

Northwest Local School District
Houston Early Learning Center
*HOME OF THE PANDAS - We are SAFE, We
are KIND!*



Preschool
Family Handbook
2025-2026



General Information

PHONE: Preschool Office513-385-8000

Option 3.....Main Office

Option 1*.....Attendance

Option 4.....Principal

Option 2.....Nurse

*Absences: You are to leave your name, your child's name, your child's teacher and **reason your child is absent on the attendance line.** *Please be sure to select this option to report an absence.*

FAX: Preschool Fax513-385-8090

ADDRESS: 3240 Banning Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45239

HOURS: AM Preschool7:55am-10:45am
PM Preschool12:10pm-3:00pm

WEBSITE: www.nwlsd.org

FACEBOOK: Houston Early Learning Center

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All Northwest Local School District school buildings have a health clinic. It is open during the school day to support the students and staff. The Health Office staff may be a Registered Nurse (RN), a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) or a Health Assistant. We believe that a healthy student is better able to participate actively in his/her education.	60
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Dear Preschool Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Houston Early Learning Center (HELC), a GOLD rated Step Up to Quality Preschool Program - the highest rating of preschools in the state of Ohio! This is a huge accomplishment for Northwest Local School District and HELC and we strive to continue this level of excellence!

Preschool is the first step of a child's academic journey; during the preschool years, students develop their social, emotional, physical, and academic readiness skills. It is important to us that you feel welcomed and involved in your child's education. This is your school and we want you to know that you can come to us with any question related to your child's education.

Please be sure to read through this entire handbook to find out about important upcoming dates and information regarding your child's preschool experience. We encourage you to become involved at HELC by participating in the various preschool events, including School Spirit Days, Conferences, Open House, Grown-up Day, School Fundraisers, and our annual Spring Concert.

Daily Communication: Your child's teacher will communicate with you using the daily [red communication folder](#). It is your responsibility to remove items from your child's folder each day. The communication folder provides an opportunity and tool to talk with your child about the things he/she has accomplished at school. It also allows your child to show off his/her hard work! Additional materials are often sent home with a time-sensitive nature. Daily backpack checks will make sure you don't miss out on possible activities at HELC. Furthermore, your [email address](#) and [phone number](#) will be used to communicate with you about your child and school information. Be certain the office has your correct contact and if there are changes, notify the office right away.

Remember you are setting the foundation for the importance of your child arriving at school on time each and every day. This will set up a lifetime habit and demonstrate how important school is. It is beneficial for each student to arrive at the same time as their classmates and begin the day on a positive note!

We look forward to working with you and your family. As always, we are available to you and can be reached by phone or by appointment. Please don't hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns. Together we will make this school year productive, fun, and rewarding!

Yours in Education,

Megan Alford
HELC Principal
malford@nwsld.org



DISTRICT MISSION

Our Mission

Northwest Local School District's mission is to create a responsive learning community where all students are valued, challenged and guided along a pathway to success.

Our Vision

Teaching and learning in the Northwest Local Schools will:

- Provide learning experiences that empower students to contribute to a future not yet imagined
- Inspire learners to adapt, be resilient, collaborate and problem solve
- Create a supportive social-emotional culture
- Provide a foundation to cultivate healthy relationships

Our Beliefs

- We believe students and staff excel best when they feel welcome in the building, safe in their classrooms and trustful of each other
- We believe all students and staff can learn and deserve opportunities to show and achieve success
- We believe valuing diversity and working to understand one another is vital and important
- We believe a high priority should be placed on providing holistic support to ensure success for all
- We believe building and maintaining collaborative relationships with community members is foundational to teaching and learning in NWLSD

HELC's MISSION

The Northwest Local School District Early Childhood Preschool Program provides students with a safe, positive, and developmentally appropriate preschool program based on guidelines provided by the Ohio Department of Education. We will meet each child's learning needs as we inspire them to reach their full potential. Our school is here to serve the community.

HELC's CORE BELIEFS

- We believe it is our responsibility to ensure growth in all domains of learning for each student.
- We believe students and staff thrive in an environment that is safe, trusting, nurturing and conducive to learning.
- We believe collaborative relationships and high expectations are paramount to the success of all learners.
- We believe in building and maintaining collaborative relationships with our community.

HELC's GOALS

- To facilitate the growth of every child's emotional, social, intellectual, and physical development.
- To foster in the education and development of each child's individual abilities.
- To provide children with the tools to be confident problem solvers.
- To assist children in developing positive relationships within a diverse community.
- To develop positive parent-child-staff relationships.
- To provide engaging learning experiences with developmentally appropriate resources that align with the Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

HELC's VISION STATEMENT

At HELC, we envision a nurturing and inclusive learning community where every child is empowered to grow emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically. Guided by strong collaborative relationships and high expectations, we are committed to creating a safe, trusting environment where students and staff thrive. Through developmentally appropriate, engaging experiences aligned with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, we foster each child's unique abilities, promote confident problem-solving, and support the development of positive, meaningful connections among families, educators, and the broader community.

CURRICULUM

Resource: Joyful Discoveries - <https://www.readingscience.org/preschool>

Publisher: Mount St. Joseph's - The Center For Reading Science

Adoption Date: March 2025

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Typical peer model students should meet the following criteria in order to attend HELC:

- The child will be at least 3 years old by September 30th of the enrolling year.
- The child is completely potty trained, meaning he/she wears underwear and does not have daytime accidents.
- The child is able to follow rules, and routines and can attend to activities for approximately 5 minutes.
- The child's speech is clear and understandable by unfamiliar adults.
- The child is able to play with a variety of toys appropriately.
- The child can play beside and/or with other children while sharing the same bin of toys.
- The family does not have any concerns with the child's speech/language, social-emotional development, motor development, cognitive or adaptive behavior.

Typical peer model students who exhibit consistent potty accidents without a doctor's note and/or behaviors that interrupt the learning environment may cause a student to be dismissed from HELC. It is up to the discretion of administration if a student will continue to attend HELC.

Out-of-district students are not accepted so that we may provide preschool services to as many Northwest families as possible.

Documentation Required for Registration

Copy of Lease or Mortgage and Copy of Utility Bill
(This verifies your residency in the school district.)

Copy of Child's Official Birth Certificate

Any Divorce/Separation Papers that Verify Custody

Copy of parent/guardian Identification Card (ID)

Additional Forms and Information Needed to Attend:

Income Verification form **with** Proof of Income and Parent Financial Agreement form

- *Form provided to list your household members and monthly income*
- *Two current pay stubs and IRS Tax Form 1040/1040 A submitted by April 15th each year*

(This information is needed to determine your monthly fee.)

Student Health History Form

Physical* (including Lead and Hemoglobin results, per state requirements)

***Physical forms are valid for one year from the date form is completed.**

Emergency Medical and Authorization to Pick Up from School form

Student Dismissal Information Form

Student Information Release Form

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Children entering preschool must be three (3) on or before September 30th of the school year of attendance.

Typically developing children who turn five (5) on or before September 30th of the school year **will not** be eligible for the district preschool. Parents may choose another preschool, but the child may not attend our preschool, as the child is eligible to attend the district's kindergarten program.

The district believes children who are age appropriate for kindergarten should be with peers of the same age. Children receiving special education services may attend another year of preschool based on an Individual Education Plan team decision including the parents.

ATTENDANCE, TARDY AND EARLY PICK-UP

As with any learning situation, the most progress takes place when the child attends school regularly. Daily attendance is expected. If your child has a medical appointment, is ill, or will not be coming to school for any other reason, the school must be notified. Per Ohio law, parents/guardians are required to call the school when their child will not be in attendance. The office telephone number for the program is Houston Early Learning Center at 385-8000. Please give the secretary the following information: your name, your child's name, teacher's name and the reason for absence. In addition, upon your child's return to school, a note must accompany him/her stating the reason for the absence. **If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, a phone call will be made to you to verify the absence.**

Regular and punctual attendance contributes to a child's success in school and in later life. Statistics have shown that absences have a direct relationship to achievement. It is important that children attend school for the entire school day. We realize, however, that arriving late or leaving early is sometimes unavoidable.

