

Student/Parent Handbook for  
FENNVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
School Year 2021-2022



*Welcome to Fennville Elementary School. We are all pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience productive and successful.*

Mr. Albert Lombard, Elementary Principal  
(269) 722-3900

Mr. Jim Greydanus, Superintendent of Schools  
(269) 722-3369

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## **FOREWORD**

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

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of August 1, 2021. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after August 1, 2021, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

### **MISSION OF THE SCHOOL**

*It is the mission of Fennville Public Schools to provide academic excellence for a lifetime of success.*

### **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

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

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

Jessica Gierucki, Curriculum Director  
5 Memorial Drive, Fennville, MI 49408  
(269) 722-3350

Or

Brent Potts, Middle School Principal  
5 Memorial Drive, Fennville, MI 49408  
(269) 722-3550

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

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The Board of Education believes that durable and significant learning by a student is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents/guardians. Such a partnership means a mutual belief in commitment to

significant educational goals, cooperation on developing and implementing solutions to problems that might be encountered and continuing communication in regarding the progress in accomplishing these goal(s). (For a complete copy of this Board policy, please see the elementary principal)

### **SCHOOL DAY**

*School doors open at 7:15 a.m. Classes begin promptly at 7:45 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m.  
Early Release Mondays: Classes begin promptly at 7:45 a.m. and end at 2:20 p.m.*

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

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

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from their appropriate building principal.

### **STUDENT WELL-BEING**

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

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

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

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

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

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

***If a parent or guardian would like their child to stay inside from outdoor recess, we will need written documentation from the parent, which is good for three consecutive days. Beyond that time, a written note from a physician is required.***

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

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

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

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

## **SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL**

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides, unless enrolling under the district's School of Choice Policy.

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

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

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

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

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

### **SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT**

The principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent, a person whose signature is on file in the School office or the parent coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

### **TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT**

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. If a student plans to transfer from Fennville Elementary, the parent must notify the principal. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records, may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the building secretary for specific details.

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

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

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

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

In compliance with law, the Board of Education may require students to submit to periodic health examinations to protect the school community from the spread of communicable disease; determine that each student's participation in health, safety, and physical education courses meets his/her individual needs; and/or determine that the learning potential of each child is not lessened by a remediable, physical disability. The District shall specify the need for services which may include, but not be limited to: student physical examinations; athlete physical examinations; dental examinations; tests for communicable disease; vision screening; audiometric screening; scoliosis test.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

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

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

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

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

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

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

### **Head Lice**

Fennville Public Schools staff recognize that head lice are a common concern in school communities. Lice are not dangerous and do not transmit disease. The school nurse or trained school staff will notify parents of the student with identified lice or nits and recommend treatment that evening. In most circumstances, the student may remain in school until the end of the school day and may return to school the next day if they have received home treatment. A parent/guardian must accompany the student when returning to school. Periodic checks of the student's hair by designated school personnel will be done over the next few weeks to assure successful treatment.

### **Elementary (Grades K to 12) Medication Administration**

The term medication shall include all medicines including those prescribed by a physician and any non-prescribed (over-the-counter) drugs, preparations, and/or remedies.

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

- A Medication Administration Form (available in any school office, from the school nurse, or online) must be filed with the respective building principal and/or the school nurse before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- The medication must be in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy.
- The administration of medication and/or medically-prescribed treatment to a student during school hours will be permitted at school by authorized and trained school staff when necessary for school attendance.
- Medication that is brought to the office and/or school nurse will be properly secured.
- Medication, and special equipment if needed, may be conveyed to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance.
- Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket or other means on or about his/her person.

- The parent/guardian must provide the school with a completed medication administration form every year and as changes in medication occur.

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

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

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

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

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

### **CONTROL OF NONCASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

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

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

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

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

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



## **INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The American's with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

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

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

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

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

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

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

For additional information about Directory information, please see District Policy 8330. Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board's annual *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) notice which can be found in the Central Office.

