by going to the INFOhio website, **MACROBUTTON** Hit the ResAnchor www.infohio.org and choosing MEC and then choosing Gahanna Middle School South.

Electronic Resources

Through the INFOhio website, free databases such as *World Book* may be accessed. These databases are available both at school and at home. See the librarian for the username and password for access.

Circulation Policies and Overdue Procedures

Books may be checked out for three (3) weeks. Books may be renewed as many times as needed until a reserve is placed on the book. Books may be reserved through the library staff. No overdue fees are charged, but students are responsible for returning materials on time. Damaged or lost materials must be paid for in order for the student to receive their Grade Cards. Students will be charged the current replacement cost for lost books. Students with overdue or lost library materials will not be permitted to check out more materials until previous commitments are resolved.

LC Rules

The LC is to be used for research, independent reading, and librarian/teacher directed activities. Homework is to be done in study hall. All school rules will be enforced in the library. A verbal warning will be given and continued infractions will result in the student's removal.

Internet Access and Computer Use

All Internet searches **must** be related to school work. Students may not "surf" the Web. Students may not change the settings or the desktop of the computers. Failure to comply will result in student's forfeiting the right to use the computers.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE GAHANNA-JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOLS

1. Bus Rules/ Bike Riders/Walkers

The bus driver has the responsibility and authority similar to that of a teacher. He/She may assign seats, establish reasonable rules to maintain order, and must obey certain standards of the State in regard to bus procedures. Pupils who fail to follow regulations are subject to losing their transportation privileges. **Students MAY NOT ride a bus other than their assigned bus without permission from the office. Permission will only be given in emergency situations. Please DO NOT request to ride a bus to visit a friend.**

Students may ride bicycles to school. Once at school, they are to be parked in the bike racks and not ridden until after school. Bike riders may leave school grounds after school as directed. The school is not responsible for damage or theft of bicycles.

Under no circumstances are skateboards, roller skates, or blades permitted to be ridden on school grounds.

Students may walk to and from school. Students are advised to use sidewalk walks when available. Parents should encourage their child to use caution when walking to and from school.

2. Cafeteria Guidelines/ Closed Lunch Period

The Gahanna-Jefferson Middle School operates under a closed lunch period. This means that no student may leave the school grounds without obtaining permission. The parking lots are out-of-bounds to students at lunchtime.

Each student is expected to practice the general rules of good manners that one usually finds in the home. To make lunch period pleasant and relaxing for all, students are asked to do the following:

- a. Observe good standards of table manners while eating.
- b. Students will be dismissed by tables after they have cleaned their area.
- c. Leave the table and area clean and orderly. Do not drop food, wrappers, containers, etc., on the floors.
- d. Take all **trash and the tray** to the solid-dish return window.
- e. Do not leave the cafeteria while eating or carrying food.
- f. A student may not leave the cafeteria area without permission.
- g. Failure to follow these rules will result in detentions, in-school restrictions, or Saturday sessions.

3. Curriculum and Grading Scale

Grade 6

Language Arts
Social Studies
Math 6/ Accelerated Math 6
Science

Grade 7

Language Arts
Social Studies
Math 7/ Accelerated Math 7
Science

Grade 8

Language Arts
Science
American History
Math 8/ Algebra 1/ Geometry
Academic Connections and/or Language (Spanish, French or Mandarin Chinese)

Related Arts

Art	
General Music (6 th)	Design & Modeling (7 th)
Health	Strings (optional)
Physical Education	Band and/or Choir (optional)

8th Grade Related Arts Elective Courses

Robotics & Animation	General Music and Production	Advanced PE
Medical Detectives	Performance Ensemble	

Grading Scale

90 - 100 A
80 - 89 B
70 - 79 C
60 - 69 D
0 - 59 F

4. Drills: Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route given by the classroom teacher. Students are **NOT** permitted to talk during a fire drill and are to remain outside the building until a signal is given to return inside.

Tornado drills are announced over the P.A. system. Students will exit from rooms and move to their designated safe areas. No person is to be within 20 feet of the outside exit doors. Students are to remain quiet and in their designated safe areas until authorized to return to their classes. If a parent comes to pick up his/her child, the child will be released, but no other students are to be released from the school with them.

Lockdown drills will be practiced periodically throughout the school year. Each child will be instructed on what to do in case of an emergency.

5. Electronic Devices

Students are discouraged from bringing to school anything that distracts or disrupts others. Cell phones, iPods, electronic games, etc. should not be brought to school unless they are needed for an approved project. Electronic communication devices are not permitted to be used during the regular school day except for recess, or when approved by a classroom teacher. The school district is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal belongings. A student who brings a cell phone or electronic device to school is consenting to allowing the phone's data to be searched as long as the search is tied to a specific violation.

6. Food and Drink

Students must have permission from the instructor in order to bring food and/or drink into the classroom.

7. Guidance Services

Each middle school has one counselor per building. School counselors provide help for students with academic, social, and emotional needs. Counselors meet with students on an individual basis as well as parents, teachers, administrators and other building personnel to help address these needs. In addition, each school counselor is involved in testing, scheduling, and initial enrollment of students.

8. Hallway Courtesy

Students should only be in the halls during the exchange of classes. They need to be courteous by keeping to the right and moving quickly and quietly. Students should also stay to the right when passing through the double doors. Running in the halls is not permitted at any time. Students are to keep an appropriate distance between each other and not display any other physical affection (including kissing) on the school campus.

Any travel in the halls during class or study periods will require a pass from a teacher. Students need to travel directly to their destination and return. Any student without a properly signed pass will not be permitted to continue. Students must be aware of other classrooms in session as they move around during the school day and maintain a certain degree of quiet and orderliness.

9. Honor Roll

Students who achieved Honor Roll status, which is based on the year-to-date grade point average through the third quarter, will receive special recognition at our Honor's Night in the spring.

10. Instructional Materials

The school district offers its students a large variety of books to enhance reading instruction. These books represent many styles of writing and cover a wide range of topics. Parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to review reading materials available in their child's classroom prior to such materials being read. Any parent/guardian wishing to do so should contact the classroom teacher to schedule an appointment. Books may be checked out on a short-term basis providing sufficient copies are available for student use.

11. Lockers

Lockers are issued to students each year. Students will be required to periodically clean their lockers. Students should **NOT** give their combination to others. **The lockers are the property of the Gahanna-Jefferson Middle Schools. The lockers and their contents are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel at any time. The Gahanna-Jefferson Middle Schools are NOT responsible for lost or stolen items. Students are responsible for promptly reporting problems with lockers to the main office.**

12. Lost and Found

Students finding any item at school should turn it into the main office where the owner can claim it. **"Finders Are Not Keepers"** at school! In fact, keeping an item found is very close to being as dishonest as stealing. Pupils losing items should check more than once or twice at the office in attempting to find a lost item. Lost and found containers are located in the cafeteria and gym locker rooms. Unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organization.

13. Pesticide Application on School Property

Pesticides may periodically be applied to school property. Parents have the right to request prior notification of pesticide applications on school property. Any parent that wishes to have prior notification of pesticide application should notify the building principal in writing. Prior notification will be provided to those parents who request the notification in the form of a written notice to be sent home with the child or through email.

14. Pets

Pets are not permitted in school unless they are needed for an approved project.

15. Physical Education

PE T-shirts are sold through the PE class. Each student is also issued a locker in the gym locker

rooms. Locks should be used. If used properly, in conjunction with the dressing lockers, there should not be a problem of safeguarding one's dressing or P.E. apparel. Under no circumstances should cell phones be visible in the locker rooms. They should be locked in their school locker. **The Gahanna-Jefferson Middle Schools are NOT responsible for lost or stolen items.**

16. Pictures

Individual student pictures are taken during registration in August and are usually available in early December. The purchase of pictures is optional, but we do require that all students have a photo taken in order to produce a yearbook.

17. Progress Reports and Grade Cards

Progress reports are sent home to parents of all students four to five weeks into each grading period. **Grade cards** are issued every nine weeks. Parents are asked to review the progress report and grade card with their child and consult the teacher(s) if they wish.

18. Security Cameras

For students' safety and welfare, students are duly informed that their behavior may be monitored on school property and/or adjacent property by security cameras. Interior and exterior security cameras are located at each building in the Gahanna-Jefferson School District. Cameras are not located in areas where people would normally expect to have privacy. Actions recorded on these cameras may be used as evidence in disciplinary action and only viewed by authorized school personnel. Security Cameras

19. Severe Weather

In case of severe weather (snow, low temperatures, ice), the official announcement for school closings will be on school social media and one-call system and television stations. Check these and **DO NOT** call the school. Listen for **Gahanna Schools** or **Gahanna-Jefferson Schools**.

20. Student Records

Please report any changes in address, phone number, and other vital information to the school office as soon as it is known. We can then maintain current information in our files. Families who plan to move to some other address, either within the district or to another town, should likewise inform the school as soon as possible. The necessary withdrawal forms can be prepared for the parent's signature. Remember, we cannot release a student's personal records without a parent signature.

21. Team Sports

Team sports are provided for both girls and boys in the 7th and 8th grades. The sports for girls include the following: volleyball, tennis, golf, cheerleading, and cross-country in the fall, basketball in the winter, and track and softball in the spring. The sports for boys include the following: football, golf, and cross-country in the fall, basketball and wrestling in the winter, and track and tennis in the spring. **A physical examination is required of all athletic participants. This physical is good for one calendar year.**

22. Telephones

Authorized use of school telephones is limited to emergency situations, before and after school, and during lunch periods with permission. Students are **NOT** to tie up the phone with extended conversations. Students who violate the phone rules may lose their rights to use the phone. **Students who are ill or need lunch money may use the office phone.**

23. Text books and Chromebooks

Text books and chromebooks are issued to each student. If the book is lost or defaced in any manner, the student is responsible for making payment according to a set schedule. If the chromebook is lost or damaged, the policy set forth in the signed agreement will take place.

24. Visitors

Visitors must report to the office upon arrival to sign in and receive a name badge. Students are not permitted to bring friends to school.

25. Annual Medicaid Notification

The Gahanna-Jefferson Public School District is eligible to receive federal Medicaid reimbursement for medically necessary services provided to their special education students when the services meet the requirements of the state's School-Based Medicaid Program and are provided in accordance with the student's IEPs (§300.154(d)(2)(i)-(iii)).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) require schools to notify parents that the district participates in this program. The district utilizes services ordered in the IEP and the Medicaid identification number, in conjunction with the state Medicaid Agency and our Medicaid billing agent, to receive reimbursement for these services from the School-Based Medicaid Program.

The district's participation in this program in no way impacts the services being provided to the student nor impacts the family's Medicaid benefits. In the event parents no longer want the district to access student information for the purposes of seeking reimbursement through this program, they can notify the district Special Education department by calling 614-337-3777. This annual notification is being provided to you in accordance with program requirements.

26. School PBIS Philosophy and Procedures

Gahanna South is committed to creating and maintaining a positive learning environment that encourages cooperation, fosters creativity, and nurtures students to take the risks involved in learning. This type of environment is safe, orderly, and conducive to learning for all members of the community.

School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive, team-based framework for creating a sustaining safe and effective school. Emphasis is placed on prevention of problem behavior, development of prosocial skills, and the use of data-based problem solving for addressing existing behavior concerns. School-wide PBIS increases the capacity of schools to educate all students utilizing research-based school-wide, classroom, and individualized interventions.