Parent/Guardian MUST accompany your child to the office if he/she arrives after 8:05am (am session) or 12:20pm (pm session) and sign him/her in the front office.

If you find it necessary to request an early pick-up for your child, a note from the parent to the child's teacher should be received *in advance of an early pick-up*. Children will be dismissed early once the parent comes to the office. The safety of each child is our first priority, thus a child being dismissed early must be signed out and identification of the person picking up the child is required, along with the person's name documented for release of the child to the person picking up.

Be sure to be on time to pick up your child. *You will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per five minutes for later pick up after 10:55am (am session) or 3:10pm (pm session). You will receive an invoice at the time of your pickup. You must pay the late fee prior to drop off the next school day.*

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

We appreciate parents' interest in their child's education and their desire to be involved and informed. School information will be provided to the custodial parent/guardian. Release of a child or information regarding the child to a non-custodial parent cannot be denied by the school without court documentation. It is a parent's responsibility to provide the school with the appropriate court documents. Please be aware that staff may only speak with the child's legal guardian regarding progress, etc.

BIRTHDAYS

Treats for individual student celebrations, such as a birthday, should be something that can be sent home in a backpack at the end of the day. It is recommended families send in small trinkets such as a pencil or eraser vs food items. **If you choose to send in a food item it must be prepackaged and peanut free (see the suggestions list which can be found on our school webpage).**

Refrain from having flowers, balloons, or other gifts delivered to the school for individual students, as they will not be delivered to the classroom. These items cause a distraction to the learning environment and become a safety issue during dismissal and bus transportation. We believe celebrations are important and have many here within the school however family visitors and celebrations are best suited for outside of the school environment.

Birthday invitations won't be sent out to other students within the classroom.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL AND/OR EMERGENCY NUMBERS

It is important for us to have correct and complete information for your child. Please let us know immediately if there are changes. Throughout the year, please contact both your child's teacher and the preschool office at the Houston Early Learning Center at 385-8000 when address, telephone number or email address changes occur.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

As mandated reporters, the school staff is required by law to notify Hamilton County Jobs and Family Services immediately in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect.

CHILD RELEASE INFORMATION

Children will NOT be released to any person other than a parent, guardian or individual listed on your enrollment card, without written permission of the parent or guardian. The individual picking up the child must have a picture I.D. to show at the time of release and **must be at least 18 years of age.**

CLASSROOM SETTINGS

The Northwest Local School District Preschool Program is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and has received a GOLD rating from Step Up to Quality. We offer preschool to students ages three and four years old at Houston Early Learning Center. At our preschool, we offer a variety of classroom settings designed to accommodate the diverse needs of our students. This includes specialized classrooms for students with disabilities as well as integrated classrooms where students of all abilities learn together.

While we prioritize meeting the unique needs of our special education students, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and supported.

CLASS ROSTERS

A class roster including the child's name, telephone number and parent, custodian or guardian name will be available to you. Written permission is required prior to publication of the list. This list is for parent use only. It will not be given to anyone other than a HELC parent.

CLASSROOM VISITS

If a parent would like to make a visit to a classroom at Houston Early Learning Center, the following district guidance will be followed:

It is a building-level administrator decision in conjunction with members of Central Office staff as needed. If a principal was to deny the observation request, reasonable rationale would need to be given.

If this request is granted, there must be a 48 hour notice and administration will be present during the visit per district policy.

CLOTHING FOR SCHOOL

Many of our daily activities are messy; please keep this in mind when choosing your child's clothing.

It is also important to allow your child maximum independence by choosing zippers and fasteners that are easily manageable during toileting and active play. Tennis shoes or sneakers are the best footwear for preschoolers. *Shoes with open toes, shoes with heels and sandals can be unsafe for students and are not allowed at school.* This is for the safety of the students. Book bags with wheels are not permitted.

We ask that a complete change of clothing be kept at school in the event your child needs a change. Please mark all extra clothing with your child's name and place it in a Ziploc bag. Also mark all jackets, sweaters, and coats with your child's name on the inside of the garment. Your child's teacher will send reminders when the seasons change in order to have weather-appropriate clothing on hand. (Shorts in January can be a little chilly!)

Children who receive special education services and who are not toilet trained are required to furnish diapers and wipes. Please discuss with your child's teacher.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to the smooth running of any successful school. Listed here are the most common forms of communication encouraged in our school district.

NOTES, PHONE CALLS AND WEBSITE

While face-to-face meetings are usually best, a personal note or brief phone call are often most effectively used by teachers in keeping parents informed as to their student's progress. The district website and parent emails are a means to get important school and district news and information. Please visit www.nwlsd.org to sign up for the Preschool Parent Email List. Click on the Red icon at the bottom of the page. Supply our school name and your email address. You will receive emails from the school with important information. Follow us on Facebook **Houston Early Learning Center**.

COMMUNICATION FOLDERS

Children will receive a communication folder at the start of the school year with their name and teacher name on the front of the folder. It will be the parent's responsibility to place any form of communication for the preschool in their child's folder. Folders will be sent home daily and must be returned daily. The teacher will not be checking book bags, just the communication folder.

Please take the time each day to check your child's folder. Read through parent newsletters for other opportunities to become involved.

CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled 3 times per year (prior to the start of school/fall/winter-early spring). Other conferences may be scheduled as needed. Please contact your child's teacher to arrange for additional conferences.

Teachers will only conference with the custodial parent (mother only if not married) unless written permission is completed in the office. The general procedure regarding parent/teacher conferences in all custody situations is to hold one conference; whereas, the appointment is to be scheduled jointly if both parents wish to be present. A joint conference further ensures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, avoiding misunderstanding and/or misinterpretations.

At conferences, the teacher will review progress made in relation to the Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool. The teacher may share work samples, assessment data, recent report card grades and review the Developmental and Educational Goals for Step Up to Quality (SUTQ).

CUMULATIVE FILES

Information on each child is kept in a school file. You may request to review your child's file. Please contact the preschool secretary at (513) 385-8000.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

Early Childhood Program-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports provides a framework of evidence based practices to promote the social-emotional competence of all children, address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of children who are at risk, and develop supports for children with persistent social, emotional or behavioral concerns. As facilitators of learning, adults in the preschool program develop and form relationships that provide a warm, caring, and positive environment where children are treated with dignity and respect.

Relationships are built between not only the adult and the child, but also between children and the materials they explore in their environment. When positive relationships are established, and when the setting is accepting yet challenging, children learn appropriate behaviors and develop positive feelings about themselves and their accomplishments. The teachers, as facilitators, set up the classroom environment to promote the construction of knowledge (learning) by the children. The environment is an invitation for exploration and discovery, with only items to be explored within the reach of children. This, in turn validates the children's feelings and accomplishments, empowering them to take risks, to discover and to become more independent.

The following strategies are used by the staff:

- Universal behavioral rules and expectations are taught to all students through the use of structured lesson plans. HELC PBIS expectations are to 'Be safe' and 'Be kind.'
- Individual and Classroom acknowledgement is provided to all students demonstrating positive behaviors.
- Students are provided with clear, concise directions, using visual, verbal, and tactile cues to aid in their understanding.
- Adults model using calm emotions, reflect the students' feelings into words, and model developmentally appropriate language.
- Restorative practices focus on strengthening relationships.
- Logical and natural consequences are utilized, such as cleaning after a spill, without negative comment.
- Choices and encouragement are offered to encourage students to explore materials and activities.
- 'Wait time' is provided.
- Preferential seating and/or working within close proximity to the teacher/task is used.
- Redirection and/or alternatives are utilized to encourage better attention, more exploration and communication.
- Planned ignoring is used for minor disruptions and attention-seeking behavior.
- Physical outlets, such as movement or rest breaks, are provided for students who need assistance in calming or regulating their emotions.
- Directions are stated positively when appropriate (e.g. "Feet on the floor" vs. "No! Get off the table."; "Hands in your lap." vs. "Don't touch that.>"). "NO" is used when a student is in danger or putting others in danger.
- Non-evaluative statements are used to comment on what a student did rather than on the effectiveness of the accomplishment (e.g. "You zipped your coat." vs. "Good job!"; "I see red and green lines." vs. "I like your picture.>").
- Calming breathing techniques are taught.
- A 'calming space' is available for students who need time to regain composure and focus. This is a time for the child to reflect and take a break. It is NOT a punitive measure. The goal is for the child to calm, regain composure, and to rejoin activities.
- A behavior intervention plan is developed, if needed, by a team which includes the student's parents.