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

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

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

person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal

information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose); and

- B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

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

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

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

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

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

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Their use may be needed by others.

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

### **STUDENT FUND-RAISING**

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules will apply to all Fundraisers.

1. Students involved in the fund-raiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.
2. Students must not participate in a fund-raising activity for a group in which they are not members.
3. Students may not participate in fund-raising activities off school property without proper supervision by approved staff or other adults.
4. Students may not engage in house-to-house canvassing for

any fund-raising activity.

5. Students who engage in fund raisers that require them to exert themselves physically beyond their normal pattern of activity, such as "runs for .....", will be monitored by a staff member in order to prevent a student from over-extending himself/herself to the point of potential harm.
6. Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the principal.

### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

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

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Student may use cell phones before the school day while in the school building. Once the school day begins, students must secure cell phones in their locker or in their student desk. Cell phones must be turned off or silenced. Students are responsible for the safe-keeping of cell phones and the school cannot be responsible for loss or damage. This also includes electronic devices such as iPods, laptops, electronic tablets, or other electronic devices.

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

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

rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

### **MEAL SERVICE**

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents interested in being involved should contact the appropriate building principal.

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program, Fennville Elementary qualifies for free breakfast and lunch for all student for the 2021-22 School Year. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the principal.

Applications for free lunch eligibility will be collected at the beginning of each school year in order to provide accurate information for continued services. If you have questions please contact the Director of Food Service, at (269)722-3363.

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

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

Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State. The alarm signals for tornadoes is different from the alarm signal for fires and lock down drills and consists of an announcement over the public address system.

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

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify families in the following ways:

Television Stations: WOOD-TV8, WWMT-TV3, WZZM-TV13.

The District's School Messenger System will place phone calls and emails to registered families along with social media currently used by the district

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

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

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

### **VISITORS**

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

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

### **VOLUNTEERS**

Persons wishing to volunteer must submit a complete "Volunteer Consent Form" to the appropriate building principal, director, and/or supervisor who will forward the form to Central Office. Central Office will initiate a background check via the Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR) and the Michigan State Internet Criminal History Access (ICHAT) or any other available and/or newly developed or generated background check modes.

If after the background check it is found that a potential volunteer has been convicted of any of these crimes:

1. Criminal sexual conduct in any degree, assault with intent to commit criminal sexual conduct, an attempt to commit criminal sexual conduct in any degree, felonious assault on a child, child abuse in any degree, or an attempt to commit child abuse in any degree.
2. Any felony conviction
3. Any misdemeanor conviction in the past three (3) years
4. Any conviction concerning "hard drugs"
5. Any other drug related conviction in the past five (5) years.

Then, if it is found that a potential volunteer has been convicted of any of the above crimes, the building principal, director, supervisor, and/or the building office will be notified. The superintendent will notify the volunteer of the findings(s) and s/he is subject to being prohibited from volunteering with Fennville Public Schools. All background checks, volunteer forms, and any reported convictions of volunteers as listed above will be kept confidential and filed in a database at the administration office.

#### **USE OF THE LIBRARY**

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

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

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

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found area is near the school offices. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

#### **STUDENT SALES**

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

#### **USE OF TELEPHONES**

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in an emergency, students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call.

Office personnel will initiate all calls on behalf of a student seeking permission to leave school.

See information about electronics.

#### **ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES**

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within twenty-four (24) hours of their receipt.

The school has a central bulletin board located in the lobby area which may be used for

posting notices after receiving permission from the principal.

## **SECTION II - ACADEMICS**

### **FIELD TRIPS**

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

Attendance rules apply to all field trips.

### **GRADING PERIODS**

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

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

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

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

1. current level of achievement
2. potential for success at the next level
3. emotional, physical, and/or social maturity

### **RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Students who have displayed significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include but are not limited to academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism. Recognition for such activities is initiated by the staff and coordinated by the building principal.

### **HOMEWORK**

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

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

### **COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

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

Copies of the School District's Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed at school during the first week of classes. **(See *Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy*)**

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

To measure student progress, students will be tested in accordance with State standards and District policy.

