



# POTOMAC MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Handbook



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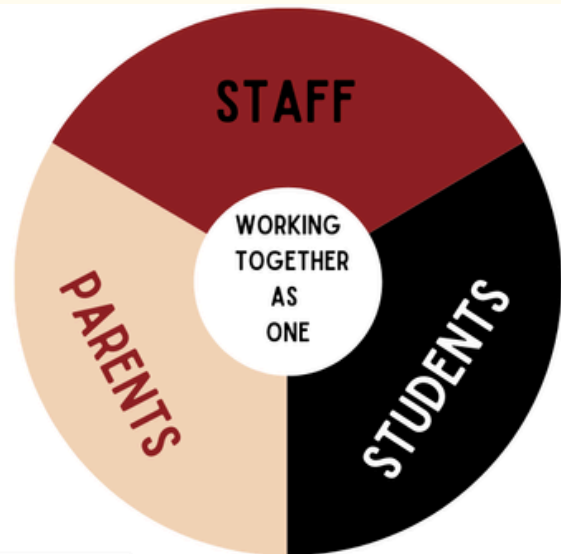
## Proactive Learning Document

***2024-2025***

**Ms. Rachel Preston, Principal  
Ms. April Johnson, Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Cornelia Long Assistant Principal  
Ms. Kathryn Sutton, Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Kathy Smaltz, Administrative Intern**

**We Are...**

**Potomac**



### **Vision**

Potomac Middle School strives to push our students to the highest levels of academic achievement, social, and emotional growth, while maintaining high expectations for all stakeholders. We believe our students can be motivated to achieve and maintain success. We also believe our students perform best in a structured and safe learning environment where they are challenged and supported.

### **Mission**

***Staff, Students and Parents Working Together as One.***

Our team mindset makes us a strong community of dedicated stakeholders working towards a common goal. Together we believe that all students can achieve, if we are present and visible, kind, mindful, and accountable for our professional responsibilities.

### **Core Business**

Our core business aligns with the PWCS strategic plan and our Continuous Improvement Plan, focused on teaching and learning. We are committed to learning and achievement for all, a positive school climate and culture, family and community engagement, and organizational coherence.

Date	Description
August 19, 2024	First day of school
August 30, 2024	Labor Day Weekend Holiday (schools and offices closed to the public)
September 2, 2024	Labor Day Weekend Holiday (schools and offices closed to the public)
October 3, 2024	Labor Day Weekend Holiday (schools and offices closed in observance of Rosh Hashanah)
October 14, 2024	Division Professional Development (no school for students)
November 1, 2024	Holiday (schools and offices closed in observance of Diwali)
November 4, 2024	Division Parent Conferences/ Division Professional Development (no school for students)
November 5, 2024	Teacher Workday (no school for students)
November 11, 2024	Veterans Day (schools and offices closed)
November 27, 2024	Thanksgiving Break (schools and offices closed to the public)
November 28-29	Thanksgiving Break (schools and offices closed to the public)
December 23-January 3	Winter Break for Students/Teachers-Holidays observed during winter break include Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Day. (no school for students)
December 24-25, and January 1	Winter Break (schools and offices closed)

January 6, 2025	School reopens
January 20, 2025	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (schools and offices closed)
January 21, 2025	Teacher Workday (no school for students)
January 22, 2025	Division Parent Conferences/Division Professional Development (no school for students)
February 17, 2025	Presidents Day Holiday (schools and offices closed)
March 28, 2025	Teacher Workday (no school for students)
March 31, 2025	Holiday (schools and offices closed in observance of Eid-Fitr)
April 14-18, 2025	Spring Break for Students/Teachers-Holidays observed during spring break include Passover, Good Friday, and Easter. (no school for students)
April 17-18,2025	Spring Break (schools and offices closed)
April 21, 2025	Teacher Workday (no school for students)
May 26, 2025	Memorial Day Holiday (schools and offices closed)
June 12, 2025	Last day of school
June 13, 2025	Teacher Workday (no school for students)