Lions ROAR with pride

	Hallway, Stairs and Lockers	Restroom	Cafeteria	Recess	Guest Speakers	Emergency Drills	Before/After School	Using Chromebooks
R - Respectful <i>Be kind to self, others, and property</i>	Give space to others Walk on right side Keep hands to self	Put trash in can Uphold privacy	Say please and thank you Stand in line keeping hands to self	Handle conflicts appropriately, if or mad out when needed Use kind words to others	Eyes on speaker Listen to speaker without talking to those around you	Treat every drill as the real thing	Wait your turn to enter the building Speak to others with kindness	Use chromebook for school purposes only
O - Optimistic <i>Be hopeful, positive, and confident!</i>	Smile and be kind and polite to others Be understanding of accidental contact	Report any concerns or vandalism	Be willing to invite new people to your table Say please and thank you to others	Invite others to play with you Show good sportsmanship	Volunteer if asked Be open to learn something new Smile and tell speaker thank you	Trust the adults to give you the best direction	Treat each day as a fresh start Acknowledge others positively: give high fives, fist bumps, and smiles to others	Report any problems with chromebook to your teacher
A - Accountable <i>Own your actions and words!</i>	Go directly to destination Apologize if you bump into someone Remember to get the items you need	Keep cell phone in pocket or not in RR at all Be courteous Return to class on	Keep cell phone in pocket during lunch Clean table even if not your mess Use inside voice	Use inside voice and body movement upon re-entering building Keep food and drink in café	Keep cell phone in pocket Keep your hands to yourself	Be silent Walk to destination Keep your hands to yourself	Go directly to your bus or car after leaving the building Walk to your bus Wait for late ride in foyer	Log off your account when done Carrying chromebook safely

		ti me						
R - Responsible <i>Choose what is right!</i>	Use a lock Use inside voice Pick up anything you drop	Return to class immediately after done	Push your chair in when you leave Clean table and chair with rag	Bring your coat when needed Return equipment	Walk quietly and wait patiently for speaker to begin Use message from speaker to enhance your life and how you relate to others	Know what to do and where to go during each type of drill	Be on time to homeroom	Keep chromebook on steady surface to keep from dropping Bring to school fully charged

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Respect for law and for those in authority shall be expected of all students. This includes conformity to school rules as well as general provisions of law affecting students. Respect for the rights of others, consideration of their privileges, and cooperative citizenship shall also be expected of all members of the school community.

Respect for real and personal property; pride in one's work; achievement within the range of one's ability; and exemplary personal standards of courtesy, decency, and honesty shall be maintained in the schools of this District. It is the responsibility of students, teachers and administrators to maintain a classroom environment that:

- Allows teachers to communicate effectively with all students in the class;
- Allows all students in the class the opportunity to learn;
- Allows all students and staff to attend and participate in a safe manner;
- Has consequences that are fair, and developmentally appropriate;
- Considers the student and the circumstances of the situation; and
- Enforces the Student Code of Conduct accordingly.

A student may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of the Student Code of Conduct even if the misconduct occurs on property not owned or controlled by the Board but that is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on property owned or controlled by the Board, or misconduct that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a Board official or employee, or the property of such official or employee, or otherwise impacts the educational environment. In addition, a student may be subject to discipline for misconduct that occurs as follows:

- A. On school grounds during school hours including the time immediately preceding and after school.
- B. On school grounds during a school-sponsored activity, event, or function, or on school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
- C. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, event, or function;
- D. In transit to or from school;
- E. On a school bus or at a school bus stop;
- F. Off school grounds at any time for a violation (1) that involves assault upon, or damage or destruction to the property of, a teacher, administrator, or other school employee, or (2) that poses a danger to the security and well-being of teachers, administrators, or other

school employees, or that would put a reasonable such person in fear of harm to personal security and well-being, or (3) that brings the District into ill repute (such as vandalism or the writing of graffiti that identifies the District or a school within the District), or (4) conduct that impacts the educational environment.

Students are responsible for all items they bring on school grounds, e.g. the contents in cars whether known or unknown. Students are also responsible for all the contents of book bags and items in possession, whether known or unknown.

1. **Academic Misconduct** - A student shall not cheat or plagiarize on any tests or other school assignments.
2. **Alcohol** - Use, possession, sale, distribution, purchase, receipt, concealment, or being under the influence of alcohol or the misuse of a product containing a substance that can provide an intoxicating or mood-altering effect on school grounds, on school vehicles, and at any school-sponsored event (Refer to Drug Prevention Policy).
3. **Alternative Nicotine Delivery Device** - Use, possession, sale, distribution, purchase, receipt, concealment, or being under the influence of electronic or other substitute forms of nicotine or chemicals which release toxic vapors (including, but not limited to vaporizer instruments, electronic cigarettes or cartridges for e-ther).
4. **Assault** - An incident that results in serious bodily injury to oneself or others. Serious bodily injury is defined as "A bodily injury that involves substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or faculty (18 U.S.C. § 1365(3)(h)).
5. **Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation** - Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another student, staff or school employee more than once that causes both mental and/or physical harm and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other individual.
6. **Dress and Appearance** - Students shall not violate school rules pertaining to dress and appearance. Students shall attend school and present themselves in a manner which is within the bounds of decency and good taste, is clean, not hazardous to their safety or to the safety of others, and which does not detract from the educational environment (Refer to Dress and Appearance Guidelines).
7. **Drugs Other Than Tobacco or Alcohol** - Use, possession, sale, distribution, purchase, receipt, concealment, or being under the influence of drugs, counterfeit drugs, look-alike drugs or paraphernalia other than tobacco or alcohol.
8. **Explosives/ Other Dangerous Substances** - Any destructive device, which includes a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce and a mine or similar device. This definition would also include any weapon that will, or that

may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and that has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.

9. **False Alarm/ Bomb Threat** - Any threat (verbal, written, or electronic) by a person to bomb or use other substances or devices for the purpose of exploding, burning, causing damage to a school building or school property, or to harm students or staff.
10. **Fighting** - Participation in an incident involving physical violence.
11. **Firearm**- A firearm is any weapon which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or any machine gun. This includes firearm components, ammunition, zip guns, starter guns, and flare guns.
12. **Firearm Look-alike** - Any item that resembles a firearm but does not have the explosive characteristics of a firearm, but may use a spring loaded device or air pressure by which to propel an object or substance (i.e., toy guns, cap guns, bb guns, pellet guns).
13. **Forgery/ Falsification/ Misleading School Personnel** - A student shall not forge the name of another person or falsify times, dates, grades, addresses, or any other information whether orally or in writing.
14. **Gang Paraphernalia** - Students shall not wear, use or possess gang related dress (including bandanas), literature, or names on person, books or property.
15. **Hazing** - Hazing is any act or coercion of another individual, including the victim, to carry out an act of initiation on any student or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person.
16. **Identification** - All students must promptly, upon request, correctly identify themselves to school authorities. Note: All students of Gahanna Lincoln High School are required to carry their picture IDs with them at all times.
17. **Inappropriate Behavior/ Disrespect** - Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to the learning environment and educational process and is respectful toward all peers and school personnel. It is recognized that no list of prohibited conduct can specifically encompass every action which may become a subject of discipline.
18. **Inappropriate Use of Technology** - Students must follow appropriate use of technology policies. It is recognized that no list of prohibited use of technology can specifically encompass every action which may become subject to disciplinary action (Refer to Access to District Technology Resources and/ or Information Resources From Personal Communication Devices and Student Education Technology Acceptable Use and Safety).

- 19. Insubordination/ Violation of School Discipline Procedures** - A student shall comply with directives and assigned consequences given by school personnel in a respectful manner.
- 20. Knife/ Other Dangerous Weapon** - A weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animating or inanimating, that is used for, or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury.
- 21. Other Dangerous Weapon Look-alike** - Any item that resembles a destructive device, which includes a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce and a mine or similar device. This definition would also include any weapon that will, or that may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and that has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
- 22. Physical Aggression** - Unauthorized contact.
- 23. Profanity/ Abusive Language/ Obscenity** - A student shall not use profane, vulgar, racially, religiously or sexually derogatory, or other improper language. Nor shall a student use vulgar, profane or other improper gestures or signs.
- 24. School Bus Violation** - A student shall not interfere with or disrupt the operation of a school bus by activities dangerous to its safe operation including, but not limited to, failing to remain seated, throwing objects out the window or at passengers or at the driver, shouting or other disorderly conduct which can cause physical harm, emotional stress or diversion of the driver's attention. Students shall conduct themselves in a safe and orderly manner and shall not trespass on nearby property while waiting to board the bus and after leaving the bus.
- 25. Sexual Misconduct** - A student shall not engage in any sexual misconduct while on school premises, under school authority, or while attending any school-sponsored activities. "Sexual misconduct" includes public indecency, having sexual contact with another even with consent, and sexually harassing comments and behavior.
- 26. Theft/ Possession of Stolen Property** - A student shall not take, acquire, receive, retain, or possess the property of the school or any other person without authorization.
- 27. Threats** - A student shall not threaten with physical or non-physical aggression/violence or coerce by any means, any student, teacher, school employee or other individual. Nor shall a student coerce another student or any other person to employ threats of intimidation, physical or non-physical aggression/violence.
- 28. Tobacco Products** - Use, possession, sale, distribution, purchase, receipt, or concealment of tobacco, tobacco substitutes (including smokeless tobacco), counterfeit tobacco, or look-alike tobacco.

- 29. Truancy** - A student shall comply with school attendance regulations. No student shall be absent from all or any portion of regularly scheduled classes or other mandatory activities without school authorization and parental consent. Presence in unauthorized areas, such as the school parking lot during the school day, without a pass or without permission of a staff member, shall be considered a violation of this provision. Leaving the school campus without the permission of authorized school personnel shall also be a violation of this provision. Repeated tardiness to school or to specific classes shall also be considered a violation of this provision (Refer to School Attendance Policy Guidelines).
- 30. Unauthorized Sales** - A student shall not sell, buy, and offer to sell or buy, or exchange any service or product without prior authorization of the building principal.
- 31. Unwelcome Sexual Misconduct** - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other physical or verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, including gender-based harassment that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education or work environment (i.e., pinching, grabbing, suggestive comments, gestures or jokes or pressure to engage in sexual activity).
- 32. Vandalism, Damage to School or Personal Property** - A student shall not cause or attempt to cause damage to or destruction of any school property or property belonging to another person. Disciplinary consequence will include restitution of cost where necessary.

A student who violates the Student Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, parent conferences, detention, in-school suspension, Saturday school, removal, suspension, expulsion or permanent exclusion. Repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct may escalate the disciplinary action.

REMOVAL, SUSPENSION, EXPULSION, AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS

The Board of Education recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the schools, whether by emergency removal, out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or permanent exclusion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in this District, and one that cannot be imposed without due process. However, the Board has zero tolerance of violent, disruptive or inappropriate behavior by its students.

No student is to be removed, suspended out-of-school, expelled and/or permanently excluded unless his/her behavior represents misconduct as specified in the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code approved by the Board. The Code shall also specify the procedures to be followed by school officials when implementing such discipline. In addition to the procedural safeguards and definitions set forth in this policy and the student/parent handbook, additional procedures and considerations shall apply to students identified as disabled under the IDEA, ADA, and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. (See Policy 5605 - Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities.)

Students may be subject to discipline or violation of the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code even if that conduct occurs on property not owned or controlled by the Board but where such conduct is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on property

owned or controlled by the Board, or conduct that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a District official or employee, or the property of such official or employee.

For purposes of this policy and the Student Code of Conduct/ Student Discipline Code, the following shall apply:

- A. "Emergency removal" shall be the exclusion of a student who poses a continuing danger to District property or persons in the District or whose behavior presents an ongoing threat of disrupting the educational process provided by the District. (See Policy 5610.03 "Emergency Removal")
- B. "Suspension" shall be the temporary exclusion of a student by the Superintendent, Principal, assistant principal, or any other administrator from the District's instructional program for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. Suspension shall not extend beyond the current school year, if at the time a suspension is imposed, fewer than ten (10) days remain in the school year.

The Superintendent may instead require a student to participate in a community service program or another alternative consequence for a number of hours equal to the remaining part of the period of the suspension. The student shall be required to begin such community service program or alternative consequence during the first full week day of summer break.

The Superintendent may develop a list of appropriate alternative consequences, and set forth such list in the applicable guidelines.

In the event, the student fails to complete the required community service or the assigned alternative consequence, the Superintendent may determine the next course of action. Such course of action, however, shall not include requiring the student to serve the remaining time of the suspension at the beginning of the following year.

The procedures for suspension are set forth in the Student Code of Conduct/ Student Discipline Code and Policy 5611 - Due Process Rights.

A student who is suspended shall be permitted to complete any classroom assignments missed because of the suspension, and receive at least partial credit for a completed assignment. Grade reductions on account of the student's suspension are permitted; however, no student may receive a failing grade on a completed assignment solely on account of his/her suspension.