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

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

If necessary, intelligence tests, speech and language evaluations, individually administered achievement tests, and other special testing services are available to students needing these services by obtaining previous written permission from parents/guardians.

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

Depending on the type of testing and specific information requested, parent consent may need to be obtained. Fennville Elementary will not violate the rights of consent and privacy of a student participating in any form of evaluation

## **SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

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

Fennville Elementary provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities.

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

The Board authorizes many student groups that are sponsored by a staff member. Authorized groups include: Early and Later Elementary Student Council, Choir, Robotics, Battle of the Books, and Girls on the Run

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

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

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

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



regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

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

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

## **Section IV – Student Conduct**

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **School Attendance Policy**

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Many important learning's result from active participation in classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Attendance is important in the development of a high quality work ethic which will be a significant factor in a student's success with future employers. One of the most important work habits that employers look for in hiring and promoting a worker is his/her dependability in coming to work every day and on time. This is a habit the school wants to help students develop as early as possible in their school careers.

#### **Truancy**

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. Students who are truant will receive no credit for school work that is missed. After 10 days of truancy a student will be considered a "habitual truant" and the truancy office of Allegan County will be notified. This could result in the following:

1. a hearing before a judge in a court of law;
2. a report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

#### **Excused Absences**

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

1. illness
2. recovery from accident
3. required court attendance
4. professional appointments
5. death in the immediate family
6. observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday and/or
7. such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent  
(District Policy 5200)

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence (three or more days) are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

#### **Suspension from School**

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

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

### **Unexcused Absences**

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

### **Notification of Absence**

If a student is going to be absent, the parents must contact the school; Early Elementary 722-3900 or Later Elementary at 722-3900 by 7:50 a.m. and provide an explanation. If prior contact is not possible, the parents should provide a written excuse as soon as possible or when the child returns to school. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

If the absence can be foreseen and the reason approved by the principal's office, the parent should arrange to discuss the matter as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up the missed school work.

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

If the absence is unexcused or unauthorized by the principal, a student may not make up the work.

The skipping of classes or any part of the school day is considered an unexcused absence and no make-up of class work will be permitted. Disciplinary action will follow.

### **Tardiness**

A student who is not in his/her assigned location by 7:45 a.m. shall be considered tardy. Any student arriving late to school is to report to the school office before proceeding to class. **After the first hour of the day (at 8:45 am), the student will be marked absent for ½ day.**

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

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

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

Students who are excusably absent from school or who have been suspended shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact his/her classroom teacher as soon as possible to obtain assignments.

Make-up work due to suspension must be completed by the time the student returns to school.

Students will be given the number of days of excused absence within which to make-up work.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to excused absence, s/he may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If s/he misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the classroom teacher to determine whether or not arrangements may be made for taking the test.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

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

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

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

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

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

#### **Expected Behaviors**

Each student shall be expected to:

- abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;
- respect the civil rights of others;
- act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- be prompt to school and attentive in class;
- work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability, or ethnic background;
- complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
- act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

Please also reference our School-Wide HAWKS EXPECTATIONS as distributed to families at the beginning of the year and upon enrollment.

### **Dress and Grooming**

Good grooming is important to the well-being of every student. Children should be dressed appropriately for the existing weather conditions. During warm weather, students may wear shorts, T-shirts, and tank tops. However, halter tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, half-shirts, mesh T-shirts, and tank tops with large arm or neck openings that expose the student's chest are not considered appropriate dress for school.

Extremely short shorts, dresses and skirts are not to be worn to school. Pants, shorts, and/or skirts must not expose undergarments and/or buttocks. All shorts and skirts must be finger-tip length as measured by the student's arms extended straight at sides.

Students must wear shoes at all times for health and safety reasons. **It is recommended that students wear a shoe with a closed toe (tennis shoes are highly recommended).**

Students are not to wear hats or coats in the building during school hours except when getting ready for recess or going home at the end of the school day.