**6th Grade Schedule**

**Panther Time 8:10 –8:25**

**Period 1(49)**

8:25 –9:14

**Period 2 (49)**

9:16 -10:05

**Locker Time**

**Period 3 (Class and Lunch)**

10:09 -11:28

**Lunch A -10:10 -10:40**

**Lunch B -10:42 -11:12 Period4 (48)**

11:30 - 12:18

**Period 5 (48)**

12:20 -1:08

**Locker Time**

**Period 6(48)ENCORE**

1:12 -2:00

**Period 7 (53)ENCORE**

2:02 -2:55



**7th Grade Schedule**

**Panther Time 8:10 –8:25**

**Period1 (48)**

8:25 –9:13

**Period2 (48)**

9:15 - 10:03

**Period 3 (48)**

10:05 -10:53

**Locker Time**

**Period 4 (48)ENCORE**

10:57 -11:45

**Period5(48) ENCORE**

11:47 -12:35

**Period 6(Class and Lunch)**

12:37 - 1:58

LunchE -12:45 -1:15

LunchF -1:20 -1:50

**Locker Time**

**Period 7 (53)**

2:02 -2:55





## 8th Grade Schedule

**Period1 (48) 8:25 –9:13**

**Period2 (48) ENCORE**

9:17 -10:05

**Period3 (48)ENCORE**

10:07 -10:55

**Locker Time**

**Period4 (Class andLunch)**

10:59 -12:18

LunchC -11:17 -11:47

LunchD -11:48 -12:18

**Period5 (48)**

12:21 -1:09

**Period 6 (48)**

1:11 -1:59

**Locker Time**

**Period 7 (52)**

2:03 -2:55







## School Hours

School doors open at 7:55 a.m. Students are dismissed at 2:55 p.m. The front office closes at 4p.m.

### Arrival

When students arrive in the morning, they must enter door one. A grab-and-go breakfast will be provided for students to take to their classrooms at 8:00a.m.

### Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 2:55p.m. with car riders. Next, walkers will be dismissed, followed by bus riders who's buses have arrived in the bus loop.

If a parent or guardian is running late to pick up their student, please notify the front office between 2:30-2:55 p.m. No student will be granted early dismissal after 2:30 p.m. as it disrupts the dismissal process. Students are prohibited from taking Ubers/Lyfts home.

### Car Riders

For the safety of our students, parents/guardians are not allowed to drop off or pick up students in the bus lane. Parents/guardians must use the car lane labeled with white lines in the parking lot. Please do not park in the Visitor's parking spots for arrival or dismissal.

### Bus Riders

Students riding the bus should:

1. Arrive at their bus stop a few minutes before the scheduled time.
2. Follow all bus rules, stay seated, and respect the driver and fellow passengers.

Students who do not follow the bus rules may receive a bus referral and/or suspension from riding the bus.



## **Behavior Management**

Our mission at Potomac Middle School is twofold: to prepare our students for life beyond the classroom while ensuring their safety during their time with us. We take a proactive approach to behavior management, aiming to prevent issues before they arise. Our carefully implemented procedures focus on improving student behavior and fostering responsibility. Our staff diligently observes and reflects on student conduct to select appropriate interventions. Expectations are clearly outlined for every area of our school, from classrooms to the cafeteria and beyond. Consistency and positive reinforcement are key components of our successful behavior management approach.

## **Administrative Detention**

Detention is held every Tuesday and Thursday under the supervision of a staff member. Students may be required to complete a Reflection Packet along with watching videos on the Code of Behavior, Time Management, and Making Appropriate Decisions in and out of the school setting. Non-compliance with the rules, failure to show up for detention, or tardiness to detention could result in additional consequences, including but not limited to additional detention, community service, and suspension.

## **Restorative Meeting Room (ISS)**

Students may be assigned the Restorative Meeting Room (RMR) for one day. They will not attend regular classes and must stay in the RMR unless for restroom use or to pick up their lunch from the cafeteria. During their session students will complete their classroom assignments for the day assigned and the Restorative Packet.

Non-compliance with the rules or refusal to attend their assigned RMR, may result in Out of School Suspension (OSS).