- C. "Expulsion" shall be the exclusion of a student from the schools of this District for a period not to exceed the greater of eighty (80) school days or the number of school days remaining in a semester or term in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place or for one (1) year as specifically provided in this policy and the Student Code of Conduct/ Student Discipline Code. Only the Superintendent may expel a student. The procedures for expulsion are set forth in the Student Code of Conduct/ Student Discipline Code and Board Policy 5611 "Due Process Rights".

1. **Firearm or Knife**

Unless a student is permanently excluded from school, the Superintendent shall expel a student from school for a period of one (1) year for bringing a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury to a school building or onto any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, to an interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or to any other school program or activity that is not located in a school or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board, except that the Superintendent may reduce this period on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy. Similarly, the Superintendent shall expel a student from school for a period of one (1) year for possessing a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury at school or on any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, at an interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or at any other school program or activity that is not located in a school or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board, except the Superintendent may reduce this period on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy. The expulsion may extend, as necessary, into the school year following the school year in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place. The Superintendent shall refer any student expelled for bringing a firearm (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921(a)(3)) or weapon to school to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system serving the District.

A firearm is defined as any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or silencer, or any destructive device. A destructive device includes, but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or other similar device.

A knife capable of causing serious bodily injury is defined as any weapon or cutting instrument consisting of a blade fastened to a handle, a razor blade, or any similar device (including sharp, metal martial arts weapons such as nunchaku or throwing stars) that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury.

The Superintendent may, in his/her sole judgment and discretion, modify or reduce such expulsion in writing to a period of less than one (1) year, on a case-by-case basis, upon consideration of the following:

- a. Applicable State or Federal laws and regulations relating to students with disabilities (for example, where the incident involves a student with a disability and the misconduct is determined by a group of persons knowledgeable about the child to be a manifestation of the student's disability);

- b. The degree of culpability given the age of the student and its relevance to the misconduct and/or punishment and/or evidence regarding the probable danger posed to the health and safety of others, including evidence of the student's intent and awareness regarding possession of the firearm or knife, capable of causing serious bodily injury, and/or
- c. The academic and disciplinary history of the student, including the student's response to the imposition of any prior disciplinary imposed for behavioral problems.

2. **Violent Conduct**

If a student commits an act at school, on other school property, at an interscholastic competition, extra-curricular event, or any other school program or activity and the act:

- a. would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult;

and

- b. results in serious physical harm to person(s) as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(5), or to property as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(6)

The Superintendent may extend the expulsion into the next school year or reduce the expulsion as necessary on a case-by-case basis as specified below. The student need not be prosecuted or convicted of any criminal act to be expelled under this provision.

The Superintendent may, in his/her sole judgment and discretion, reduce such expulsion to a period of less than one (1) year, on a case-by-case basis, upon consideration of the following:

- a. applicable State or Federal laws and regulations relating to students with disabilities (for example, where the incident involves a student with a disability and the misconduct is determined by a group of persons knowledgeable about the child to be a manifestation of the student's disability);

or

- b. other extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to, the academic and disciplinary history of the student, including the student's response to the imposition of any prior disciplinary imposed for behavioral problems.

If at the time of the expulsion, there are fewer days remaining in the school year than the number of days of the expulsion, the Superintendent may apply any or all of the remaining period to the following school year.

1. **Bomb Threats**

If a student makes a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which

a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat, the Superintendent may expel the student for a period of up to one (1) year. The Superintendent may extend the expulsion into the next school year or reduce the expulsion as necessary on a case-by-case basis as specified below. The student need not be prosecuted or convicted of any criminal act to be expelled under this provision.

The Superintendent may, in his/her sole judgment and discretion, reduce such expulsion to a period of less than one (1) year, on a case-by-case basis, for the following reasons:

- a. for students identified as disabled under the IDEA, ADA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, upon recommendation from the group of persons knowledgeable of the student's educational needs;

or

- b. other extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to the academic and disciplinary history of the student, including the student's response to the imposition of any prior discipline imposed for behavioral problems.

If at the time of the expulsion, there are fewer days remaining in the school year than the number of days of the expulsion, the Superintendent may apply any or all of the remaining period to the following school year.

D. "Permanent expulsion" shall mean the student is banned forever from attending a public school in the State of Ohio. (See Policy 5610.01)

If a student is expelled for more than twenty (20) school days or for any period of time that extends into the next school year, the Superintendent shall provide the student and his/her parents with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of those public or private agencies in the community which offer programs or services that help to rectify the student's behaviors and attitudes that contributed to the incident(s) that caused the expulsion.

Suspension or Expulsion of Students in Grades Pre-Kindergarten through 3

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, except as permitted by law, suspension or expulsion proceedings shall not be initiated against a student in any of grades Pre-kindergarten through three unless the student has committed the following acts:

- A. The student brings a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury to a school building or onto any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, to an interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or to any other school program or activity that is not located in a school or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board, or possesses a firearm or knife capable of causing serious bodily injury at school or on any other property (including a school vehicle) owned, controlled, or operated by the Board, at an interscholastic competition, an extra-curricular event, or at any other school program or activity that is not located in a school

or on property that is owned or controlled by the Board.

- B. The student commits an act at school, on other school property, at an interscholastic competition, extra-curricular event, or any other school program or activity and the act:
1) would be a criminal offense if committed by an adult; and 2) results in serious physical harm to person(s) as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(5), or to property as defined in R.C. 2901.01(A)(6).
- C. The student makes a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat.
- D. The student engages in behavior of such a nature that suspension or expulsion is necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, the student's fellow classmates, the classroom staff and teachers, or other school employees.

Prior to suspending or expelling a student in any of grades Pre-K through 3, the Principal shall, whenever possible, consult with a mental health professional under contract. If the events leading up to the student's suspension or expulsion from school indicate that the student is in need of additional mental health services, the student's Principal or the District's mental health professional shall assist the student's parent or guardian with locating providers or obtaining such services, including referral to an independent mental health professional, provided such assistance does not result in a financial burden to the District or the student's school.

If a student in any of grades Pre-K through 3 is suspended or expelled, the student shall be afforded the same notice and hearing procedural, and educational opportunities as set forth in Board policy and the law. The suspension or expulsion of a student in any of grades Pre-K through 3 shall not limit the Board's responsibilities with respect to the provision of special education and related services to such student in accordance with Board policy and the law. Further, the Board shall not be limited in its authority to issue an in-school suspension to a student in any of grades Pre-K through 3, provided that the in-school suspension is served in a supervised learning environment.

If the Superintendent determines that a student's behavior on a school vehicle violates school rules, s/he may suspend the student from school bus-riding privileges for the length of time deemed appropriate for the violation and remediation of the behavior. Any such suspension must comply with due process and the Student Code of Conduct/ Student Discipline Code.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to provide for options to suspension/expulsion of a student from school which may include alternative educational options.

The Superintendent shall initiate expulsion proceedings against a student who has committed an act that warrants expulsion under Board policy even if the student withdraws from school prior to the hearing or decides to impose the expulsion. The expulsion must be imposed for the same duration it would have been had the student remained enrolled.

The Board may temporarily deny admittance to any student who has been expelled from the schools of another Ohio district or an out-of-state district if the student's expulsion period set by the other district has not expired. The expelled student shall first be offered an opportunity for a

hearing. This provision also applies to a student who is the subject of a power of attorney designating the child's grandparent as the attorney-in-fact or caretaker authorization affidavit executed by the child's grandparent and is seeking admittance into the schools of this District in accordance with Policy 5111.

The Board may temporarily deny admittance to any student who has been suspended from the schools of another Ohio district if the student's suspension period set by the other district has not expired. The suspended student shall first be offered an opportunity for a hearing before the Board.

When a student is expelled from this District, the Superintendent shall send written notice to any college in which the expelled student is enrolled under Postsecondary Enrollment Options at the time the expulsion is imposed. The written notice shall indicate the date the expulsion is scheduled to expire and that the Board has adopted a provision in Policy 2271 under R.C. 3313.613 to deny high school credit for postsecondary courses taken during an expulsion.

If the expulsion is extended, the Superintendent shall notify the college of the extension.

The Superintendent may recommend a student perform community service in conjunction with or in place of a suspension or expulsion. The Board may adopt guidelines to permit the Superintendent to impose a community service requirement beyond the end of the school year in lieu of applying the expulsion into the following school year.

A copy of this policy is to be posted in a central location in each school and made available to students and parents upon request. Key provisions of the policy should also be included in the parent-student handbook.

PERMANENT EXCLUSION OF NONDISABLED STUDENTS

In accordance with the law, the Board of Education may seek to permanently exclude a student, sixteen (16) years of age or older, who has been convicted of or adjudicated delinquent for the reason of the following offenses:

- A. carrying a concealed weapon or conveying or possessing a deadly weapon or dangerous ordinance on property owned or controlled by a board of education or at an activity held under the auspices of this Board
- B. possessing, selling, or offering to sell controlled substances on property owned or controlled by a board of education or at an activity under the auspices of this Board
- C. complicity to commit any of the above offenses, regardless of where the complicity occurred

In accordance with law, any student, sixteen (16) years of age or older, who has been convicted or adjudicated delinquent for committing the following offenses may be subject to permanent exclusion:

- A. rape, gross sexual imposition or felonious sexual penetration
- B. murder, manslaughter, felonious or aggravated assault

- C. complicity to commit offenses described in paragraphs A and B regardless of where the complicity occurs

The above statement of policy on permanent exclusion is to be posted in a central location in each school as well as made available to students, upon request.

If the Superintendent has adequate evidence that a student, sixteen (16) years old or older at the time of the offense, has been convicted of or is an adjudicated delinquent resulting from any of the above offenses, s/he shall submit a written recommendation to the Board that the student should be permanently excluded from the public schools by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The recommendation is to be accompanied by the evidence, other information required by statute, and the name and position of the person who should present the District's case to the State Superintendent. The Board, after considering all the evidence, including the hearing of witnesses, shall take action within fourteen (14) days after receipt of the Superintendent's recommendation.

If the Board adopts the resolution, the Superintendent shall submit it to the State Superintendent, together with the required documents and the name of the person designated by the Board as its representative to present the case to the State Superintendent. A copy of the resolution shall be sent to both the student and his/her parents.

If the Board fails to pass the resolution, it shall so notify the Superintendent, in writing, who, in turn, shall provide written notification of the Board's action to both the student and his/her parents.

If the State Superintendent rejects the Board's request, the District Superintendent shall readmit the student in accordance with statute and District guidelines.

If the State Superintendent acts on the Board's request, his/her actions and those of the District shall be in accord with the procedures described in statute.

IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

It is the purpose of this policy to allow for an alternative to out-of-school suspension. The availability of in-school disciplinary options is dependent upon the financial ability of the Board of Education to support them.

In-school discipline will only be offered at the discretion of the principal for offenses found in the Student Code of Conduct/Student Discipline Code.

The Superintendent is to establish administrative guidelines for the proper operation of such programs. As long as the in-school disciplinary alternatives are served entirely in the school setting, they will not require any notice, hearing, or appeal rights. Any student who is issued an in-school disciplinary assignment shall serve such assignment in a supervised learning environment within the school setting and shall be permitted to complete any classroom assignments missed because of the in-school discipline.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is an important factor in the establishment of strong learning behaviors and a good scholastic record. Work missed because of an absence from school is very difficult to make up. There is NO SUBSTITUTE for actual participation in daily classroom discussions, lessons and work, and it is imperative that students attend school when they are well and able.

Classes are in session as follows:

- Elementary School - 8:00 AM to 2:25 PM
- Middle School - 8:45 AM to 3:30 PM
- High School - 7:35 AM to 2:50 PM

Distance learning and hybrid learning schedules may be adjusted and will be communicated directly by the district/building teacher.

Students are required to be in school on time for their first class to start and are not permitted in the building before or after school hours unless supervised by a member of the faculty. Students may not leave school between classes or before their last class without the permission of the office.

Call-Ins/ Notification of Absences

It is very important that both the school district and parent/guardian know where students are at all times. The school and the parent/guardian need to work together to keep each other informed when students are not in school.