The wearing of clothing advertising, promoting, or depicting tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, other drugs, profanity, vulgar suggestions, or making reference to anything that is of a questionable moral value or is disruptive or detrimental to the learning environment is not permitted. Face coverings are allowed in response to current state mandates relating to the spread of communicable diseases.

Students not dressed appropriately will not be allowed to attend class until the situation has been corrected. All decisions regarding dress code will be left to the discretion of the building principal.

Additional Information on Shoes and Boots - When playgrounds are extremely wet, muddy, or snowy, children should wear boots. We request that parents send extra shoes for them to keep at school for indoor wear during the wet season. In addition, tennis type shoes are required for gym class.

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

### **GANGS**

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

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

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

## **CARE OF PROPERTY**

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

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

## **DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS**

In accordance with Federal Law, the Board of Education prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school-related event. Drugs includes any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance as defined by State statute, or substance that could be considered a "look-a-like" controlled substance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in the student handbook, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by State law, the District will also notify law enforcement officials.

The District is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which s/he receives help through programs and services available in the community. Students and their parents should contact the school principal or counseling office whenever such help is needed.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

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

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

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

(Organized by Rule Number)

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school. **In addition to the discipline infractions listed below, please refer to the Fennville Elementary PBIS manual for specifics on school-wide behavior.**

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

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

The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic

and extracurricular participation.

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

The sale, distribution, possession, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs that has a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic beers and wines, and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

## ***2. Use of breath-test instruments***

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a Student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

## ***3. Use of tobacco***

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

## ***4. Student disorder/demonstration***

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

### **5. Possession of a weapon**

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

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

- A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item.
- B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle.
- C. any similar objects that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

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

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

### **7. Knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence**

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

### **8. Purposely setting a fire**

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

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

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

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

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a

school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

### **11. Extortion**

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

### **12. Gambling**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **15. Explosives**

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

### **16. Trespassing**

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

### **17. Theft**

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

### **18. Disobedience**

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



comply. Chronic disobedience can result in expulsion.

**19. Damaging property**

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

**20. Persistent absence or tardiness**

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

**21. Unauthorized use of school or private property**

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

**22. Refusing to accept discipline**

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

**23. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules**

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

**24. Displays of affection**

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

**25. Possession of electronic equipment/Using camera cell phones**

Most electronic equipment necessary in school is supplied by the school. Students are not allowed to bring radios, portable TV's, electronic toys, pagers, cellular telephones, laser pens, and the like without the permission of the building principal. The property will be confiscated and disciplinary action will be taken. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff "have a reasonable expectation of privacy." A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to and including a multi-day suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

**26. Violation of individual school/classroom rules**

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

**27. Violation of bus rules**

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules (or please refer to bus rules provided by the Director of Transportation).

**28. Disruption of the educational process**

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

**29. Harassment**

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

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

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

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or assistant principal, or may report it directly to one of the District Compliance Officers listed below:

Jessica Gierucki, Curriculum Director  
5 Memorial Drive, Fennville, MI 49408  
(269) 722-3350

Or

Brent Potts, Middle School Principal  
1 Memorial Drive, Fennville, MI 49408  
(269) 722-3550

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 2266.

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

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for

employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

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

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

Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

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

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

- A. verbal harassment or abuse;
- B. pressure for sexual activity;
- C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- D. unwelcome touching;
- E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, job, or performance of public duties.

Note: Any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal "child abuse" as defined in State law. M. C. L. A. 722.621 et. seq.

### **29a. Hazing**

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

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

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

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

Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff are involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

## **29b. Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior Toward Students**

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

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

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

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

This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property, if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school’s control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment. (Neola Policy 5517.01)

The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

**Bullying** is defined as the intimidation of others by acts, such as but not limited to:

- A. threatened or actual physical harm;
- B. unwelcomed physical contact;
- C. threatening or taunting verbal, written or electronic communications;
- D. taking or extorting money or property;
- E. damaging or destroying property;
- F. blocking or impeding student movement;
- G. electronically transmitted acts – i.e., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) for text messaging, instant messaging, blog web sites or online bullying through social networking sites (e.g. facebook.com, twitter.com) to harass through unpleasant or aggressive messages.