Physical punishment for problematic behaviors is not used. In the event a child would endanger him/herself or others, families may be called to remove the child from class.

The policy below applies to all persons on the premises and is restricted as follows, per Ohio State law, 3301-37-10:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to: punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about him/her or family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability. The child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Children are expected to follow the same rules as required by the NWLSD Code of Regulations for Conduct of Pupils. BOARD OF EDUCATION DISTRICT POLICY SECTION AT THE END OF THIS HANDBOOK.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

AM Drop Off	7:55-8:05	PM Drop Off	12:10-12:20
Tardy	8:10 and after	Tardy	12:21 and after

Our parking lot opens for drop off at 7:55 (am session) and 12:10 (pm session). We unload our bus riders first followed by our car riders.

Prior to that our lot needs to be clear for staff arrival at our building, enrollment center and for meetings at our conference center. Unnecessary congestion to our lot will delay our traffic flow and staff being prepared. Thank you in advance for adhering to these times.

- Enter our lot from Banning Road and travel 5 mph along a shared lane with buses and daycare vans.
- Cars will use the 'car only' lane to travel the left side parking spots while bus and daycare will use the 'bus only' lane to travel the right grass side parking spots.
- Traffic will hug the yellow line and stay as close to the vehicle in front of them.
- Wait for a staff member to direct cars into lanes and buses/daycare vans to curb side lane.
- Once in the lane, pull your vehicle as close to the vehicle in front of you (do not block crosswalk).

- Once staff members signal it is safe to release, car rider adults are responsible for quickly getting students out of the car, backpack on children and to walk them to the associated door for their classroom. This is where parents/caregivers will say their quick goodbyes to one another.
- Staff members are located right inside the doors to welcome them to school and will use their identification tag number to ensure they get to the correct teacher that is waiting for them.
- Once all vehicles in bus lane and car lanes are unloaded, cones will be removed and lanes will be released to exit the parking lot. Do not cross over lanes to exit as we will do this in an orderly and safe manner.
- Vehicles waiting to load lanes will be signaled by the staff member and will direct cars into lanes and buses/daycare vans to curb lane. We will repeat this process until all students have been dropped off.
- If you are late dropping off your child, please park your car in a designated parking spot and buzz the front doors. You will be asked to sign your child and the reason he/she is late. If you have an appointment, be sure to bring in their school excusal form for our front office staff. Thank you!

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

AM Drop Off	10:45-10:55	PM Drop Off	3:00-3:10
Tardy (\$ charges begins)	10:56	Tardy (\$ charges begins)	3:11

Our parking lot opens for pick up at 10:35 (am session) and 2:50 (pm session). We load our bus riders first and then our car riders.

Prior to that our lot needs to be clear for flow traffic accessing district enrollment center and our district conference center. Unnecessary congestion to our lot will delay our traffic flow. Thank you in advance for adhering to these times!

- Enter our lot from Banning Road and travel 5 mph along the shared lane with buses and daycare vans.
- Cars will use the 'car only' lane to travel the left side parking spots while bus and daycare will use the 'bus only' lane to travel the right grass side parking spots.
- Traffic will hug the yellow line and stay as close to the vehicle in front of them.
- Wait for a staff member to direct cars into car lanes and buses/daycare vans to the curbside lane.
- Once in the lane, pull your vehicle as close to the vehicle in front of you (do not block crosswalk).
 - Have your identification tag ready while you are in your vehicle. Once you exit the car you will need to take your ID # card with you so we can ensure that it matches the students tag prior to releasing them. ***You will need this card daily to ensure safety.***

Order of Traffic Flow:

- o Bus riders will be released first. Once they are loaded buses will leave the lot.
- o Once buses are gone, this signals car rider adults from the first wave in lanes 1, 2, 3, and 4 to exit their cars and wait outside the exit doors that match their identification tag color. Your child will exit here.

- o Do not crowd exit doors. Adults picking up should be on the sidewalk near the yellow line as this will allow space so staff can visually see students reuniting with adults. Have your identification tag with you.
- o Once reuniting occurs adults and students may walk back to the car and wait for the signal release.
- o Once all cars in all lanes are loaded, a staff member will signal the beginning of our car rider lease. Release will occur in an orderly fashion by releasing the lanes in order as they come in. Stay in your lane and do not cross over lanes of traffic.
- o Once all vehicles in lane 1-4 are released, a new wave of cars will enter our lot to park and proceed to exit doors to retrieve their child.

If you know you will be late picking up your child, call our office at 385-8000. Children that are late being picked up will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per five minutes after 10:55 (am session) and 3:10 (pm session). You will receive an invoice at the time of your pickup. You must pay the late fee at the time of pick-up. Thank you!

Late Arrival

If your child is arriving late to school, the parent/guardian must go to the office to sign the child in to school. It is imperative that students arrive at school on time so they can practice transitions with their peers and begin school promptly. It is standard protocol to receive notification from the office if habitual absenteeism is evident.

A recent study looking at young children found that absenteeism in preschool was associated with negative grade school outcomes such as greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge. Research shows that attendance is an important factor in student achievement.

Late Pick-Up

If you are late picking up your child, your child will be taken to the office to wait for you.

You will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per five minutes intervals for late pick-up after 10:55 a.m. or 3:10 p.m. You will receive an Invoice at the time of your pickup. You must pay the late fee prior to the drop off the next school day.

If your child is a bus rider and returns to school because no one is home to meet the bus, you will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 per five minute intervals once the child is returned. You will receive an Invoice at the time of your pickup. You must pay the fee at the time of pick-up.

NOTE: For typical students, if attendance is habitual and/or tardiness on arrival or pick-up is documented frequently then it is up to the discretion of the principal if the student will continue in our preschool program.

EMERGENCY FIRE, TORNADO, AND A.L.I.C.E. SAFETY DRILLS

Emergency drills are held in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code and are determined by number by the Ohio Revised Code. The drills are planned to provide practice at varying times and under differing conditions. Children are taught proper procedures to follow. Order and speed are stressed during a drill. No talking is permitted as an emergency situation requires being able to hear directions given by a staff member. The intent is to help in the

response to the signals for fire, tornado, or ALICE drills so it becomes so routine that the procedure will be carried out rapidly, automatically and in an orderly manner to maximize safety for all occupants of the building in the event of an emergency.

Parents will be notified when we have practiced an ALICE drill. If a crisis occurs and we must evacuate the building, you will be notified by One Call Now as to where to pick-up your child or children.

FEES LATE PAYMENT

Parents/Guardians will receive a reminder email when a payment is not received by the last day of the month (payments are due the 25th of each month). If the payment is not received after the reminder email, a final notice will be emailed with the amount due and a removal date to terminate your child's enrollment, if the payment is not made.

FAMILY and COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Preschool families and the community are always welcome to become involved in the preschool program. The preschool has several events throughout the year where volunteers are needed. Please contact your child's teacher or the office for additional information. **Please be sure to RSVP to our family events by the date on the invitation so that we can plan accordingly.**

FOOD ALLERGIES

The incidence of food allergies increases every year. *The Houston Early Learning Center refrains from any activities or snacks involving peanut butter, peanuts or any other tree nuts.*

GOVERNING BODY

The preschool has a governing body that oversees the quality of the program. The leadership team meets on a monthly basis to discuss improvement strategies and any other issues that may improve the quality of the program.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION or BULLYING

A parent or guardian may file a complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying pursuant to Board policy. The complaint must be specific as to the action giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The form is located in the school's office and can also be found on the District's website under Parent Resources. If you chose to complete a paper form, please complete and return to the building principal.