- A. The parent/guardian should make every effort possible to notify the school in ALL cases of student absence. Calls should be made to the school office between the hours of:
 - Elementary School - 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM
 - Middle School - 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
 - High School - 7:15 AM to 3:15 PM
- B. When possible, the parent/guardian should notify the school in advance of an absence. (e.g. A phone call or a note from a parent/guardian on Wednesday to notify the school of an absence on Friday)
- C. If a student is absent, and no notification was received from the parent/guardian, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian within two hours of the start of school. If no contact is made, an explanation from the parent/guardian will be necessary. If the school does not receive an explanation of the absence within three (3) school days, the absence will automatically be considered unexcused.
- D. Absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals will be calculated by minutes. Whether the absence from the time missed at school is considered excused or unexcused is dependent upon the reason given and to the discretion of the principal or his/her designee.

Excusable Reasons for Absence

An excused absence may be granted at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee. An excused absence will only be granted for the time missed at school for the following reasons:

- A. personal illness, other health-related appointments, or professional appointments (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required and will be required when a student is considered to be Excessively Absent or Habitually Truant)
- B. illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child (a written physician's statement and an explanation as to why the child's absence was necessary may be required)
- C. quarantine of the home (as determined by the proper health officials)
- D. death in the family
- E. necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s) (applicable only to a child over fourteen (14) years of age)
- F. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
- G. out-of-state travel to participate in a District-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity (up to a maximum of twenty-four (24) hours per school year)
- H. such good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent
- I. medically necessary leave for a pregnant student in accordance with Policy 5751
- J. service as a pre-notify officer at a primary, special, or general election in accordance with the program set forth in Policy 5725.

Needs Medical/ Court Excuse (NMCE)

When a student of compulsory school age is absent from school with or without legitimate excuse for thirty-eight (38) or more hours in one month, or sixty-five (65) or more hours in a school year the attendance officer shall notify the child's parent or guardian of the child's absences, in writing, within seven (7) school days after the date of the absence that triggered the notice requirement. This will require that the student have a doctor/dentist/court excuse for every absence in order for it to be excused. A student has three (3) days to provide a doctor, dentist, or court excuse. If the student does not have a doctor/dentist/court excuse, the absence will be unexcused. Students with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher or a communicable illness that warrants being sent home by the school nurse will be considered an excused absence by the school. A student with the NMCE determination who ONLY gets permissio n from his/her parent/guardian to go home from the district will be considered unexcused.

Tardiness

Students late to school must report to the office to sign in before reporting to class. Parents/ Guardians must provide an explanation for the tardiness. Excessive tardies that are unexcused will result in a disciplinary action by the office. If the school does not receive an explanation of the tardiness within three (3) school days, the tardiness will automatically be considered unexcused.

Unexcused Absences, Tardies, Early Dismissal

The determination of whether or not the time missed from school is excused or unexcused will be at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee. Excessive absences, tardies, and early

Dismissals that are unexcused will result in a disciplinary action by the office. Examples of unexcused absences, tardies, and early dismissals include, but are not limited to

- A. Cutting classes or study halls
- B. Missing the bus or a ride
- C. Oversleeping
- D. Shopping
- E. Suspension
- F. Truancy
- G. Lice (may be unexcused if the absence related to lice is excessive)
- H. No parent contact with Attendance Office
- I. Tanning, portrait sitting, cosmetic appointments, baby-sitting, not returning from lunch, driving classes etc.
- J. Car trouble

No student shall leave school grounds without permission of the principal or an assistant principal.

Habitually Truant

A student will be considered habitually truant if the student is of compulsory school age and absent without a legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, for forty-two (42) or more hours in one (1) school month, or for seventy-two (72) or more hours in one (1) school year.

Legitimate excuses for the absence of a student who is otherwise habitually truant include but are not limited to

- A. the student was enrolled in another school district;
- B. the student was excused from attendance in accordance with R.C. 3321.04; or
- C. the student has received an age and schooling certificate.

Absence Intervention Team

To the extent required by law as determined on an annual basis, within ten (10) days of a student becoming habitually truant, the Principal shall assign the student to an absence intervention team.

Within fourteen (14) school days after the assignment of a student to an absence intervention team, the team shall develop an intervention plan for that student in an effort to reduce or eliminate further absences. Each intervention plan shall vary based on the individual needs of the student, but the plan shall state that the attendance officer shall file a complaint not later than sixty-one (61) days after the date the plan was implemented, if the child has refused to participate or failed to make satisfactory progress on the intervention plan. Within seven (7) school days after the development of the plan, reasonable efforts shall be made to provide the student's parent/guardian/custodian, with written notice of the plan.

Each absence intervention team may vary based on the needs of each individual student but shall include a representative from the child's building, another representative from the child's building who knows the child and the child's parent or parent's designee, or the child's guardian, adult item, or temporary custodian. The team also may include a school psychologist, counselor, social worker, or representative of a public or nonprofit agency designed to assist students and their families in reducing absences.

The members of the absence intervention team shall be selected within seven (7) school days of the student meeting the habitual truancy threshold. Within the same period of seven (7) school days, the Principal shall make at least three meaningful, good faith attempts to secure the participation of the student's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian adult item, or temporary custodian on that team. A good faith attempt to secure participation of the parent shall include, but not be limited to, contacting (or attempting to contact) the parent by telephone, email, or regular mail. If the student's parent responds to any of those attempts, but is unable to participate for any reason, the Principal shall inform the parent of the parent's right to appear by designee. If seven (7) school days elapse and the student's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian adult item, or temporary custodian fails to respond to the attempts to secure participation, the attendance officer shall investigate whether the failure to respond triggers mandatory abuse or neglect reporting to the public children services agency. At the same time, the absence intervention team shall continue to develop an intervention plan for the child notwithstanding the absence of the child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian adult item, or temporary custodian.

Intervention Strategies

In order to address the attendance practices of a student who is habitually truant, the intervention team may, as part of an intervention plan, take any of the following intervention actions:

- A. provide counseling to the student
- B. request or require the student's parent to attend a parent involvement program
- C. request or require a parent to attend a truancy prevention mediation program
- D. notify the Registrar of Motor Vehicles of the student's absence
- E. take appropriate legal action
- F. assignment to an alternative school (Note: If the District has established an alternative school, it must appear as an alternative intervention strategy.)

In the event that a student becomes habitually truant within twenty-one (21) school days prior to the last day of instruction of a school year, the Principal may, in his/her discretion, assign a school official to work with the child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian adult item, or temporary custodian to develop an absence intervention plan during the summer.

The absence intervention process shall commence upon the first day of instruction of the next school year.

Returning to School after an Absence

All students should make arrangements to complete missed work. A student will have a minimum of one school day for each day of absence to make up assignments. If a student misses more than one (1) day of school, homework may be requested by calling the office. Work will be sent to the office by the end of the day for pick up. If the parent/guardian cannot arrive at school before the office is closed for the day to pick up the assignments, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to make arrangements to retrieve the work.

Steps for Absence by Permission

Appointments with a doctor, dentist, court etc., should not be made during school time. Should this be necessary, however, the parent/guardian of the student must contact the school prior to the student's first scheduled period of absence. If the student is released, and it is learned that the excuse was NOT valid, the absence will be unexcused. Students leaving or returning to the school grounds during the school day MUST first report to the office. Failure to sign out may result in an unexcused absence.

Family Travel

Ohio has specific compulsory attendance regulations, and Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools must comply with those statutes. Ohio Revised Code Section 3321.02 states, "every child actually resident in the state shall be amenable to the laws relating to compulsory education, and neither he nor the person in charge of him shall be excused from the operations of said sections or the penalties under them on the ground that the child's residency is seasonal, that the parent of the child is a resident of another state, or that the child has attended school for the legal period in another state."

Whenever a pre-planned absence for family travel is requested, the parent/guardian must discuss it with the principal. The length of absence should be made clear, and those involved should have an opportunity to express their views on the potential effects of the absence. The District will only approve a student's absence for family travel when he/she will be in the company of his/her own parent/guardian or other family members but no other student's parent(s)/guardian(s), unless there are extenuating circumstances deemed appropriate by the principal. Planned absences will not be excused if your child has already met or will meet (based on the current request) the absence threshold for Excessive Absence and/or Habitual Truancy.

If a student is absent for family travel outside of excused absences allowed by the District, he/she will be considered unexcused from school and subject to the laws regarding habitual truancy. The school district may be obligated to report the parent/guardian to the Franklin County Juvenile Court System and file charges of lack of compliance with the compulsory education rules. During this time period, the student may be given appropriate assignments to be completed. The time missed will be counted as an authorized, unexcused absence but shall not be a factor in determining grades unless the make-up work is not completed.

Planned Absence (e.g. family travel, college visit, etc.)

In the event that the student knows in advance that he/she will be absent (e.g. family travel, college visit, etc.) for several days, the parent/guardian should send a note to the office a week

in advance. The student will be given a "Planned Absence Form" This form must be returned to the office before the planned absence begins. All make-up work is due on the first day the student returns from the planned absence. This work includes any tests that the student may have missed during his/her planned absence. We strongly discourage any planned absences during the last week of any grading period or during state-wide testing.

Absence on Extra-Curricular Days

Students who are absent from school a half day or longer may not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity on that day.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

All Gahanna schools have a concern for the health, safety and general well-being of each student in establishing dress/appearance guidelines. Therefore, we reserve the right to restrict or require dress, accessories, and/or other aspects of appearance that are inconsistent with safety, good health practices, community norms and are disruptive to the educational process – both during the regular school day as well as at all school-related activities. Enforcement of the dress code is the responsibility of the staff and the administration.

Students should govern their dress and grooming by maintaining reasonable standards of neatness and cleanliness. It is desired that these dress guidelines will assist students in making appropriate choices that serve as an indication of their pride in themselves and in their school. Attempts by students to call undue attention to themselves and/or to cause disruption of the educational process will not be permitted. The following dress/appearance guidelines are in place to promote a common understanding and cooperation among students, parents, and schools.

Dress and Appearance Guidelines:

1. Nothing should be worn on the head inside school buildings, other than for religious or medical reasons including, but not limited to hats, caps, bandanas and sunglasses.
2. Shoes will be worn at all times. Slippers/bedroom shoes are not permitted. Footwear that may be harmful to the flooring or present a safety concern may not be worn in the building (examples include, but are not limited to, shoes with wheels and athletic cleats).
 - Elementary students must wear shoes with a back and are not permitted to wear flip flops or slides.
3. All clothing shall be within the bounds of decency and good taste as appropriate for school.
 - Dresses, skirts and short-length shorts shall not be shorter than mid-thigh in length
 - No sleepwear.
 - Tube tops, low cut tops, muscle shirts, sheer tops, spaghetti strap tops, halter tops and/or any strapless top or dress which reveals breasts or undergarments are not acceptable

- No exposed midriffs. As a test for appropriate length, no bare midsection shall be exposed when arms are raised above head.
 - Pants must be secured at the natural waistline. Underwear or shorts under pants shall not be visible.
 - Clothing or accessories that advertise alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; contains gang-related symbolism; is suggestive, offensive, or profane; has sexual connotations; promotes, puts down, insults, threatens, or harasses any member of the school staff or student body based upon issues such as gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disabilities; or creates a hostile, intimidating, harassing, or offensive learning environment is unacceptable and cannot be worn.
4. When activated to increase safety and mitigate the risk of exposure, policy 8450.01 *Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic/Epidemic Events* will require face coverings of all students unless they are unable to do so for health or development reasons. Failure to follow face covering requirements may result in disciplinary action or assignment to the virtual learning environment.

Violations of the Dress Guidelines may result in the following actions:

- A student will be asked to correct any violation of the dress guidelines. If the violation cannot be corrected at school, the parents will then be contacted to assist in correcting the violation.
- If a student must go home to change, any time out of school will be counted as unexcused.
- According to the discretion of the administration, students in violation of the dress/appearance guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action.

DRUG PREVENTION POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community.

As the educational institution of this community, the schools should strive to prevent drug abuse and help drug abusers by educational, rather than punitive, means.

For purposes of this policy, "drugs" shall mean:

- A. all dangerous controlled substances as so designated and prohibited by Ohio statute;
- B. all chemicals which release toxic vapors;
- C. all alcoholic beverages;
- D. any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy;
- E. anabolic steroids;
- F. any substance containing betel nut (areca nut);
- G. any substance that is a "look-alike" to any of the above;
- H. any counterfeit to any of the above.