## Level One - Parents Will Be Contacted

An infraction that causes an interruption to instructional time will be handled through teacher interventions. If more than one infraction occurs simultaneously, the student will serve the intervention of the more serious offense. Once the infraction has occurred the teacher will:

- Restorative support through conversation with the teacher
- Teacher/Student conference
- Team conference with student
- Reteach expected behavior
- Document in the HUB under “Teacher Notes”
- Referral to Refocus Room

### EXAMPLES OF LEVEL ONE INFRACTIONS

- Arriving to class late
- Interfering with learning in the classroom (talking, teasing, off-task, etc.)
- Inappropriate language/profanity
- Cutting class
- Verbal confrontations
- Inappropriate use of technology (playing not approved games or on sites not pertaining to the lesson)
- Cellphone being used or visible without permission
- Failure to comply to teacher request
- Inappropriate care of school equipment or property
- Inappropriate actions with other students
- Horseplay (non serious) but inappropriate physical contact that does not cause harm to other students or staff members
- Uncooperative behavior or brief failure to follow directions or talking back.

## Level Two-Parents Will Be Contacted

An infraction that threatens the safety of students or staff, repeated level one infractions, and/or repeated interruption to instructional time may result in a referral to a school administrator.

*Once the infraction has occurred, the teacher/staff member will:*

- Contact the parent/guardian via phone, text, or email
- Submit a referral in the HUB.
- Teacher notes will be documented in the HUB.

*Once the Administrator receives the referral, the Administrator will:*

1. Discuss the referral with the student and instruct the student to fill out an Incident Report.
2. Contact the parent/guardian via phone, text, or email.
3. Initiate an intervention out of the following interventions:
  - restorative conversation,
  - parent conference
  - administrative detention
  - restorative center (formally called In-school suspension)
  - behavior contract, or an Out of School Suspension.

### EXAMPLES OF LEVEL TWO INFRACTIONS

- Blatantly offensive/disruptive language/racial slurs toward another individual
- Disrespect and/or verbal harassment of adults/peers
- Instigating a fight/threatening to fight (whether a fight occurs or not)
- Theft (student/school property)
- Bullying (physical contact, written or spoken threats, intimidation, ongoing teasing, etc.)

## Level Three-Parents Will Be Contacted

An infraction that threatens the safety of students and staff or a repeated Level Two infraction, the student will receive a discipline referral. This will be documented in the HUB and the parent will be contacted via phone, text, or email.

Failure to comply with the interventions given by the school will result in the imposition of the next step of intervention. Once the student is given their due process, the student will leave with a copy of the discipline referral in hand to deliver to parents. The parents can request an additional copy if the student misplaces the document.

Once the administrator has been notified, the Administrator will:

1. Provide the student with due process
  2. Contact the parent(s)
  3. Initiate intervention (see below)
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) up to 10 days as decided by the principal
  - Ongoing social and emotional support as needed (MTSS or social worker)
  - Referral to SMAPD for Alternative Education Programs
  - At any time, serious and specific actions may be referred to Prince William County Police.

### Examples of Level Three Infractions

- Ongoing blatant disrespect or harassment directed at teacher/staff
- Aggressive behavior/physical contact toward peers or staff members
- Weapons possession
- Fighting (Physical Altercation)
- Major Vandalism
- Sexual harassment (lewd comments, inappropriate touching, etc

## Level Three-Continued

- Smoking, possession and/or use of tobacco products or vape
- Possession of and/or use of controlled substances to include alcohol
- intimidation or harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, gender, or religion
- Indecent exposure
- Any illegal act-on or off school property
- Group/mob assault
- Threat (to bomb, burn, kill, etc)
- Distribution or use of illegal substances or possession with use of alcohol, drugs, vapes, etc. including associated paraphernalia and/or placebos

## Dress Code

Students may not:

- 1.Reveal bare skin to the extent that they distract or may foreseeably distract other students and staff.
- 2.Reveal or expose undergarments.
- 3.Contain vulgar, discriminatory, lewd, patently offensive, or obscene language or images.
- 4.Contain threats or gang symbols.
- 5.Promote the use of weapons and violence, or the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, and/or associated paraphernalia.
- 6.Create a foreseeably cause of a disruption to the learning environment.
- 7.Are accessories that could be regarded as or used as a weapon.