HOLIDAYS

The preschool classes participate in two holiday celebrations each year. In the fall there is a Fall Celebration (in lieu of Halloween) and in February, we will celebrate Valentine's Day. Your child's teacher will provide additional information prior to these classroom parties.

HEALTH PROCEDURES/MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE/ MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Hand washing is the most effective measure to prevent the spread of disease. All children and staff wash hands thoroughly before handling or eating food; after toileting or wiping noses; and after changing diapers. As much as possible, children are encouraged to manage their own hand washing by keeping step stools, soap and towels within reach, and observing adults using good hand washing techniques.

Parents and/or guardians will be notified by phone when signs or symptoms of illness appear. In addition, a child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent/guardian or to the person designated on Emergency Medical Form. Once contacted, it is expected that the person will immediately pick up their child. Examples of these symptoms are:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within 24 hours)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Temperature of 100F (under the arm) along with other signs of illness
- Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark urine and /or grey or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestations

The mildly “ill child” will be made comfortable and provided with a place to rest.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the building administrator and the parent or guardian.

The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully observed for symptoms listed above as well as the following:

- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Elevated temperature
- Vomiting
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation

If a child is sent home, the child may be readmitted when free of fever for 24 hours and/or the threat of contagion is over. Symptoms of the illness must disappear, and the child must feel well.

If your child has been exposed to a contagious disease while at pre-school, you will be notified in writing.

In cases of injuries that need a doctor's care, the parents will be notified immediately. First aid treatment will be confined to cleaning with water, applying ice, and bandaging only. If the situation warrants, paramedics will be called. **Note: all school personnel are prohibited from administering medical treatment of any kind unless a medical authorization form is on file.**

Policy for Administration of Medication

Northwest Local School District Policy for Administration of Medication is consistent with the Ohio Revised Code 3313.713 (The Medication Policy Law). Students are not to carry any prescription or non-prescription medicine with them during the school day. School personnel are not authorized to administer prescribed medication or perform medical procedures unless they are prescribed by a physician and authorized by the parent.

Whenever possible the administration of medication required by a student during the school day should be given before or after school hours. However, certain students may require the administration of medication during the school day to maintain an optimum health status for learning. In the event that a student requires the administration of medication, **prescription and/or over-the-counter**, during the school day, the following procedure must be followed:

Administration of Medication form physician's order and parental permission must be completed in its entirety and signed by the prescribing physician and the parent/guardian.

1. Medication is to be brought to the school building by the parent/guardian in the **original** container.
2. A parent, guardian designated by the parent is responsible to personally bring any medication to the school building. **Never send medication with a student.**
3. All medication is kept in a **locked storage unit** in each school building.
4. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain an updated physician's order when the medication changes in any way.
5. Any unused medication not claimed on the last day of school will be destroyed.
6. A new medication order must be submitted each school year.

Administration of Prescribed Medical Treatment

A student may require a prescribed medical treatment (non-medication) during the school day such as tube feeding, dressing change or catheterization. The prescribing provider and the parent must complete the **Administration of Prescribed Medical Treatment** form before school personnel may initiate the medical treatment. This form may be obtained in the Health Office.

Student Injury/Incident

Although safety is our number one priority at Houston Early Learning Center we also recognize that this age of discovery, curiosity and learning how to communicate effectively may lead students to injury risks.

Teachers and assistants will consistently monitor, redirect and model appropriate behavior to reduce and prevent the risk of injury. When an incident/injury does occur the staff member

will use their best judgment on what level of care the injury/incident needs. For example, the staff member may address it within the classroom with continuous monitoring, reassurance and a utilization of the first aid kit, if necessary.

Staff members may see that the injury/incident needs attention beyond what can be provided within the classroom, therefore, the child will be seen by our school nurse/health assistant. The nurse/health assistant will address the injury/incident based on their training and complete an injury/incident report, if needed. If a report is written, the nurse/health assistant will contact the family by phone or written documentation the day of the injury.

IMMUNIZATIONS and YEARLY MEDICAL STATEMENT

State law requires that each child remain up-to-date with his/her immunizations or have special consideration by the child's physician (In addition, a child may be exempt from immunizations due to religious reasons... a statement must be signed attesting to that fact). A record of the immunizations must be on file within 30 days of the child's first day of school.

State law requires that your child receive an annual physical examination by a licensed physician and provided to the school within the first 30 days of the child's first day of school. The physician needs to affirm that your child is in "suitable condition for enrollment" in the program. A form will be provided for you.

Ohio Immunization Summary for Child Care and Pre-School

VACCINES	IMMUNIZATIONS FOR CHILD CARE/HEAD START AND PRE-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
DTaP/DT Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis	Four (4) doses of DTaP or DT, or any combination.
POLIO	Three (3) doses of OPV or IPV or any combination of OPV or IPV.
MMR Measles, Mumps, Rubella	One (1) dose of MMR administered on or after the first birthday.
Hib Haemophilus Influenzae Type b	Three (3) or four (4) doses depending on the vaccine type, the age when the child began the 1 st dose and the last dose must be after 12 months. or One (1) dose if given on or after 15 months of age.
HEP B Hepatitis B	Three (3) doses of Hepatitis B. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose. The third dose must be given at least 16 weeks after the first dose and at least 8 weeks after the second dose. The last dose in the series (third or fourth dose), must not be administered before age 24 weeks.
Varicella (Chickenpox)	1 dose of Varicella administered on or after the first birthday.

Notes:

■ Vaccine doses are only considered valid if administered according to the most recent version of the *Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Aged 0 Through 18 Years* or the *Catch-up Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 4 Months through 18 Years Who Start Late or Who Are More Than 1 Month Behind*, as published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

■ Vaccine doses administered ≤ 4 days before the minimum interval or age are valid (grace period). Doses administered ≥ 5 days earlier than the minimum interval or age are not valid doses and should be repeated as age-appropriate. If MMR and Varicella are not given on the same day, the doses must be separated by at least 28 days with no grace period.

■ For additional information please refer to the Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-12-37 for Child Care, Head Start, Pre-School and the Ohio Revised Code 3313.67 and 3313.671 for School Attendance and the ODH Director's Journal Entry (available at www.odh.ohio.gov, Click on "I" and then "Immunization" and then "Required Vaccines for Childcare and School"). These documents list required and recommended immunizations and indicate exemptions to immunizations.

■ Please contact the Ohio Department of Health Immunization Program at (800) 282-0546 or (614) 466-4643 with questions or concerns.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) AND SECTION 504 PLAN

An individualized education plan is developed for each child who has been identified as having a disability. It is a written plan that is developed and implemented according to federal and state regulations. The parents and school personnel comprise the IEP team. The IEP includes a statement of measurable goals and short-term instructional objectives related to meeting your child's educational needs that result from his/her disability. Your child's IEP must be reviewed at least annually. However, your child's IEP may be reviewed /revised at any time during the school year at your request or at the school district's request.

A Section 504 Plan is a formal plan that a school can develop to give students with a disability the support they need, however, these plans aren't part of special education making them different than IEPs. 504 plans and IEPs are covered by different laws and work in different way but the end goal is the same: to help students thrive in school. One way 504 plans do that is through accommodations. To be considered for a 504 plan, the parents and school personnel come together to collaborate to determine eligibility. If a student qualifies, a plan is written, followed by educators and then is reviewed annually.

Students who receive special education services will be provided with A Special Education Procedural Safeguard Notice booklet that will provide a guide to parents rights to special education.

INSPECTIONS

Throughout the school year, our building will get inspections from various departments including our local fire and health department. Copies of inspections can be obtained in our main office after a written request is provided to administration.

LIBRARY

Children will visit the library each week. They will be given the opportunity to check-out a book as long as their book from the previous week is returned. Please call the school with library questions.

LICENSING

In accordance with state law, each preschool classroom is licensed through the Ohio Department of Education. The license is posted inside each preschool classroom. On-site visits by a representative of the Department of Education occur a minimum of once during the school year to ensure that the health and safety needs of the children are being met.