The Board prohibits the use, sale, distribution, purchase, receipt, possession, concealment, or distribution being under the influence of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia as the term

is defined by law or the misuse of a product containing a substance that can provide an intoxicating or mood-altering effect

- A on school grounds.
- B on school vehicles
- C at any school-sponsored event.

It further establishes a drug-free zone within 1000 feet of any facility used by the District for educational purposes.

The Superintendent shall prepare guidelines for the identification, amelioration, and regulation of drug use in the schools. Such guidelines shall:

- A emphasize the prevention of drug use;
- B provide for a comprehensive, age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol education and prevention program which
 1. addresses the legal, social, psychological, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use;
 2. provides information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs and alcohol;
 3. assists students to develop skills to make responsible decisions about substance abuse and other important health issues;
 4. promotes positive emotional health, self-esteem, and respect for one's body;
 5. meets the minimal objectives as stated in the essential performance objectives for health education as established by the State Department of Education;
- C include a statement to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful;
- D provide standards of conduct that are applicable to all students and which clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as a part of any school activity;
- E include a clear statement that disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on students who violate the school standards of conduct and a description of those sanctions;

The sanctions may include, together with punitive action, voluntary referral to appropriate persons or agencies for screening and assessment. Such referral may only be made to qualified and properly licensed individuals or programs.

- F provide information about any drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and reentry programs available to students and provide procedures to direct students and their parents to the appropriate programs;

- G require that all parents and students be given a copy of the standards of conduct regarding the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students;
- H require the notification to parents and students that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory;
- I establish means for dealing with students suspected of drug use or suspected of possessing or distributing drugs in school and ensure that the District's policy and administrative guidelines on Search and Seizure Policy 5771 and AG 5771, Suspension and Expulsion Policy 5610 and AG 5610, and Permanent Exclusion Policy 5610.01 and AG 5610.01 are complied with fully.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines necessary to implement this policy. Such guidelines shall ensure that the proper notice regarding the use of anabolic steroids is posted in each of the District's locker rooms used by students in grades 7-12.

OFFENSES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Students who voluntarily request assistance or counseling in situations where no offense, as specified below, has been detected will not be deemed in violation of this policy based on information divulged. Where an offense, as specified below, has been detected, violations of this policy will not necessarily be excused because the student requests assistance or counseling.

1. Selling/ Distribution - No student shall sell, transmit, distribute, supply, or offer to sell, transmit, distribute, or supply any quantity of alcohol, illegal drugs, counterfeit drugs, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia or instruments, or prescription drugs, as specified in the preceding statement of policy.

First Offense:

1. Parents will be notified immediately and the student will be removed from school for the remainder of the day.
2. The police shall be notified.
3. Consultation with parent(s) and student emphasizing available education and counseling services for alcohol and other drug evaluation procedures will be conducted.
4. The student may be suspended for ten (10) days and may be recommended for expulsion.
5. The student may lose parking privileges for the remainder of the year.
6. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the Juvenile Court may be notified for the purpose of suspending the temporary instruction permit or operator's license or denying the opportunity to obtain such a permit or license until the student becomes age 18, earns a high school diploma or GED.

Second or subsequent offenses:

1. The student may be recommended for expulsion.

2. Use/ Possession/ Purchase - No student shall possess, conceal, use, purchase, offer to purchase drug paraphernalia or instruments such as, pipes, roach dippers, syringes, hypodermic needles, cocaine spoons or kits or any other item nor mail or actually used for the packaging, conveyance, dispensation or use of alcohol or other drugs. Nor shall any student use, be under the influence of, possess, conceal, have control of, purchase or attempt to purchase intoxicants, illegal drugs, and counterfeit drugs, controlled substances, or prescription drugs when such use, possession or control is prohibited by law school policies or regulations of the Board of Education. Students may possess or use prescription and non-prescription medications consistent with *School District Medication Policy* (see Student Health Information section).

First offense

1. Parent(s) will be notified and the student may be removed from school for the remainder of the day.
2. Police may be notified
3. The student may lose school parking privileges for the remainder of the year.
4. Consultation with parent(s) and student emphasizing available education and counseling services may be conducted
5. The student may be suspended for ten (10) days or the student may be suspended for seven (7) days with the agreement to complete a minimum of twelve (12) hours of student-family education pertaining to alcohol and other drugs and/or an evaluation by counsel or certified to evaluate abuse of alcohol or other drugs (CAC, CCDC, OR CDC) as agreed to by school officials, student and parent(s). A written evaluation must be sent to school officials indicating findings and recommendations for the student.
6. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the Juvenile Court may be notified for the purpose of suspending the temporary instruction permit or operator's license or denying the opportunity to obtain such a permit or license until the student becomes age 18, earns a high school diploma or GED.

Second offense:

1. All of the above except item 5 shall be modified only in the following respects: The student will be suspended for ten (10) days and a recommendation for expulsion with no alternative option for a lesser penalty.
2. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the Juvenile Court may be Notified for the purpose of suspending the temporary instruction permit or operator's license or denying the opportunity to obtain such a permit or license until the student becomes age 18, earns a high school diploma or GED.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Board of Education recognizes that the privacy of students or their 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 Board acknowledges the need for in-school storage of student possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Such spaces remain the property of the Board and, in accordance with law, may be the subject of random search. Where locks are provided for such places, students may lock them against incursion by other students, but in no such places shall students have such an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. The Board directs the school principals to conduct a routine inspection at least annually of all such storage places.

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search the person or property, including vehicles, of a student, with or without the student's consent, whenever they reasonably suspect that the search is required to discover evidence of a violation of law or of school rules. The extent of the search will be governed by the seriousness of the alleged infraction and the student's age.

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

Administrators are permitted to conduct a random search of any student's locker and its contents at any time, providing proper notice has been posted in the locker areas of each building.

Search of a student's person or intimate personal belongings shall be conducted by a person of the same sex, in the presence of a second staff member who, if requested by the student, would be the same sex as the student being searched.

However, in exceptional circumstances when the health or safety of the student or of others is immediately threatened a search may be conducted by a person of the opposite sex in the presence of a second staff member of either sex.

Administrators are authorized to arrange for the use of a breath-test instrument 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.

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 on school property where such substances could be concealed. Canine detection must be conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities or with organizations certified in canine detection and is not to be used to search individual students unless a warrant has been obtained prior to the search.

Except as provided below, a request for the search of a student or a student's possessions will be directed to the principal who shall seek the freely offered consent of the student to the inspection. 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.

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. 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.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY

Students are permitted to use the district's technology resources including the network from personal communication devices and are responsible to understand the policies found here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/gahanna/Board.nsf/goto?open&d=B2DFPJ3E698A>
<https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/gahanna/Board.nsf/goto?open&d=B2DFPJ3E698A>

All students are expected to annually review and acknowledge notice of district policies pertaining to technology use and personal devices at registration.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Video surveillance may be in use in any interior or exterior area of the school facility where privacy is not expected.

ANTI-HARASSMENT

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 all discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, 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 harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will

take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

For purposes of this policy, "School District community" means students, administrators, and professional and classified 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 the investigation of allegations of harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating unlawful 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 that 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 include:

- 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**" 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 VI 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. In the context of employees, consensual sexual relationships where such relationship leads to favoritism of a subordinate employee with whom the superior is sexually involved and where such favoritism adversely affects other employees or otherwise creates a hostile work environment.
- J. 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.
- K. 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.

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" as set forth in Ohio Revised Code 2907.03. 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, doctrine, 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

Members of the Schod District community, which includes all staff, and third parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of harassing conduct to an administrator, supervisor or other Schod District official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Any administrator, supervisor, or other District official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Anti-Harassment Compliance Officer at his/her first convenience.

Members of the Schod District community or third parties who believe they have been unlawfully harassed by another member of the Schod District community or a third party 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 merits 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 work 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 the Policy 1662 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".

Stephanie Loucka
Human Resource Director
614-471-7065
160 S Hamilton Rd
Gahanna, OH 43230

Sue Weging
Special Education Director
614-471-7065
160 S Hamilton Rd
Gahanna, OH 43230

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 individual 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 either 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) business 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 employee or other member of the Schod District community or third party (e.g., visitor to the District) who believes that s/he has been subjected to unlawful harassment or retaliation 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, 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. 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 any individual to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission ("OCRC") or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC").

Informal Complaint Procedure

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to stop inappropriate behavior and to investigate and facilitate resolution through an informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as an less formal option for a student, other member of the Schod District community, or third party 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 and will only be utilized where the parties (alleged target of harassment and alleged harasser(s)) agree to participate in such process.

Employees, other members of the Schod District community, or third parties who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed or 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.

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

As an initial course of action, if an individual 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.

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

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 employees, other members of the School District community, or third parties 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 individual claiming unlawful harassment, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the individual 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 individual 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 individual 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 individual elects to file a formal complaint initially, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

An individual 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, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or other District employee. 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, 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 indicating 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 deems 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 in most of 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.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within five (5) business 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 five (5) business days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent must 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 member of the School District community or third party 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 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 Original Conduct: Child Abuse/Sexual Misconduct

State law requires any school teacher or school employee who knows or suspects that a child with a disability under the age of twenty-one (21) or that a child under the age of eighteen (18) 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.

State law defines certain contact between a teacher and a student as "sexual battery." If the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe that the Complainant has been the victim of criminal conduct as defined in Child's Criminal Code, such knowledge should be immediately reported to local law enforcement.

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.

Allegations Involving Conduct Unbecoming the Teaching Profession/Suspension

The Superintendent will report to the Ohio Department of Education, on forms provided for that purpose, matters of misconduct on the part of licensed professional staff members convicted of sexual battery, and will, in accordance with Policy 8141, suspend such employee from all duties that concern or involve the care, custody, or control of a child during the pendency of any criminal action for which that person has been arrested, summoned and/or indicted in that regard.

Education and Training

In support of this Anti-Harassment Policy, the Board promotes preventive 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 harassment in general, will be age and content appropriate.

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 document 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 or addresses 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 or identifies 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.

BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while enroute to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education's Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Complaints

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

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

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

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

Privacy/ Confidentiality

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

Reporting Requirement

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

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

Immunity

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R.C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

Notification

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

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

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

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

Education and Training

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

Annually, the District shall provide all students enrolled in the District with age-appropriate instruction regarding the Board's policy, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations of the policy to the extent that State or Federal funds are appropriated for this purpose.

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

The District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students, to the extent that State or Federal funds are appropriated for these purposes. Time spent by school staff in these training programs shall apply toward mandated continuing education requirements.

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

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

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

A part-time Registered Nurse is assigned to each elementary and middle school. There are also nurses available during school hours to take care of ill children, minor injuries and administration of specific medications. If your child is complaining of being sick in the morning, please take their temperature before sending them to school. If the child is vomiting, has diarrhea or has a temperature of 100 degrees F or greater, the child must stay home from school until they are fever-free, vomit free or diarrhea free (without the use of medication) for 24 hours.

Gahanna-Jefferson students are excluded from school in accordance with the recommendations from the Ohio Department of Health. The Ohio Department of Health's Communicable Disease Chart can be viewed at: <http://www.odfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=1730&type=application/pdf>

MEDICATIONS

According to Ohio laws and school district policy, it is necessary for the district to follow strict guidelines pertaining to students taking medications at school. Because of this, students are not permitted to take medication at school unless the necessary form is completed by both the physician or nurse practitioner and parent. This form is available from the school office or on the district website

[Prescription Medication Form](#)

[Non-Prescription/Over-The-Counter Medication Form](#)

The medication must be brought to school by an adult, in the original container labeled with the student's name, name of medication, dose and time it is to be given. This policy applies to prescriptions, as well as over-the-counter medications, like Tylenol, Children's Motrin, cough drops, etc.

We strongly urge that all medications be administered at home whenever possible. For questions or clarifications, please contact the school nurse assigned to your building.

HOLIDAY/CLASSROOM PARTIES and BIRTHDAYS

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools promotes good nutrition in school as one way for our students to receive a quality education and build healthy habits for life. Childhood obesity rates are on the rise, and because this issue can lead to chronic health problems, it is up to us as parents and educators to take an active role in addressing this problem. Also on the rise are the number of severe food allergies. For this reason, students may not bring in any food treats as part of a birthday celebration. Food items will also not be allowed for any classroom holiday parties. Non-food items may be used as part of these celebrations.