## Hoodies/Caps/Bonnets

Hoodies, caps, and hair bonnets that cover a student's head or face may not be worn on school grounds or in the school building. This is a safety violation, and impedes the camera footage and overall safety of students and staff. If students fail to comply with this request, disciplinary action will be assigned to include confiscation of the item for the day.

**Potomac Middle School**  
*Classroom Teacher Discipline Form*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Student Number</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Grade</b>

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Incident Date:</b>	<b>Parent Contact Date:</b>
<b>Description of Behavior:</b>	<u><b>Teacher Actions:</b></u> Restorative Chat, Student Reflection, Verbal Warning, Reteach Expected Behavior
	<b>Student Signature:</b>

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Incident Date:</b>	<b>Parent Contact Date:</b>
<b>Description of Behavior:</b>	<u><b>Teacher Actions:</b></u> Restorative Chat, Student Reflection, Conference w/ student, Reteach Expectations Implemented Strategy:
	<b>Student Signature:</b>

<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Incident Date:</b>	<b>Parent Contact Date:</b>
<b>Description of Behavior:</b>	<u><b>Teacher Actions:</b></u> Restorative Chat, Student Reflection, Reteach Expectations, Continue/Modify Strategy, Lunch Detention Assigned Date: _____
	<b>Student Signature:</b>

<b>4<sup>th</sup> Incident Date:</b>	<b>Parent Contact Date:</b>
<b>Description of Behavior:</b>	<u><b>Teacher Actions:</b></u> Restorative Chat, Student Reflection, Reteach Expectations, Refer to PBIS T-2 Committee, Lunch Detention #2 Assigned Date: _____ Parent/Teacher Conference Date: _____
	<b>Student Signature:</b>

**5<sup>th</sup> Incident:** Document information on Administrative Referral Form. Contact Parent.



## Tardy to Class Policy

Our expectation is that students will move with a purpose from one class to the next to maximize instructional time. Our tardy policy will work in conjunction with student documentation and be linked to student conduct.

1st-4th tardy .....Warning, parent contacted, counseling visit

5th tardy .....Administrative referral

6th-9th tardy..... Administrative referral with additional consequences

10 and above.....Reverse Suspension (Parent follows student for the day or the class period as appropriate).

## Passes

Passes are issued through an online platform with coordinating physical passes for the colored zones in the building. Students must have a pass to leave the learning environment. Additionally in some circumstances student agendas can be used as a hall pass. If a student loses their agenda book, another one can be purchased from the School store for \$10. All students must have an agenda book daily.

Acceptable passes include:

1. Restroom
2. Water
3. Excused tardy from a teacher or the front office.
4. Nurse
5. Counseling





## **Food and Drink Policy**

Students may carry water bottles from class to class to consume water only. Students should refill their water bottles between classes and before lunch.