A copy of the most recent licensing compliance report is posted in each preschool classroom. Parents can request a copy of inspection reports from the Preschool Principal. If parents need to file a complaint regarding the implementation of the Rules for Preschool Programs, Chapter 3301-37; they should call the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness (614) 466-0224 or the Ombudsman.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children engage in outdoor play as weather permits. Please dress your child in comfortable and appropriate clothes for the weather and play. Hats, mittens and boots are needed during the colder months (**please mark all items of clothing with your child's name. This includes all coats and jackets**). Recess is held outside unless the outside temperature/wind chill is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit (feels like temp) or the weather conditions are not conducive to being outside. Children who are well enough to come to school are expected to go outside for recess.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

At the beginning of each school year each family is asked to complete a questionnaire about their child. As a parent you are your child's best teacher. In order for optimum learning to occur for each student, it is essential that parents and teachers are a team. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's school experiences and our program provides a variety of ways for you to do so.

- We welcome each parent to become an active participant within the classroom.
- You may volunteer to assist the teacher with special activities within the room.
- At the beginning of the school year each teacher will schedule days for parents to volunteer. If you are unable to come to the classroom, parents may assist with special tasks the teacher may need help with (i.e. cutting, putting activities together, and paperwork) in your home.

Parents are encouraged to share their talents with the classroom. Please arrange this with your child's teacher.

Parent information meetings will be available throughout the year. Speakers and topics are determined from our parent surveys. Many of these topics will be geared specifically for the developmental levels of young children.

Special events for parents to come to school and participate in activities with their child are also provided. This helps the child communicate his/her experiences and interests to their families. Children will be sharing their talents during our evening programs at different times throughout the school year.

PETS ON PROPERTY

While we understand that pets are part of your family, you may not bring them into school without the administration's consent and we ask that all pets remain inside cars at arrival and departure regardless of being on a leash. This is a safety/health concern and we appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

REPORT CARDS

Report Cards will be sent home three times during the year. Specific dates are noted on the school calendar that is sent home at the start of the school year.

RECORDS

Please be informed that health records, including medical and developmental history, speech, hearing and vision screening, immunization records and dental records are collected for each child. These records are used to help provide a total educational preschool program. These records are confidential and will only be released to qualified staff working directly with your child.

Directory information is considered public information and may be released without parental consent in some cases. Directory information may not be released to an individual or group representing businesses or other profit-making agencies. If a parent objects to the disclosure of any or all directory information, this objection should be put in writing and sent to the student's school of attendance.

RECORDS TRANSFER POLICY

Houston Early Learning Center maintains a cumulative record /file for each student enrolled in our preschool program. If a student moves to a new district/school or when preschool students transfer from preschool to kindergarten, we follow the protocol of our district regarding student records. The parent/guardian is provided with a Records Release paper for typical preschool students. This states the Date of Withdrawal, Student's Name, and reason for Withdrawal and the Records Release Information. Refer to the attachment. If the student has an IEP, the parent/guardian completes a NWLSD Records Release for the Special Education Department. Likewise, when a child enrolls in a new school and HELC receives a written records request from the school, we send the materials (usually via fax) to the school that the parent/guardian has authorized permission for us to do so.

Additionally, should a parent/guardian want us to share information with an outside source (such as Cincinnati Children's Medical Center), we require them to complete a release of information form for each organization/agency for which they would like to communicate.

- Houston Early Learning Center – Records of Release
- NWLSD – Records Release for Special Education Records
- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center Authorization for Use and/or Disclosure of Protected Health Information to Schools
- NWLSD – Special Education Services – Permission to Exchange Information

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

If the need arises for the preschool program to obtain additional information to effectively provide your child with an appropriate education, you may be asked to sign a release of information form. Should you wish any reports sent from the preschool program to physicians or other agencies, you will need to sign a form authorizing the program to do so.

RETURNING STUDENTS

Students who are eligible to return to the preschool program for the next school year will be sent a re-enrollment packet from the preschool office in late winter. The completed

enrollment packet for all returning students is due to the preschool office at HELC by March 1st each school year. Please return the completed packet to your child's teacher.

Parents must update the two page enrollment information form, the income eligibility form, two pay stubs and IRS Tax Form 1040/1040A submitted by April 15th each year (**this information is needed to determine your monthly fee**) and the student health form. Copies of the birth certificate, proof of residency and social security card will not be required again unless the information on file has changed.

Failure to return the re-enrollment packet in a timely manner may result in a student losing their priority placement in the program.

SAFE SCHOOL HOTLINE

The Safe OH tip line will accept both calls and texts 24 hours a day regarding bullying, potential suicide risks, violence or other school safety issues. This information is anonymous and reported directly to the designated administrator at your school. This tip line allows students and adults to anonymously share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety—whether that involves a threatened mass incident or harm to a single student. Calls or texts to 844-SaferOH (844-723-3764)

SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

Below is an example of what a typical day would look like for a preschool student.

Activity/Task	Length
Arrival	10 mins
Morning Work/Tabletops Play	25 mins.
Recess	20 mins.
Bathroom	10 mins.
Circle Time	20 mins.
Literacy Circle	15 mins.
Snack	10 mins.
Centers Play & Small Groups	30 mins.
Math Circle	10 mins.
Word Games	10 mins.
Goodbye Song & Pack Up	10 mins.

SCHOOL CLOSING AND DELAYS

Inclement weather plans for the Northwest Local School District will be announced as follows:

1. Northwest Schools will be closed
2. Northwest Schools will be on two hour delay
3. Northwest Schools will dismiss early
4. Northwest Schools will be on two-hour delay with limited transportation
5. Northwest Schools have limited transportation

On days when there is a delay, preschool will be cancelled and afternoon preschool will be held at the regular time. On days when there is an early dismissal due to weather, afternoon preschool will be cancelled.

SECURITY

The doors will be locked when school is in session. If you arrive after school begins, you will need to buzz the office at the outside entrance for someone to allow you in the building.

SNACKS

We ask each child to be responsible for bringing snacks for the entire classroom group on a rotating basis. The state requires the following:

- Daily snacks must have items from two of the four food groups (meat/meat-equivalent group; bread/bread-alternatives group; milk group; or fruit/vegetable group).
- A source of vitamin C should be provided weekly. If juice is provided, it must be 100% juice. In addition to juices, examples of sources of vitamin C are: apples, bananas, blueberries, cranberry juice, apple juice, cantaloupe, grapes, oranges, peaches, pears, pineapple, and watermelon.

If juice or 1% milk is not provided, then water is made available. Snacks do not need to be an expensive proposition. A box of crackers, a package of cheese and juice could be a snack. We also enjoy foods that allow us to practice a variety of fine motor skills (i.e. scooping, spreading, and cutting). **All snacks must be in unopened packages or containers. Snacks must be store bought and labeled with ingredients. Snacks may not be homemade.**

STUDENT PICTURES

Individual pictures will be taken in the fall and spring. A group photo of each classroom will be taken in the spring. Specific dates and information about how to order photos will be provided weeks in advance to our families. LifeTouch is our school photographer.

TOYS, GAMES, and ELECTRONICS

Children are not permitted to bring toys, games or electronic devices (including cell phones) to preschool. The only exception would be if your child's classroom teacher requests toys or

games be brought to school for a specific event. Cell phones and electronic devices are never permitted. Confiscated cell phones and other electronic devices will be returned to parents only.

TRANSITIONS

Families and Children Transitioning into HELC's Preschool

Families are encouraged to schedule a school visit prior to their start at Houston Early Learning Center. During this visit, parent/guardian and child will tour the preschool and visit each classroom as it relates to the classroom the child will likely attend. This visit allows the family and student to meet teachers, students, assistants, nurse, school's secretary, principal, and custodians. Families also visit HELC's playground, gym, library, outdoor Learning Lab, and the computer lab.

Families are handed an Enrollment Packet. Each page of the packet is reviewed and questions are answered before the parent/guardian leaves with the Enrollment Packet. A checklist is used for families so they can easily track the required documents needed for preschool enrollment.

When the Enrollment Packet is completed, the parent/guardian contacts the school's secretary and an appointment is made to review the packet for its completed forms and information.

In June, all Preschool Families are mailed a Battelle Developmental Inventory letter about their required summer screenings in July. The letter asks if the family will need an Interpreter for the screening and if so, what language is needed. The letter also asks which session they are requesting (AM or PM), and to select a date in and time preference for their July BDI screening.