Suggested alternatives to food treats for birthdays and holiday parties may include:

- Party favors such as erasers, pencils, stickers, bracelets, keychains, etc.
- Parent/Guardian or guest visiting the classroom and reading a book to the students
- Donating an item to the classroom such as a book, game, plant, craft, etc.
- Providing an item classmates can sign such as a t-shirt, tote bag, autograph book, etc.
- Planning and having the students do an activity such as a craft, dance party, game, etc.

In an effort to protect each child's safety, Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools will only permit peanuts and tree nuts in the cafeteria. All instructional spaces (classrooms) and common areas where students have access will be nut free. There may be a designated "nut free" table in the cafeteria. Peanuts and tree nuts will be monitored closely by trained staff and faculty. All school lunches prepared and purchased from the cafeteria are nut free. If your student is in a building/classroom that allows daily snacks, your student's snacks must meet allergy restrictions for all students in the class. This will be monitored by teachers. A letter will be sent to parents at the start of the school year with a list of safe snacks for that class/year. Teachers will plan

ahead for community trips, field trips and class-wide activities or meals and will follow all allergy restrictions in order to allow all students to participate.

FERPA Directory Information Notice

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the district/school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PI) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PI from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her

professional responsibility.

4. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable.

requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

If you do not want Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the Gahanna-Jefferson Local Schools in writing by September 15th. Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Date of graduation
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

Students at Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools may purchase a well-balanced, nutritious meal each day made by the district's Food Service Staff based on USDA requirements.

Students purchasing a plate lunch may choose 3-5 components – protein (meat/ meat alternate), whole grains, ½ pint of milk, and must include a fruit or vegetable.

A variety of vegetables from each vegetable sub-group are offered weekly including:

Dark Green	Red/ Orange	Beans/ Legumes	Starchy	Other Veggies
Broccoli	Carrots	Kidney Beans	Corn	Celery
Romaine	Sweet Potatoes	Hummus	Potatoes	Green Beans
Spinach	Tomatoes	Black Beans	Peas	Cucumbers

Breakfast includes 3-4 components including whole grain-rich items, fruit, and milk. Breakfast is available at Chapel Field, Goshen Lane, Jefferson, Lincoln, Royal Manor, Middle Schools South & West, and Lincoln High School.

Plate lunch and breakfast menus are available online at www.gahannaschools.org. Elementary plate lunches cost \$2.75 (reduced .40); \$3.00 at middle and high school; breakfast is \$1.50 (reduced .30).

Students use their 6-digit student identification number as their PIN on the café POS system. Parents are encouraged to prepay for meals through My Payments Plus online, by cash (not encouraged), or checks. The charge limit is 4 meals.

Families may apply for free or reduced-price meals any time during the school year. Applications are available in each school, and the administration office, and may be submitted online at <http://frr.gps.org>. Students on the free and reduced-price meals program are eligible for a plate lunch (and plate breakfast where offered) daily. The cafeteria POS system provides complete confidentiality.

At no cost, My Payments Plus at www.MyPaymentsPlus.com allows families to

- Check each child's current account balance online
- Create settings to receive email notifications when their account reaches a low balance
- For a small program fee you can make a prepayment into your child's meal account using a credit or debit card and create settings to automatically replenish the account. Online deposits of \$50 or more will earn a bonus (to offset the program fee of .0475%).

Procedure for Meal Charges

It is the responsibility of parents to provide lunch for their children while at school. It is important that children receive the nutrition they need to stay focused and learn during the school day. The Gahanna-Jefferson Child Nutrition Department's goal is to provide healthy meals to students and support its self-funded account.

Unpaid meal charges place a financial strain on the Child Nutrition Department. While we intend to feed all students needing lunch, and treat the students with respect regarding charging of meals, it remains the parent's responsibility to provide payment or pack lunches.

CHARGE LIMIT = 4 MEALS

Parents and students:

- Parents may apply for Free/Reduced-Price School Meals online at fr.gjps.org at any time during the school year as they are processed daily. Hard copy meal applications may be submitted at the school or via email at GREENL@GJPS.ORG
- Parents may prepay for meals by check made payable to the school cafeteria, with cash or online by credit/check card at www.mypaymentspj.us.com. Parents will need their student's ID number to register for a free account. Student account balances, purchase history, online payments may be viewed, as well setting up notifications for low balances and autopay features.
- Parents may call the Child Nutrition office at 614-478-5531 for student account balances. Parents may also limit purchases, ex. "Plate Lunch only" by calling Beverly Fansler or submit the School Meals Special Diet and Restrictions Form.
- Students may inquire about their balance with the cashier. Cashiers also remind the students "told someone at home that you need lunch money".

When the district is operating in the distance learning or hybrid environment, GJPS students will have the opportunity to receive Grab & Go breakfast and lunches for days in which they are not in the physical building. Grab & Go locations and procedures will be communicated to families through district and building communications.

Child Nutrition Department:

- The Child Nutrition office notifies parents at least twice weekly of their child(ren)'s negative balance via email and will repeat until the lunch debt is paid (please check your SPAM folder).

- In the event a student has reached his/her charge limit, has no packed lunch, and no funds in hand, an Emergency Meal (Plate Lunch or Breakfast) funded by the "Fill My Tummy Fund" donations will be provided. The Child Nutrition office will email the parent to inform them that their student's account is in crisis.
- Charging of snacks, beverages, or second entrees are never allowed. These a la carte purchases must be paid with cash or with funds in the student's account.

Please note: During the last 2 weeks of school students may not charge meals. They must have cash, check, or funds on their account to purchase breakfast or lunch. Remaining balances will transfer to the next school year.

Questions can be directed to Linda Green, Child Nutrition Supervisor or Beverly Fansler, Child Nutrition Services Assistant at 614.478.5531.

WELLNESS POLICY

As required by law the Board of Education establishes the following wellness policy for the Gahanna-Jefferson School District as a part of a comprehensive wellness initiative.

The Board recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the District's students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the school meal programs, by supporting the development of good eating habits, and by promoting increased physical activity both in and out of school.

Schools alone, however, cannot develop in students healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating and exercise. It will be necessary for not only the staff, but also parents and the public at large to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits.

The Board sets the following goals in an effort to enable students to establish good health and nutrition habits:

- A. With regard to nutrition education, the District shall:
 1. Nutrition education shall be included in the Health curriculum so that instruction is sequential and standards-based and provides students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to lead healthy lives.
 2. Nutrition education shall be integrated into other subject areas of the curriculum when appropriate, to complement, but not replace, the standards and benchmarks for health education.
- B. With regard to physical activity, the District shall:

1. Physical Education

- a. A sequential, comprehensive physical education program shall be provided for students in K-12 in accordance with the physical education academic content standards and benchmarks adopted by the State.
- b. The sequential, comprehensive physical education curriculum shall provide students with opportunities to learn, practice, and be assessed on developmentally appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to engage in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.
- c. Physical Education teachers shall remove from class participation any student who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury. The Principal and/or teacher shall notify parents or guardians about the possible concussion or head injury.

2. Physical Activity

Schools shall encourage families to provide physical activity outside the regular school day, such as outdoor play at home, participation in sports sponsored by community agencies or organizations, and lifelong physical activities like bowling, swimming, or tennis.

C. With regard to other school-based activities the District shall:

1. Activities, such as tutoring or club meetings, shall not be scheduled during meal times, unless students may eat during those meetings.
2. Students, parents, and other community members shall have access to, and be encouraged to use, the school's outdoor physical activity facilities outside the normal school day.
3. Schools in our system utilize electronic identification and payment systems, therefore, eliminating any stigma or identification of students eligible to receive free and/or reduced meals.
4. Students are discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some students' diets.

D. With regard to nutrition promotion, the District shall encourage students to increase their consumption of healthy foods during the school day.

Furthermore, with the objectives of enhancing student health and well-being, and reducing childhood obesity, the following guidelines are established:

- A. In accordance with Policy 8500, entitled Food Service, the food service program shall comply with Federal and State regulations pertaining to the selection, preparation,

consumption, and disposal of food and beverages, including but not limited to the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, as well as to the fiscal management of the program.

- B. As set forth in Policy 8531, entitled Free and Reduced Price Meals, the guidelines for reimbursable school meals are not less restrictive than the guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The sale of foods of minimal nutritional value in the food service area during the lunch period is prohibited.

- C. The sale of foods and beverages to students that do not meet the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards to be consumed on the school campus during the school day is prohibited.
- D. All food items and beverages available for sale to students for consumption on the school campus (any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that is accessible to students during the school day) between midnight and thirty (30) minutes after the close of the regular school day shall comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, including but not limited to competitive foods that are available to students a la carte or as entrees in the dining area (except entree items that were offered on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) menu on the day of and the day after they are offered on the NSLP or SBP menu), as well as food items and beverages from vending machines, from school stores, or as fundraisers, including those operated by student clubs and organizations, parent groups, or booster clubs.
- E. The food service program will provide all students affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to be healthy and to learn well.

The Board designates the Building Principals as the individual(s) charged with operational responsibility for measuring and evaluating the District's implementation and progress under this policy. The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines necessary to implement this policy.

The Superintendent shall appoint a District-wide Wellness Committee that includes parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, educational staff (including physical education teachers), school health professionals, members of the public, and school administrators to oversee development, implementation, evaluation and periodic update of this policy. The Wellness Committee shall be an ad hoc committee with members recruited and appointed annually.

The Wellness Committee shall be responsible for:

- A. assessment of the current school environment;
- B. review of the District's Wellness policy;

- C. presentation of the Wellness Policy to the Board for approval;
- D. measurement of the implementation of the policy; and
- E. recommendation for the revision of the policy, if necessary.

Before the end of each school year, the Wellness Committee shall recommend to the Superintendent any revisions to the policy it deems necessary and/or appropriate.

The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board on the Wellness Committee's progress and on its evaluation of the policy's implementation and areas for improvement, including status of compliance by individual schools and progress made in attaining the policy's goals.

The Superintendent is also responsible for informing the public, including parents, students and community members, on the content and implementation of this policy. In order to inform the public, the Superintendent shall post the policy on the District's website, including the Wellness Committee's assessment of the policy's implementation.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS AND LIMITED USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

The Board of Education is committed to the District-wide use of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") with students and the establishment of a school environment focused on the care, safety, and welfare of all students and staff members. Student Personnel shall work to prevent the need for the use of restraint and/or seclusion. PBIS shall serve as the foundation for the creation of a learning environment that promotes the use of evidence-based behavior interventions, thus enhancing academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. An emphasis shall be placed on promoting positive interventions and solutions to potential conflicts. PBIS emphasizes prevention of student behavior problems through the use of non-aversive techniques, which should greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the need to use restraint and/or seclusion.

Professional staff members and support staff determined appropriate by the Superintendent are permitted to physically restrain and/or seclude a student in limited circumstances as set forth in this Policy.

All restraint and seclusion shall only be done in accordance with this Policy, which is based on the standards adopted by the State Board of Education regarding the use of student restraint and seclusion, and consistent with the Ohio Department of Education's Policy on Positive Behavior Interventions and Support, and Restraint and Seclusion (adopted January 15, 2013).

The Board shall annually notify parents of this policy, and publish it on the District's website.

DEFINITIONS

Aversive behavioral interventions means an intervention that is intended to induce pain or discomfort to a student for the purpose of eliminating or reducing maladaptive behaviors, including such interventions as application of noxious, painful, and/or intrusive stimuli, including any form of noxious, painful or intrusive spray, inhalant, or taste.

Chemical restraint means a drug or medication used to control a student's behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is not:

- A. Prescribed by a licensed physician, or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under Ohio law for the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition; and
- B. Administered as prescribed by the licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under Ohio law

De-escalation techniques are strategically employed verbal or non-verbal interventions used to reduce the intensity of threatening behavior before a crisis situation occurs.

Functional behavior assessment ("FBA") is a collaborative problem-solving process that is used to describe the "function" or purpose that is served by a student's behavior. Understanding the "function" that limiting behavior serves for the student assists directly in designing educational programs and developing behavior plans with a high likelihood of success.