## **Cafeteria Expectations**

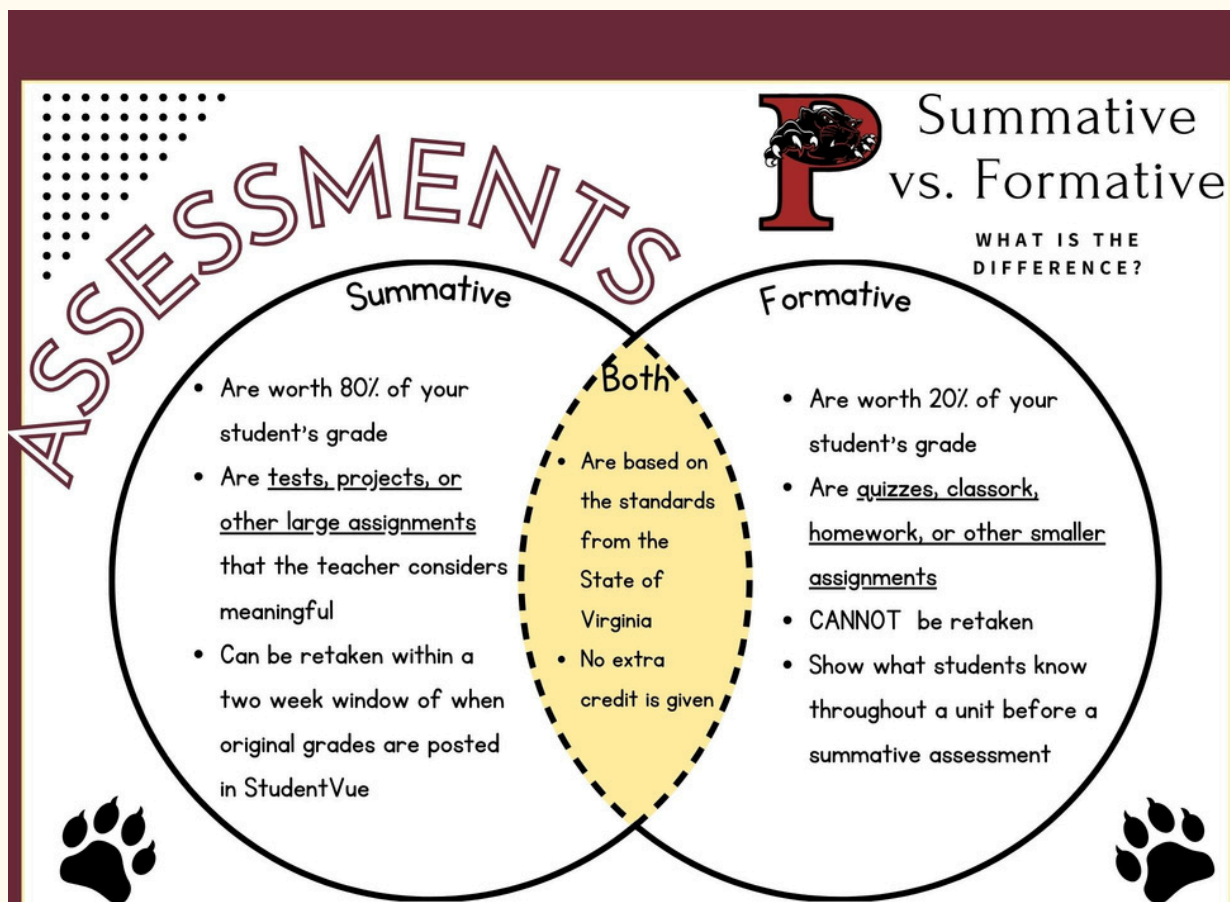
- Students will respect cafeteria property and use it only for its intended purpose
- Food and drinks will not leave the cafeteria
- Trash and trays are to be properly taken care of prior to leaving the area
- Students must have a pass to leave the cafeteria
- Students will be dismissed by tables in an orderly manner by the administrator or designee

## **Restroom Use**

- Students may use the restrooms before school, in between classes, and lunch with a pass
- Students are to use the restroom closest to their classroom
- PTMS uses the 10-10 rule (non-emergency request for the restroom will not be given during the first ten and last ten minutes of each class period)

## PWCS Grading Scale

- A Excellent 90-100 (4.0)
- B+ Very Good 87-89 (3.4)
- B Good 80-86 (3.0)
- C+ Above Average 77-79 (2.4)
- C Average 70-76 (2.0)
- D+ Below Average 67-69 (1.4)
- D Poor 60-66 (1.0)
- F Failure 0 - 59 (0)



Potomac middle school's gradebook adheres to an 80%-20% weighting scale. Summative assignments or assessments are worth 80% of a students grade and formative assignments or assessments are worth 20% of a students grade.

## **Retake Policy**

### **Touch-Base Conferences**

Potomac Middle School will have two touch-base conference during the school year. Parents and guardians will be notified when each conference will take place. A zoom link will be provided by the teacher to confirm all Zoom touch base meetings.

### **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to provide students with an opportunity to practice the skills they have learned in their classes, enhance and/extend the instructional program.

### **Principal's Honor Roll/Honor Roll**

A student must receive an "A" in all classes in order to receive Principal's Honor Roll for the nine-week grading period. A student must receive letter grades of "B" or higher except for one "C" for the nine-week grading period.