Parents are mailed a second letter (Preschool Screening Date/Time Notification) with their assigned date and time to come to HELC, over the summer, to participate in the Battelle Developmental Inventory in July. The school's secretary also calls each family to remind them of their screening prior to their screening date and time. After all the BDI screenings take place in July, class lists are formalized.

A Welcome Letter is mailed to all preschool families the first of August. This letter has every family's assigned date and time for their 1:1 Parent/Student/Teacher Conference prior to the start of school. The letter also has the student's name, teacher's name, assistant's name and classroom number. Additionally, every classroom door frame is painted a different color to assist families in identifying their child's classroom. The letter asks each family to bring with them a family photo to be hung on their classroom bulletin board, and staggered start times are also included for the ease of transitioning to preschool.

The above preschool orientation allows for families and teachers to meet for 45 minutes, prior to the start of school. The family learns about HELC's routines, school day, visits their classroom, finds their cubby, completes an activity, sets goals for the New Year, and brings a photo of their family to display.

Every family receives a copy of ODE's Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School. Additionally, all families receive a copy of the Preschool Parent Handbook, Preschool Calendar with all Preschool Events listed such as: First Day of Preschool,

Staggered Start Days for students with last names from A-M and N-Z, Preschool Open House/Curriculum Night, Library Parent Presentation, Grandparent's Day, Fall Celebration, Community Helper's Day, Report Cards, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Photo Day, Read With Your Child Days, Mom's Day, Dad's Day, Spring Concert, Library Summer Parent Presentation.

During the child's first 30 day period, the parent (s)/guardian will collaborate with the teacher to help the child successfully transition into his or her classroom. If a successful transition has not been made, the parent (s)/guardian, child's teacher, and principal will meet to discuss concerns and options.

Student Transitioning Within the Preschool During the School Year

When a student transitions within HELC's Preschool Program, teachers in both the new classroom and the existing classroom meet with the parent (s)/guardian and discuss the child's development, growth, new classroom routines and expectations, schedules, procedures, and any concerns. The teachers and parent(s)/guardian collaborate to develop a transition schedule which also includes the child visiting the new classroom on several occasions before moving into a new classroom.

If the transitioning student has an active IEP, the IEP will be amended to reflect the transition.

Strategies used for a smooth transition may include: The assistant from the child's existing classroom stays with the transitioning student in the new classroom to offer support and guidance to the student, if needed. The new classroom teacher is well prepared to receive and welcome the transitioning student into the classroom as well as the assistant and students too. The transitioning student has h/h cubby with h/h name, name tag is displayed, table placement, rug seat, etc. to further welcome the transitioning student. Social stories may also be created for the transitioning student to prepare the student for h/h new classroom. This social story is also shared with the student in the existing classroom and at home to prepare for the transition.

Students are prepared for how long each visit to the new classroom will last. A visual timer may be used during this time. Students are offered a visual schedule of the new classroom's routines. The new teacher has a special friend/student to pair the transitioning student with to serve as a role model and helper for the new student. Photos of the transitioning student may be taken and shared with the family/guardian in h/h new classroom. This serves as an additional resource for the transitioning student to refer to as he/she moves from the existing classroom to a new classroom.

Once the transition is made, ongoing communication between the family/guardian and new teacher continues to develop and evolve through day to day interactions at drop off and dismissal, phone calls, emails, notes, and parent-teacher conferences.

Family is handed a copy of ODE's: Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School.

Transitioning Families/Students Within the Preschool Program at the End of the Year

In January, Houston Early Learning Center's three year old preschoolers returning for the following school year to preschool and students on an active IEP considering to NOT go to kindergarten, receive a form asking Parents/Guardian if they will be enrolling in preschool for the upcoming school year or will they not be returning to preschool for the upcoming school year. This form is sent home to every qualifying three year old preschool student and any student on a current IEP that is considering not transitioning to kindergarten. The form also asks the family if they would like an AM session or a PM session. Additionally, the form asks the family to mark the date and time frame for BDI screenings that occur in July. This form is returned to the school.

Students that will be transitioning/returning to our Preschool Program are handed a Re-Enrollment packet in February. All Re-Enrollment Packets are returned to the school. Once a family decides they will be transitioning their child in our Preschool Program, teachers are notified so they can begin their transition process and end of the year classroom placement. Additionally, teachers begin their process of preparing transitioning students to a new school/program.

If a Re-Enrollment Packet is not complete, the school's secretary will contact the family and schedule an appointment to meet with the family for completion.

In the spring, Teacher-Parent Conferences take place for every family. This time is used to celebrate the student's growth, review goals, develop new goals, if applicable, answer parent/guardian questions-concerns, and if needed another meeting can be set to continue the conversations. A transition plan is completed by the teacher and parent for the student. A copy of ODE's Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School Information.

In June, a letter is mailed to all returning families about the required Battelle Developmental Inventory screening. The letter asks if the family will need an Interpreter and if so what language is needed, which sessions they are requesting (AM or PM), and to select the date and time preference for their BDI screening.

Parents/Guardians are mailed a second letter for Preschool Screening Date/Time Notification) with their assigned date and time to come to HELC, over the summer to participate in the BDI screening.

After BDI Screenings, a Welcome Letter is sent to all preschool families. This letter has every family's assigned date and time for their 1:1 Parent/Student/Teacher Conference prior to the start of school. The letter also has the student's teacher's name, asks the family to bring a family photo to the meeting for the classroom bulletin board, and the staggered start date for preschool.

During this Orientation, teacher and family sets goals for the year, which is revisited throughout the school year. Parents/Families receive a copy of HELC's Preschool Parent-Handbook, a Welcome Letter from the Principal, Preschool Calendar with all Preschool Events listed such as: Teacher-Parent-Student Conferences, First Day of Preschool for students with last names from A-M and N-Z, Preschool Curriculum Night, Groesbeck Library Parent Presentation, Grandparent's Day, Fall Celebration, Community Helper's Day, Report Cards, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Photo Day, Read With Your Child Day, Mom's Day, Dad's Day, Spring Concert, Library Summer Presentation for Parents. Every family receives a copy of ODE's Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School information.

Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten:

In February, HELC sends home information about NWLSD's Kindergarten Registration for the upcoming school year. The calendar to schedule appointments for Kindergarten with enrollment begins in mid-February and appointments begin in March. Families are asked to complete an on-line Registration Packet and are given a date and time to meet with Enrollment. There are four days in March just for Kindergarten Registration. This ensures families understand the enrollment process and enrollment is there just for these families to answer any and all questions. Evening times are also offered to accommodate working families.

During Kindergarten Registration, families are shown how to access their Kindergarten Supply Lists, and summer learning activities in the areas of literacy and math. This information is located on the district's webpage.

In the spring, Teacher-Parent Conferences take place for every family. This time is used to celebrate the student's growth, review goals, develop new goals, if applicable, answer parent/guardian questions-concerns, and if needed another meeting can be set to continue the conversations. A transition plan is completed by the teacher and parent for the student. A copy of ODE's Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School Information. If a student is attending a new program or school for Kindergarten, the teacher strongly encourages the family and child to attend their Open House and tour the new school to become familiar with the new program.

In April, students and families are invited to NWLSD Kindergarten Open House. Our district has five Kindergarten buildings and each family is informed, during registration, which school their child will be attending. This is done through the family address. Every family and child is invited to attend this event, take a tour of their new school, meet the Kindergarten teachers, see the classrooms, and have a Meet and Greet session to answer their many questions at each of NWLSD's five buildings. Families are handed homework packets for summer learning during this event and/or websites to visit for virtual learning.

In May, HELC partners with their local library and offers families community and summer resources to encourage literacy and learning. All students with an existing IEP have transition meetings with their existing teacher and new teacher and team members, along with parents. Parents and Teachers complete a student Transition Plan.

Teachers and students make a countdown calendar to help the students understand the transition from preschool to kindergarten or from preschool to preschool. Teachers read, share, and discuss books about Kindergarten and social-emotional stories about transitioning to a new school.