Mechanical restraint means any method of restricting a student's freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal use of the student's body, using an appliance or device manufactured for this purpose. Mechanical restraint does not mean devices used by trained school personnel, or used by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including

- A. restraints for medical immobilization;
- B. adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; or
- C. vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle

Parent means:

- A. a biological or adoptive parent;
- B. a guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State);
- C. an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare;
- D. a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-05(E); or
- E. any person identified in a judicial decree or order as the parent of a child or the person with authority to make educational decisions on behalf of the child

Physical escort means the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, waist, hip, or back for the purpose of inducing a student to move to a safe location.

Physical restraint means the use of physical contact that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his/her arms, legs, body, or head freely. Physical restraint does not include a

physical escort, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact for the following or similar purposes to:

- A. break up a fight;
- B. knock a weapon away from a student's possession;
- C. calm or comfort;
- D. assist a student in completing a task/response if the student does not resist the contact; or
- E. prevent impulsive behavior that threatens the student's immediate safety (e.g., running in front of a car).

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") means a school-wide systematic approach to embed evidence-based practice and data-driven decision making to improve school climate and culture in order to achieve improved academic and social outcomes, and increase learning for all students. PBIS encompasses a range of systemic and individualized positive strategies to reinforce desired behaviors, diminish reoccurrences of challenging behaviors, and teach appropriate behaviors to students.

Positive Behavior Support Plan means the design, implementation, and evaluation of individual or group instructional and environmental modifications, including programs of behavioral instruction, to produce significant improvements in behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of problematic behavior.

Prone restraint means physical or mechanical restraint while the student is in the face-down position for an extended period of time.

Seclusion means the involuntary isolation of a student in a room, enclosure, or space from which the student is prevented from leaving by physical restraint or by a closed door or other physical barrier. It does not mean a time-out.

Student means a child or adult aged three (3) to twenty-one (21) enrolled in the District.

Student Personnel means teachers, principals, counselors, social workers, school resource officers, teacher's aides, psychologists, bus drivers, or other District staff who interact directly with students.

Time-out means a behavioral intervention in which the student, for a limited and specified time, is separated from the class within the classroom or in a non-locked setting for the purpose of self-regulating and controlling his or her own behavior. In a time-out, the student is not physically restrained or prevented from leaving the area by physical barriers.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") creates structure in the environment using a non-aversive effective behavioral system to improve academic and behavior outcomes for all students.

The PBS prevention-oriented framework or approach shall apply to all students and staff, and in all settings.

PBS shall include:

- A. school staff trained to identify conditions such as where, under what circumstances, with whom, and why specific inappropriate behavior may occur;
- B. preventative assessments that include:
 - 1. review of existing data
 - 2. interviews with parents, family members, and students; and
 - 3. examination of previous and existing behavioral intervention plans.
- C. development and implementation of preventative behavioral interventions, and the teaching of appropriate behavior, including:
 - 1. modification of environmental factors that escalate inappropriate behavior;
 - 2. supporting the attainment of appropriate behavior; and
 - 3. use of verbal de-escalation to defuse potentially violent dangerous behavior.

SECLUSION

Seclusion may be used only when a student's behavior poses an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or others and no other safe and effective intervention is available. Seclusion may be used only as a last resort safety intervention that provides the student with an opportunity to regain control of his/her actions. Seclusion must be used in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, for the minimum amount of time necessary for the purpose of protecting the student and/or others from physical harm and otherwise in compliance with this Policy and the Ohio Department of Education's ("ODE") corresponding policy.

Seclusion shall be implemented only by Student Personnel who have been trained in accordance with this Policy to protect the care, welfare, dignity and safety of the student.

Additional requirements for the use of seclusion:

If Student Personnel use seclusion, they must:

- A. continually observe the student in seclusion for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- B. use verbal strategies and research-based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control as quickly as possible;
- C. remove the student from seclusion when the immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others has dissipated;
- D. assess the student for injury or psychological distress after the use of seclusion, and monitor the student as needed following the incident;
- E. conduct a debriefing including all involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- F. complete all required reports and document their observations of the student.

Requirements for a room or area used for seclusion:

A room or area used for sedation must:

- A provide for adequate space, lighting, ventilation, clear visibility, and the safety of the student;
- B not be locked or otherwise prevent the student from exiting the area should staff become incapacitated or leave the area.

Additional prohibited sedation practices:

Sedation shall never be used as a punishment or to force compliance.

Sedation shall not be used

- A for the convenience of staff;
- B as a substitute for an educational program;
- C as a form of discipline or punishment;
- D as a substitute for less restrictive alternatives;
- E as a substitute for inadequate staffing;
- F as a substitute for staff training in positive behavior supports and crisis prevention and intervention; or
- G as a means to coerce, retaliate, or in a manner that endangers a student.

Sedation of preschool-age children is prohibited, except that a preschool-age child may be separated from his or her classmates, either in the classroom or in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space, for an amount of time that is brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and development, if the child is always within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member.

RESTRAINT

There are different types of restraint, as defined above, including physical restraint, prone restraint, mechanical restraint, and chemical restraint. The use of restraint other than physical restraint is prohibited.

Physical restraint may be used only when the student's behavior poses an immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others and no other safe and/or effective intervention is available. The physical restraint must be implemented in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, and otherwise in compliance with this Policy and the ODE's corresponding policy.

Physical restraint shall be implemented only by Student Personnel who have been trained in accordance with this Policy to protect the care, welfare, dignity and safety of the student, except in the case of rare and unavoidable emergency situations when trained personnel are not immediately available.

Notwithstanding the requirements of this Policy and ODE's corresponding standards and policy, school personnel may use reasonable force and restraint in accordance with R.C. 3319.41. Persons employed or engaged as teachers, principals, or administrators, non-licensed school employees and school bus drivers may, within the scope of their employment, use and apply such amount of force and restraint as is reasonable and necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property.

Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

If Student Personnel use physical restraint, they must:

- A. continually observe the student in restraint for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- B. use verbal strategies and research-based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control;
- C. remove the student from physical restraint immediately when the immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others has dissipated;
- D. assess the student for injury or psychological distress after the use of physical restraint, and monitor the student as needed following the incident;
- E. conduct a debriefing including all involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- F. complete all required reports and document their observations of the student.

Physical restraint shall not be used for punishment or discipline, or as a substitute for other less restrictive means of assisting a student in regaining control.

Prohibited Restraint Practices

The following restraint practices are prohibited under all circumstances, including emergency safety situations:

- A. prone restraint as defined in Executive Order 2009-13 (which defines prone restraint to mean "all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal functioning of any portion, or all, of an individual's body while the individual is in a face-down position for an extended period of time");
- B. physical restraint that restricts the airway of a student or obstructs the student's ability to breathe;
- C. physical restraint that impacts the student's primary mode of communication;
- D. restraint of preschool-age students, except for holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain control;
- E. restraint that deprives the student of basic needs;
- F. restraint that unduly risks serious harm or needless pain to the student, including physical restraint that involves the intentional, knowing, or reckless use of any of the following techniques:

1. using any method that is capable of causing loss of consciousness or harm to the neck or restricting/obstructing respiration in any way;
2. pinning down the student by placing knees to the torso, head and/or neck of the student;
3. using pressure points, pain compliance, or joint manipulation;
4. dragging or lifting of the student by the hair or ear or by any type of mechanical restraint;
5. using other students or untrained staff to assist with the hold or restraint; or
6. securing the student to another student or to a fixed object.

G mechanical restraint (that does not include devices used by trained Student Personnel, or by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed); or

H chemical restraint (which does not include medication administered as prescribed by a licensed physician).

ADDITIONAL PROHIBITED PRACTICES

The following practices are prohibited under all circumstances, including emergency safety situations:

- A corporal punishment;
- B child endangerment as defined in Ohio Revised Code 2919.22; and
- C aversive behavior interventions.

CONTACT LAW ENFORCEMENT AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL

In accordance with the Board's Emergency Management Plan (see Policy 8400), District personnel shall contact law enforcement and/or appropriate emergency response personnel if at any point they determine that an intervention (either a restraint or seclusion) is insufficient to maintain the safety of all involved.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

If a student repeatedly engages in dangerous behavior that leads to instances of restraint and/or seclusion, District personnel shall conduct a functional behavior assessment to identify the student's needs and more effective ways of addressing those needs. If necessary, District personnel shall also develop a behavior intervention plan that incorporates positive behavior interventions.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The District shall provide training as follows:

- A All Student Personnel, as defined in this Policy, shall be trained annually on the requirements of the Ohio Department of Education's Policy on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, and Restraint and Seclusion; Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-15; and this Policy.

- B. the Superintendent, in consultation with each school building's principal and/or assistant principal, shall identify which District employees should receive additional training so that an adequate number of personnel in each building are trained in crisis management and de-escalation techniques, including the use of restraint and seclusion. District employees who receive such additional training must keep their training current in accordance with the requirements of the provider of the training.
- C. The Superintendent shall develop a plan to provide training to school personnel, as defined in this Policy, so that Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports are implemented on a District-wide basis. Implementation of PBIS throughout the District may be a multi-year process, with training taking place over several years.

The District shall maintain written or electronic documentation on training provided and lists of participants in each training.

MONITORING AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The Superintendent shall monitor the implementation of this policy.

Any parent of a child enrolled in school in the District may submit a written complaint to the Superintendent regarding an incident of restraint or seclusion. The Superintendent shall investigate each written complaint and respond in writing to the parent's complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint.

REQUIRED DATA AND REPORTING

Each use of restraint or seclusion shall be:

- A. documented in writing
- B. reported to the building administration immediately,
- C. reported to the parent immediately, and
- D. documented in a written report.

A copy of the written report shall be made available to the student's parent or guardian within twenty-four (24) hours of the use of restraint or seclusion. A copy of the written report shall also be maintained in the student's file.

All written documentation of the use of restraint or seclusion related to a particular student are educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act ("FERPA"), and district personnel are prohibited from releasing any personally identifiable information to anyone other than the parent, in accordance with FERPA's requirements.

The Superintendent shall develop a process for the collection of data regarding the use of restraint and seclusion.

The Superintendent shall report information concerning the use of restraint and seclusion annually to the Ohio Department of Education as requested by that agency, and shall make the District's records concerning restraint and seclusion available to the staff of the Ohio Department of Education upon request.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Any form of discrimination or harassment can be devastating to an individual's academic progress, social relationship and/or personal sense of self-worth. As such, the Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its educational programs or activities.

The Board also does not discriminate on the basis of Protected Classes in its employment policies and practices as they relate to students, and does not tolerate harassment of any kind.

Equal educational opportunities shall be available to all students, without regard to the Protected Classes, age (unless age is a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any legitimate objective of the program/activity), place of residence within the boundaries of the District, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this District. Educational programs shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

In order to achieve the aforesaid goal, the Superintendent or designee shall:

A. Curriculum Content

review current and proposed courses of study and textbooks to detect any bias based upon the Protected Classes; ascertain whether or not supplemental materials, singly or taken as a whole, fairly depict the contribution of both genders, various races, ethnic groups, etc. toward the development of human society;

B. Staff Training

develop an ongoing program of in-service training for school personnel designed to identify and solve problems of bias based upon the Protected Classes in all aspects of the program;

C. Student Access

1. review current and proposed programs, activities, facilities, and practices to verify that all students have equal access thereto and are not segregated on the basis of the Protected Classes in any duty, work, play, classroom or school practice, except as may be permitted under State and Federal laws and regulations;
2. verify that facilities are made available, in accordance with Board Policy 7510 - Use of District Facilities, for non-curricular student activities that are initiated by parents or other members of the community, including but not limited to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society;

D. District Support

verify that like aspects of the District program receive like support as to staff size and compensation, purchase and maintenance of facilities and equipment, access to such

facilities and equipment, and related matters;

E. Student Evaluation

verify that tests, procedures, and guidance and counseling materials, which are designed to evaluate student progress, rate aptitudes, analyze personality, or in any manner establish or tend to establish a category by which a student may be judged, are not differentiated or stereotyped on the basis of the Protected Classes.

District Compliance Officers

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as the District's "Compliance Officers" (also known as "Civil Rights Coordinators") (hereinafter referred to as the "COs").

Sue Weging
Special Education Director
(614) 416-6501
160 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, OH 43230

Shea Reed
Human Resources Director
(614) 416-6503
160 South Hamilton Road,
Gahanna, OH 43230

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

The COs are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination, retaliation or denial of equal access. The COs shall also verify that proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 is provided to students, their parents, staff members, and the general public. A copy of each of the Acts and regulations on which this notice is based may be found in the COs office.