### **Conduct Eligibility Policy**

Students are not eligible to participate in sports if they failed two classes in the previous quarter. Sports grade checks will occur every 2 weeks. Students must have passing grades in their classes to play in a game. Two or more failed grade checks will result in a referral for tutoring.

### **After-School Event Ineligibility**

If you are ineligible, you cannot attend any school events including sporting events, dances, incentive day, etc.

# ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL EVENTS?



## WHAT DOES INELIGIBLE MEAN?

If you are ineligible, you cannot attend any school events including sports, dances, or incentive days in addition to an administrative consequence.

### LEVEL III INFRACTION

Disrespect, Fighting, Bullying, Sexual Harassment, & other Extreme Violations of the COB

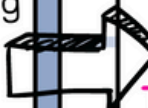


### INELIGIBLE FOR:

6 to 9  
Weeks of  
the Quarter

### LEVEL II INFRACTION

Profanity, Theft, Instigating or Filming a Fight, Bullying Behavior & other violations of the COB.

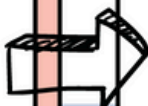


### INELIGIBLE FOR:

2 to 4  
weeks of  
the Quarter

### LEVEL I INFRACTION

Skipping, tardies, removal from class, disruptive behavior, defiance & other violations of the COB



Parent  
Conferences  
Phone Call  
Detention  
& More

# PTMS GRADING POLICIES



We are working to promote common grading practices and policies across PTMS.

## RETAKE POLICY

- Retakes will be offered for all summative assessments. Formative
- retakes will only be given when special arrangements are made with the teacher. Students will be given a two-week deadline to retake an
- assignment starting when grades are posted unless there are extenuating circumstances. Before a student is allowed to retake, they must complete work to show their new learning. This can be either
- missing work or new work

## LATE WORK POLICY

- The deadline for all late work is the end of the marking period
- If late summative assignments are turned in within two weeks of the due date, they are eligible for a retake. Work turned in after the two week time period forfeit the right to retake.

## GRADE BOOK

### CONSISTENCY

- Each assignment needs to be tagged with the SOL objective in the title
- The assignment should include the learning target and anything else relevant



## Technology Equipment Use Policy

Student laptops play a crucial role in the instructional and learning processes. To ensure their longevity and proper use, students must handle them appropriately. Compliance with the PWCS Acceptable Use Policy for telecommunication technologies is essential. Misuse or abuse of technology equipment, whether in labs, libraries, or classrooms, may result in disciplinary action

Parents and Caregivers, please review the PWCS [Digital Device Loan Agreement](#) with your student(s) before school begins.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

Student cell phones and tablets must remain “Off and Away for the Day”. Students are allowed to have electronic devices (such as cellphones, AirPods, etc.) on school grounds, provided that these devices remain invisible and are not activated during the school day. Leaving the device on vibrate, silent mode, or with the ringer off is not acceptable. While traveling to and from school, students may use electronic devices as long as they do not distract the bus driver or compromise safety.

Students are prohibited from recording (audio or video) classroom activities without the permission of the principal or designee. Violators may have their communication devices confiscated and may face other corrective actions. The **School Division** staff does not assume responsibility for the security of communication and electronic devices brought onto school grounds.

1st offense-updates coming soon!

2nd offense-updates coming soon!

3rd offense-updates coming soon!

***\*If at any time a student refuses or is disrespectful to the teachers request, administration will be notified immediately, and the device will be confiscated by security for the parent(s)/guardian to pick up.***

## Common Language

The following definitions of terms are provided to eliminate disputes as to interpretations of inappropriate actions/behaviors.

**10-10 Rule**- Students are not allowed to leave the learning environment in the beginning 10 minutes of class or last 10 minutes of class.

**Accumulated Offenses**- Receiving numerous discipline referrals, When a student receives six or more discipline referrals, they are considered for a Principal's Conference.

**Assault**- An attempt or threat to strike another person.

**Battery**- Touching which harms or hurts another.

**Bullying**- Taunts, threats, insults, gossip, humiliation, teasing, pushing, tripping , and hitting are all considered to be bullying behaviors. This can be a one-time or over a period of time if they are covered under one of the protected categories according to Title IX.