At the end of school, Students and Families enjoy a Spring Concert, Mom's Day, Spirit Day, and a Field Day. These activities help prepare students and families to transition and prepare them to say good-bye.

Additionally, when students transition to Kindergarten, teachers share materials/resources with families for Kindergarten readiness along with HELC's website information for ongoing summer review and learning in the areas of literacy and math. Students and families receive a preschool certificate from HELC and a copy of their Kindness Pledge which they recite

everyday with the preschool students, staff, teachers, and principal. Every family receives a copy of ODE's Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School. When students and families exit HELC, teachers help them say goodbye to staff and friends. Teachers give families work samples, progress reports, and journals to share with the new school/program.

When families enroll in a new program/school, they complete a Records Transfer with the new school/program. Once HELC receives this documentation, we process the information and the student's records are transferred to the new school/program.

TRANSPORTATION

In accordance with State Law and when acceptable, bus transportation is provided for children with disabilities. Children are picked up and dropped off at their homes. Other arrangements must be approved by the transportation department (transportation is only provided within the Northwest Local School District boundaries). Children will only be transported to a single location. See pages 51-53 for additional information.

WITHDRAWING FROM SCHOOL

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the preschool program because of a family move, health or other circumstance, please contact the Preschool Secretary at the HELC 385-8000. The preschool programs require two week advance notice.

Houston Early Learning Center maintains a cumulative record file for each student enrolled in our preschool program. Should a student move to a new district/school, we follow the protocol of our district regarding student records. When a child is enrolled in his/her school and we receive a written records request from the new school, we send the materials, (usually via fax), to the school.

Additionally, should a parent/guardian want us to share information with an outside source, such as Cincinnati Hospital Medical Center, we require them to complete a release of information form for each organization/agency they'd like us to communicate with.

NORTHWEST LOCAL
DISTRICT OFFICE PORTION
2025-2026
NWLSD Curriculum Department

Academic Acceleration

In accordance with the belief that all children are entitled to an education commensurate with their particular needs, students who can exceed the grade-level standards set by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and the District should be afforded the opportunity and be encouraged to do so. The Board believes that all students, including advanced learners, should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential. For some advanced learners, this can best be achieved by affording them access to curriculum, learning environments and instructional interventions more commonly provided to older peers. This is referred to as academic acceleration. NWLSD accelerates students after careful evaluation of the student's level of performance and readiness, using the IOWA Acceleration Scale (IAS). Parents considering acceleration should contact the child's principal for information about referring their child for evaluation. (*BOE Policy 5408*)

There are four forms of acceleration: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, whole-grade acceleration, acceleration in individual subject areas (referred to as a single-subject acceleration), and early high school graduation.

Early entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade

Parents who see evidence that their student is advanced in ability and achievement can consider Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade. The process involves cognitive ability and academic testing, as well as team consideration of social/emotional factors that will affect the child in the classroom. A minimum cognitive ability score of 115 is required for consideration for early entrance based on the criteria outlined by the IOWA Acceleration Scale (IAS). **Parents can begin submitting requests for Early Entrance on March 1st. Our deadline for Early Entrance applications is the last day of the school year in May.** This timeline allows us to complete evaluations prior to the start of the school year.

Subject Acceleration

Occasionally a student's ability in a particular subject area may be so advanced that their needs are best met by an above grade-level curriculum. Single-subject acceleration is considered by a whole team that includes the parent, building staff, administrators, and a representative from the Gifted Department. Multiple data points are considered when determining subject-acceleration for a child. This process begins through a discussion with the classroom/subject area teacher and the building principal.

In the Northwest Local School District, students taking high school Honors Algebra I in middle school and/or Honors Geometry prior to the 10th grade, are considered single-subject accelerated in math. The first time that students are accelerated, a Written Acceleration Plan is completed and shared electronically. Gifted identification is not required for single-subject acceleration.

Whole Grade Acceleration

In even fewer instances, a student's ability and achievement in all content areas may be so advanced that their educational needs may be best met through placement at a higher-grade

level. The decision to meet a student's needs through whole grade acceleration is made very carefully and takes into account both academics and the social and emotional needs of the student. Whole grade acceleration is considered by a team that includes the parent, building staff, administrators, and a representative from the Gifted Department. Multiple data points are considered and, as required by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, are processed using the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS). This process typically begins through a discussion with the classroom teachers, along with the building principal.

Early Graduation

Some students take advantage of the option to graduate in less than four years. This is processed through the counseling department at the high school and requires the student to meet the credit requirements of graduation as determined by Ohio Department of Education guidelines and Northwest Local School District guidelines.

Appeal

A parent or legal guardian of the student referred for academic acceleration may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the local Superintendent (or his designee) within thirty days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent (or his designee) shall review the appeal and notify the parent/legal guardian who filed the appeal of his final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent (or his designee)'s decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if the student is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals.

Gifted Identification

Screening for gifted identification occurs annually and takes place during the regular school day. Northwest Local School District universally screens all students for gifted identification in reading and math, in grades 2-8, using the NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). There is therefore no need to request gifted testing in reading or math for students in grades 2-8. The Northwest Local School District also screens all students for superior cognitive ability in grades 2 and 5, using the CogAT (Cognitive Ability Test) and offers an opportunity for high achieving newly enrolling students in grades 3, 4, and 5 to be screened for cognitive ability in January/February of each school year.

Referrals for gifted testing are accepted throughout the school year. The Northwest Local School District has defined windows for gifted testing in the fall and spring shortly after completion of the NWEA MAP testing windows. Requests for initial (first time) gifted testing are completed within 90 days of referral. All testing requests received in May are honored in the following school year. If you would like to make a referral for gifted testing outside of our universal screening windows, please complete and submit [this form](#) electronically.

Aid Program for Students

Students shall not be deprived of any of the opportunities or benefits offered by the program of instruction of the public schools of Ohio because of the financial difficulties of their family. Therefore, provisions shall be made for assistance to such students for materials for instruction. Disadvantaged children, who are in a state of correctable poor health or in social conditions detrimental to their welfare, will be referred to the proper service agencies. School personnel will cooperate with the various agencies in meeting the needs of these children.

Fees and Assessments

The basic textbook and/or online resources for each course are provided to each student without charge. Students may, however, be required to purchase workbooks and/or consumable supplies for some courses. A complete list of maximum fees by course is approved by the Board of Education in

the spring/summer of each school year for the upcoming school year. Assessed fees cover the cost of the resource(s) plus shipping. Instructional fees are typically assigned to students in late August or early September through the Student Information System. 2025-26 student fees should be paid through the Student Information System's Parent Portal. **ALL current and past due fees must be paid in a timely manner. Students with unpaid fees may not be permitted to participate in school events including but not limited to: Prom and Graduation.** Instructional fee waivers based on economic eligibility are reviewed and approved by our Food Services Department only if written permission is granted by families as part of the enrollment process or during application for free or reduced priced meals.

Parent Right To Know

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The following are Northwest Local School District policies and federal laws for your information. The information has been summarized below; however, if you would like more detailed information, **please review the student handbook, visit the district website at www.nwlsd.org or contact the Northwest Local School District Central Support Offices at 923-1000 ext 3903.**

Professional Qualifications of Teachers

In accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act/ Parent's Right to Know, this is a notification to every parent of a student in a Title I school that you have the right to know about the teaching qualifications of your child's classroom teacher in a school receiving Title I funds. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that any school district receiving Title I funds must notify parents of each student attending any school receiving Title I funds that they may request, and the district will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including at a minimum, the following:

- I. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- II. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- III. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
- IV. Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Information can be accessed on the Ohio Dept. of Education website at www.ode.state.oh.us, or you may contact the Human Resource Office at 923-1000 to schedule an appointment.

Directory Information

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education

Infinite Campus

The Northwest Local School District uses Infinite Campus as an online grade book in grades 2 - 12. Infinite Campus is a classroom management solution that integrates the grade book, attendance, student behavior reporting and parent communication into one comprehensive, web-based system. The Parent Access Web Site is a component of Infinite Campus that enables parents and students to view grades and attendance information. The Parent Access Web Site displays student grade averages, progress details, report cards, attendance, schedules, homework, classroom information, events, and other school information in read-only format. A letter containing step-by-step login procedures as well as username and passwords will be sent home early in the school year. Please take advantage of this great tool to stay abreast of your student's attendance and grades.