The Superintendent shall annually attempt to identify children with disabilities, ages 3-22, who reside in the District but do not receive a public education. In addition, s/he shall establish procedures to identify students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP), including migrant children and youth, to assess their ability to participate in District programs, and develop and administer a program that meets the English language and academic needs of these students. This program shall include procedures for student placement, services, evaluation, and exit guidelines and shall be designed to provide students with effective instruction that leads to academic achievement and timely acquisition of proficiency in English. As a part of this program, the District will evaluate the progress of students in achieving English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, on an annual basis (see AG 2260F).

Reports and Complaints of Unlawful Discrimination and Retaliation

Students and all other members of the School District community and third parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of unlawful discrimination and/or retaliation to a teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the CO within two (2) school days.

Members of the School District community, which includes students or third parties, who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against are entitled to utilize the complaint process 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. Whether there are notifiable incidents for initiating complaints 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 constitute unlawful discrimination based on a Protected Class, the Principal shall report the act to one of the COs who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. While the CO investigates the allegation, the Principal shall suspend his/her Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the CO's written report. The CO shall keep the Principal informed of the status of the Policy 2260 investigation and provide him/her with a copy of the resulting written report.

The COs will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful discrimination/retaliation. COs shall accept complaints of unlawful discrimination/retaliation 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 CO will begin either an informal or formal process (depending on the request of the person alleging the discrimination/retaliation or the nature of the alleged discrimination/retaliation), or the CO will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. The CO will provide a copy of this policy to any person who files a complaint. In the case of a formal complaint, the CO will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All members of the School District community must report incidents of discrimination/retaliation that are reported to them to the CO within two (2) business days of learning of the incident/conduct.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful discrimination/retaliation of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one of the COs within two (2) business days. Additionally, any Board employee who observes an act of unlawful discrimination/retaliation is expected to intervene to stop the misconduct, 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 misconduct. Thereafter, the CO or designee must contact the student, if age eighteen (18) or

der, or the student's parents if the student is under the age eighteen (18), within two (2) school days to advise s/he/them of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged wrongdoing.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

Any student who believes that s/he has been subjected to unlawful discrimination or retaliation may seek resolution of his/her complaint through the procedures described below. The formal complaint procedures involve an investigation of the individual's claims and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the charges are substantiated.

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful discrimination or 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. 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 procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful discrimination or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights ("OCR"). The Cleveland Office of the OCR can be reached at 1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325, Cleveland, Ohio 44115; Telephone: (216) 522-4970; Fax: (216) 522-2573; TDD: (216) 522-4944; E-mail: ocr.cleveland@ed.gov; Web: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr>.

Informal Complaint Procedure

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to quickly stop inappropriate behavior and facilitate resolution through an 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 dealing with 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 as a reminder to the individual 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 dealing with 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 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 (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, 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/r discriminatory 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 indicating 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.

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 - Non-Discrimination. 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, she/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.

A Complainant or Respondent who is dissatisfied with the final decision of the Superintendent may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's final decision.

In an attempt to resolve the complaint, the Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within twenty (20) business 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) business days of this meeting. The decision of the Board will 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 reoccurrence, 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.

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, ES, 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.

MANDATED REPORTING

School employees are required by law to report any suspicion of abuse and/or neglect.

SCHOOL VISITOR POLICY

The Board of Education welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, other adult residents of the community, and interested educators. But in order for the educational program to continue undisturbed when visitors are present and to prevent their intrusion of disruptive persons into the schools, it is necessary to invoke visitor controls.

The Superintendent or building administrator has the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to a school of this District or to expel any person when there is reason to believe the presence of such person would be detrimental to the good order of the school. If such an individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, the building administrator is authorized to request from the local law enforcement agency whatever assistance is required to remove the individual.

Rules regarding entry of persons other than students, staff, and faculty upon school grounds or premises shall be posted conspicuously at or near the entrance to such grounds or premises if there are no formal entrances, and at the main entrance to each school building. In addition, the rules shall be posted in a central location in each school and made available to students, upon request.

A Board member who is interested in visiting schools or classrooms shall notify the Superintendent and the building administrator.

The Board member shall be visiting as an interested individual in a similar capacity to any parent or citizen of the community. These visits should not be considered to be inspections nor as supervisory in nature.

If, during a visit to a school or program, a Board member observes a situation or condition which causes concern, s/he should discuss the situation with the principal as soon as convenient. Such a report or discussion shall not be considered official.

If the Board member believes the situation or condition serious enough, s/he may wish to also inform the Superintendent.

ADA 504 COMPLAINT AND DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

If a person believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability, the person may utilize the following complaint procedures as a means of reaching, at the lowest possible administrative level, a prompt and equitable resolution of the matter.

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations ("Section 504"), parents, students, and employees will be notified of their right to file an internal complaint regarding an alleged violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of Section 504. In addition, employees, students and their parents will be notified of their right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Finally, students and parents will be advised of their right to request a due process hearing before an Impartial Hearing Officer (IHO) regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of persons with disabilities, and their right to examine relevant education records.

The Director of Special Education is the District's Section 504/ADA Compliance Officer(s) ("District's Compliance Officer(s)"). Sue Weging can be reached at:
160 S Hamilton Rd
(614) 337-3777
(614) 478-5568

Building principals shall serve as Building Section 504/ADA Compliance Officer(s) ("Building Compliance Officers").

Internal complaints and requests for due process hearings must be put in writing and must identify the specific circumstances or areas of dispute that have given rise to the complaint or the request for a hearing, and offer possible solutions to the dispute. The complaint or request for due process hearing must be filed with a District Compliance Officer within the time limits specified below. The District's Compliance Officer is available to assist individual students in filing a complaint or request.

GIFTED SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

The Board of Education shall ensure that procedures are established to identify all gifted students. The District follows the identification eligibility criteria as specified in Section 3324.03 of the Ohio Revised Code and the *Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Gifted Students* as specified in the District Plan.

"Gifted" students perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. Annually, children who are gifted are identified by professionally qualified persons using a variety of assessment procedures. The Board encourages efforts to provide services for the children who are gifted as an integral part of the total kindergarten through grade 12 program.

The Superintendent shall identify children in grades kindergarten through twelve, who may be gifted in one or more of the following areas:

- A. Superior Cognitive Ability
- B. Specific Academic Ability in one or more of the following content areas:
 - 1. Mathematics
 - 2. Science
 - 3. Reading, writing, or a combination of these skills
 - 4. Social studies
- C. Creative Thinking Ability
- D. Visual or Performing Arts Ability such as drawing, painting, sculpting, music, dance, drama.

Only those instruments approved by the Ohio Department of Education shall be used for screening, assessment, and identification of children who are gifted as provided in the Chart of Approved Gifted Identification/Screening Instruments. The District shall select instruments from the approved list that will allow for appropriate screening and identification of minority and disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language.

Scores on Ohio Department of Education approved assessment instruments provided by other school districts and trained personnel outside the School District shall be accepted.

The Board shall adopt and the Superintendent shall submit to the Ohio Department of Education a plan for the screening, assessment, and identification of children who are gifted. Any revisions to the District plan will be submitted to the Ohio Department of Education for approval. The identification plan shall include the following:

- A. the criteria and methods used to screen and select children for further assessment who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in one of the gifted areas
- B. the sources of assessment data used to select children for further testing and an explanation to parents of the multiple assessment instruments required to identify children who are gifted
- C. an explanation for parents of the methods used to ensure equal access to screening and further assessment by all District children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, children from low socio-economic background, children with disabilities, and children for whom English is a second language
- D. the process of notifying parents regarding all policies and procedures concerning the screening, assessment, and identification of children who are gifted
- E. provision of an opportunity for parents to appeal any decision about the results of any screening procedure for assessment, the scheduling of children for assessment, or the placement of a student in any program or for receipt of services
- F. procedures for the assessment of children who transfer into the District
- G. at least two (2) opportunities a year for assessment in the case of children requesting assessment or recommended for assessment by teachers, parents, or other students

The District's plan may provide for contracting with any qualified public or private service provider for screening or assessment services under the plan.

The Superintendent shall:

- A. ensure equal opportunity for all children identified as gifted to receive any or all services offered by the District;
- B. implement a procedure for withdrawal of children from District services and for reassessment of children;
- C. implement a procedure for resolving disputes with regard to identification and placement decisions;
- D. inform parents of the contents of this policy as required;
- E. submit, as required, an annual report to the Ohio Department of Education.

Placement procedures for District services shall be in conformance with the District's written criteria for determining eligibility for placement in those services.

- A. Written criteria for determining eligibility for placement in a gifted service shall be provided to any parent, District educator, or the Ohio Department of Education upon request.
- B. Written criteria provided by the District shall include an explanation of the methods used to ensure equal access to each gifted service for all eligible District students, including

minority or disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language.

- C. Services which students receive shall be consistent with their area(s) of identification and shall be differentiated to meet their needs.
- D. Subjective criteria such as teacher recommendations shall not be used to exclude a student from service in the superior cognitive and specific academic areas who would otherwise be eligible.
- E. All District students who meet the written criteria for a gifted service shall be provided an equal opportunity to receive that service.

The Superintendent shall implement all policies and procedures in accordance with laws, rules and regulations, and follow the *Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Gifted Students*.

The Superintendent shall develop a plan for the service of gifted students enrolled in the District identified under this policy. Gifted services shall occur during the typical instructional day with flexibility allowed for the scheduling of District-approved internships or mentorships and higher education coursework, including credit flexibility. Services specified in the plan may include such options as the following:

- A. differentiated curriculum
- B. differentiated instruction
- C. cluster groupings
- D. mentorships/internships
- E. whole grade acceleration (see Policy 5410)
- F. subject acceleration (see Policy 5410)
- G. early entrance (see Policy 5112)
- H. early high school graduation (see Policy 5464)
- I. dual enrollment opportunities including but not limited to college credit plus
- J. advanced placement/international baccalaureate courses
- K. honors classes
- L. magnet schools
- M. self-contained classrooms
- N. resource rooms
- O. independent study/educational options
- P. advanced online courses and programs
- Q. services from a trained arts instructor
- R. other options identified in the rules of the Ohio Department of Education

A Written Education Plan (WEP) will guide the gifted services based on the student's area(s) of identification and individual needs. The Written Education Plan shall:

- A. provide a description of the services to be provided;
- B. identify staff members responsible for providing that specific service as delivered;
- C. implement a procedure for resolving disputes with regard to identification and placement decisions;
- D. specify policies regarding the waiver of assignments and the scheduling of tests missed while participating in any gifted services provided outside the general classroom if different from the District policy detailed below;
- E. specify a date by which the WEP will be reviewed for possible revision.

The WEP shall be developed in collaboration with an educator who holds licensure or an endorsement in gifted education. The WEP shall include goals for the student, methods and performance measurements for evaluating progress on the goals, and a schedule for reporting progress to students and parents.

Parents and all educators responsible for providing gifted education services to the student, including teachers providing differentiated instruction in general education settings, shall be provided a copy of the WEP.

Students participating in gifted services provided outside the general education classroom will generally be exempted from routine class work (worksheets, homework, etc.) assigned during absences from the regular classroom due to participation in the gifted services. Students are to turn in work due the day of absence and make arrangements to make up missed tests. Special class work (projects, book reports, etc.) assigned during the student's absence are to be completed. Exceptions to this policy will be detailed in the student's Written Education Plan.

The District shall report to parents and the Ohio Department of Education that a student is receiving gifted education services only if the services are provided in conformance with the *Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Gifted Students*.

Each year the District shall submit data and participate in program audits as required by the Department.

CHILD FIND

As required by *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)*, the Gahanna-Jefferson Special Education Office conducts ongoing *Child Find* practices to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities - from birth through age 21 - residing within the school district, who may be homeless, wards of the state, or attending nonpublic schools.

If you know of a child with a disability, or have a child suspected of having a disability, who is not currently receiving appropriate educational or related services, please contact the GJPS Office of Special Education at 614-337-3777.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Information regarding the District's asbestos management plan is available by contacting

Scott Lofton
Business Director
slftons@gjps.org