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 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 bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior including bullying or hazing, should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent.

### **Confidentiality**

Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure names and allegations.

### **Notification**

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

the District will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

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

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

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

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

### **CRIMINAL ACTS**

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

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

### **SAFETY CONCERNS**

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

### **Formal Discipline**

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

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

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

tried twice for the same crime).

### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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

### **DUE PROCESS RIGHTS**

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

#### **Short-Term Suspension from School**

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the administrator will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the Principal. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed.

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

The principal will reach a decision within two (2) school days after the receipt of the written request. The principal's review may include a meeting with the parents if, in the principal's opinion, this is appropriate.

The decision of the principal may be appealed in writing to the Superintendent within two (2) school days of the parents' receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent will review the circumstances and render a decision in writing within two (2) school days after receipt of the written appeal.

The Superintendent's decision shall be considered final. Parent may appeal to the Board only in cases of alleged violation of due process by the Superintendent. In such cases, the appeal shall be made in writing to the Board President within two (2) school days after the parents' receipt of the Superintendent's decision, and shall include a statement of the alleged violation of due process. The Board shall notify the parents of its decision within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written request. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed. Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

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

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

If, in the principal's opinion or as required by statute, an alleged infraction warrants a long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the principal shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent. Upon receipt of the recommendation, the Superintendent will schedule a hearing with the student's parents. Prior to the hearing, the parents will receive a formal letter of notification which will contain:

- the rule(s) alleged to have been violated;
- the charges against the student;
- the approximate date of the violation;
- the time and place of the hearing with the Superintendent;
- a statement of the student's and parents' prehearing rights:
  - a. to review written statements about the alleged misconduct,
  - b. to review the student's records, and
  - c. to request a delay in the hearing of up to ten (10) school days;
- the length of the recommended suspension or expulsion;
- a statement of the student's hearing rights:
  - a. to counsel;
  - b. to a translator;
  - c. to appear in his/her own behalf and for parents or guardians to appear;
  - d. to produce witnesses and present evidence on his/her behalf.

The Superintendent shall make a decision within two (2) days of the hearing.

The parents may appeal the expulsion to the Board, in writing, within ten (10) days after receipt of the notice. The parents shall state in the appeal the reasons they think the Superintendent's decision is not justified and provide any extenuating circumstances they wish the Board to consider. The Board will conduct a hearing within thirty (30) days after it receives the appeal. The Board of Education must conduct the hearing in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

Fennville Elementary makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions



regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the building principal

### **CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS OF RULES**

Whenever a disruptive student is sent to the principal's office for disciplinary action, the following alternatives will be considered and used at the discretion of the principal:

- Conference with the student
- Phone call to parents
- Special assignment
- Detention
- Parent/Principal conference
- Loss of privileges
- In-school suspension
- Immediate removal from school to home or parent's place of employment by principal
- Suspension from school
- Referral to appropriate legal, social, or educational agency
- Temporary isolation until parents are available for conference

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

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

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

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

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

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

### **STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION**

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL**

The school provides transportation for all students who live farther than one mile from school. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Director of Transportation at 722--3820.

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

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

**If a parent needs to make a transportation change, the school office should be contacted by 12:00 noon of that day.**

### **BUS CONDUCT**

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

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

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

Previous to loading (on the road and at school), each student shall:

- be on time at the designated loading zone (5 minutes prior to scheduled stop);
- stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the school
- Transportation;
- Line up single file off the roadway to enter;
- wait until the school transportation is completely stopped before moving
- Forward to enter;
- refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe to cross;
- go immediately to a seat and be seated.

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

### **During the trip, each student shall:**

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

**Leaving the bus, each student shall:**

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

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

**VIDEOTAPES ON SCHOOL BUSES**

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

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

**PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS**

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