**Cheating**- The giving or receiving assistance (Written, orally, or otherwise) on test, classwork, or any assignment that will be graded or not graded.

**Conduct**- The manner in which a student behaves, especially on a particular occasion.

**Contraband**- Items which is illegal or prohibited by legal authority.

**Defiance**- Refusing to follow prompts or directions from adults in school and/or on the bus.

**Detention**- A period before, during lunch, or after school that a student is held for disciplinary reasons.

**Disrespect**- The lack of consideration/tolerance for someone's self, beliefs, possessions, privacy, space, and or authority.

**Disruption**- Any behavior/action which interrupts/disrupts/disturbs the orderly operation of all aspects of the school.

## Common Language

**Dress code**- Guidelines for appropriate attire while at school.

**Expulsion**- Decision by School Board permanently denying a student the right to attend school and school-related activities.

**Fighting**- Any physical exchange, including mutual combat, which may hurt or upset others.

**Forgery**- Copying, falsifying or altering printed matter for the purpose of fraud.

**Harassment**- Repeated words, gestures, sounds, or actions which offend, threaten intimidate, or make someone feel uncomfortable based on a protected class.

**Horseplay**- Rough or boisterous play or pranks.

**Indecent exposure**- Inappropriate behavior including, but not limited to, mooning/flagging, public displays of private areas.

**Instigating**- Words (written or spoken) or actions that perpetuate a situation.

**Level One Discipline Infraction**- Less severe behaviors that do not cause danger to self or others.

**Level Two Discipline Infractions**- Behaviors that result in destruction of property, severe disruption of class or physical harm or serious disrespect towards adults. Level two infractions may be referred to administration.

**Level Three Discipline Infractions**- An infraction that threatens the safety of students and staff or repeated Level Two infractions. Level Three infractions are referred directly to Administration for intervention.

**Out-of-School Suspension**- A discipline action in which the student is suspended for serious discipline infractions. A disciplined student is not allowed on school grounds during the OSS and will receive unexcused absences.





## Common Language

**Passes**- Official written permission for student to be out of class. A student pass and e-hall virtual pass are required.

**Phone Usage**- Off and Away for the Day.

**Plagiarism**- To pass off as one's own ideas and writings that belong to another.

**Profanity/Cursing**- Use of vulgar or indecent language or gestures.

**Referral**- Official written notification to appropriate administrator/designee requiring administrative action and parent signature, regarding a student's inappropriate behavior.

**Sexual Harassment**- Sexual harassment is an illegal form of discrimination based on a person's gender (male or female). It occurs when a student is treated unfairly because of his or her gender, or when a student feels hurt or uncomfortable because of what is said or done by another person (student or adult). Words (spoken or written), actions, or bodily contact may be considered sexual harassment if they are connected in some way with gender, and if they are considered to be unwanted or harmful by the student.

**Skipping Class**- Student is missing for an entire class during the school day without a valid excuse/reason for the absence.

**Skipping School**- Student misses an entire day of school without a valid excuse/reason for the absence.

**Tardy**- Student is not in classroom at scheduled time.

**Excused Tardy**- Late to class with permission from a teacher or staff member as evidenced by signature of that person or subsequent e-mail notification.

**Unexcused Tardy**- Late to class without a note.

**Threat**- An expression of an intention to inflict evil, injury, or damage on another person (or thing or place) usually, but not necessarily, as retribution or punishment for



## Common Language

Something done or left undone. It can be in verbal or written form.

**Truancy**- Attendance is compulsory until age eighteen unless the student has been exempted by law, has graduated, or has completed a G.E.D. program. School attendance officers are authorized to enforce attendance requirements and to refer students and/or parent to the courts for legal action, if necessary.

**Vandalism**- The malicious or willful damaging or destroying of school property or personal belongings of school employees. This includes computer and other electronic vandalism. This infraction can include the damage/destruction of another student's property.

**In-School-Suspension**- A disciplinary program aiming at behavior management allowing students to remain in a learning environment while isolated from the rest of the student body.