All NWLSD teachers are required to maintain a grade book and to follow the established guidelines outlined in the NWLSD Grading and Reporting Handbook. Teachers of students in grades 2--12 are required to maintain their grade book in Infinite Campus. Student grades should be updated by teachers in Infinite Campus at least once per week.

Grading Scale – K-1

The key below is to be used to indicate a student's progress in specific academic skill areas on the report card:

(3) Meeting Standards

The student consistently meets the standards as required for the grade level.

(2) Approaching Standards

The student is approaching the standards as required for the grade level, and is making progress towards meeting standards.

(1) Below Standards

The student is not meeting the standards required for this grade level.

Grading Scale – Grades 2-12

The grading scale is A-F as shown on the report card. The corresponding percentage key adopted by Northwest Local Schools is as follows:

A	=	90-100%
B	=	80-89%
C	=	70-79%
D	=	60 – 69%
F	=	Below 60%

Student Report Cards

Report cards are available for parents approximately 8-10 school days after the end of each academic quarter. A complete list of report card dates for each quarter can be found on the [Curriculum Department webpage](#) under the heading Board Approved Handbooks.

Interim Reports

While parents have access to student grades throughout the school year via the Parent Access Web Site (Infinite Campus), high school students also receive mid-quarter interim reports to apprise of progress in credit-bearing courses. All families are encouraged to contact their student's teacher(s) if they have questions or concerns about student progress.

Assessment Results

Parents have a right to know the level of achievement their child attains on each of the state academic assessments. [ESSA Section 1112 (e)(1)(B)(i). Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code 3313.6029) requires districts to share the results of Ohio's State Tests with parents or guardians no later than June 30 of each year. Results are shared electronically with parents through the Student Information System. For the 2024-2025 school year Ohio State Test results will be available through ProgressBook no later than June 30th. Family Reports for Ohio State Tests are distributed to families when students return in the Fall because they are not received from the state prior to the June 30th deadline. Although the June 30th deadline does not apply to the Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessments (OELPS, OELPA, and Alt-OELPA), the Alternate Assessment for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD), ACT, or SAT, the Northwest Local School District is committed to providing results from these assessments to families in a timely manner.

School and District Report Cards

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) annually issues school and district report cards. The ODEW does not mail the report cards to parents' homes. District and School Local Report Cards are available on the ODEW website www.ode.state.oh.us. The interactive Local Report Cards are typically made available to the public by ODE in September of each school year for the prior school year.

SameGoal

The Northwest Local School District uses SameGoal as its documentation, management and compliance platform for Special Programs in grades PreK - 12. SameGoal is utilized for communicating and collaborating with families regarding evaluation and services for Special Education, Gifted Education (Written Education Plans and Written Acceleration Plans), 504 Plans, and English Language Plans. Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, SameGoal will also be the platform used for sharing the following with families: Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans (RIMPs), Behavior Intervention Plans, Absence Intervention Plans, and Academic Intervention Plans (MTSS). Plans are typically shared electronically with families directly through SameGoal via the primary parent/guardian email address provided to the District. In some cases parents are asked to provide electronic signatures acknowledging or authorizing services through this system. Special arrangements for paper documents and communication, including translation of documents, are available upon request.

Promotion of Students

Promotion indicates that the student is capable and prepared for the level of study to which he/she has been assigned. The placement of a student in any grade level or course should be in the best interest of the student. Students who are placed rather than promoted have not yet learned all grade level standards but are moved to the next grade level based on their elevated age. Retention is viewed as another opportunity for growth at a particular level of study. In gathering facts and information for retention decisions, every effort shall be made to provide the opportunity for continuous communication between the parent/family and the school.

Students may not be promoted to the next grade level if the student has been truant for more than 10 percent of the required attendance days of the current school year and/or has failed two or more of the required curriculum subject areas in the current grade. Students may be promoted if the student's principal and the teachers of any failed subject areas agree that the student is academically prepared to be promoted to the next grade level despite these two factors.

Third Grade Reading Guarantee

Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee ensures that a struggling reader receives the support he or she needs to be able to learn and achieve. All NWLSD students in kindergarten through grade three are screened to determine if they are reading as well as they should be three times per year. For students in grades K-3, reading at grade level is determined by the results of an approved reading diagnostic administered at the beginning of the school year. Under Ohio law, districts and schools must create a

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) for any student in grades K-3 who scores not on track (reading below grade level) on the reading diagnostic assessment. High dosage tutoring opportunities aligned with high quality tutoring best practices and the science of reading are an Ohio requirement for reading improvement and monitoring plans (RIMPs). In addition to other RIMP requirements, high-dosage tutoring must continue beyond grade 4 if a student still is not reading at grade level. A score of proficient on Ohio's State Test for English language arts (700 or higher) is considered reading at grade level. School staff will work closely with parents to develop this plan and monitor student reading progress. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans will be electronically shared with parents through SameGoal.

If a student is retained in the third grade, the school will provide individualized instructional plans to meet the specific needs of each student. Schools may move students to the fourth grade in the middle of the year according to the following procedures:

Mid-Year Promotion for Third (3rd) Grade Students Retained Due to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG)

A retained third grade student will have an additional opportunity to demonstrate readiness for 4th grade. If a child reaches the earns a passing score of 700 on the fall administration of the state reading assessment, he/she will be considered for mid-year promotion to fourth (4th) grade:

After a retained third (3rd) grader has met either of the above mentioned criteria, a conference will be held including the parent(s), current teacher, building administrator(s), and any other necessary school personnel. If all parties are in agreement that it is in the child's best interest, he/she will be promoted to 4th grade as soon as possible.

NWLSD Student Services Department

NWLSD

Code of Conduct Guidelines

NWLSD recognizes its responsibility to provide all students with an environment conducive to the development of their maximum learning potential. The Code of Conduct supports this endeavor by setting forth expectations that will ensure that the school environment is best suited for learner growth. The Code of Conduct is adopted by the Board pursuant to state law.

Any student engaging in the following types of conduct, either specifically or generally, like the type of conduct listed below is subject to suspension, expulsion, emergency removal or permanent exclusion from curricular or extracurricular activities pursuant to State law. This Code of Regulations applies while a student is in the custody or control of the school, on school grounds or closely proximate thereto, while at a school-sponsored function or activity or on school-owned or provided transportation vehicles. In addition, the Code of Regulations governs a student's conduct at all times, on or off school property and in the virtual environment, unless specifically limited to school property as stated in a regulation, when such student conduct is reasonably related to the health and safety of other students and/or school employees, or such conduct would unreasonably interrupt the educational processes of the District.

The NWLSD Progressive Discipline Code is divided into four levels. Each level represents progressively more serious misbehavior and consequences. The level of discipline shall be based on the severity of the misbehavior and the number of infractions involved with each referral. **The Administration reserves the right to skip levels of discipline depending upon the violation.** Although it may be necessary, school removal is used as a last resort.

The law requires that students are provided with a written notice of intent to suspend prior to being suspended. State law also requires that students and parents are provided with a written notice of intent to expel.

The written notice of intent to suspend shall be given to the student at an informal hearing. The notice of intent to expel shall be sent to the student and the parents and the students and parents will be provided an opportunity for an informal hearing prior to a decision to expel.

A student or the parents may appeal any decision of the District administration to suspend a student from school to the Superintendent/designee. A student or parent must request a **suspension appeal** in writing within **10 days** after the discipline measure takes effect. A student or the parents may appeal an expulsion from school to the Board/designee. A student or parent must request an **expulsion appeal** in writing within 14 days after the discipline measure takes effect. Appeal paperwork is located in each school office as well as the Administrative Offices. The appeal process includes an additional informal meeting with a hearing officer. The student and parents may be represented in all appeal hearings but notice to the NWLSD Student Services Offices is requested if bringing legal representation to reduce the chances of a possible rescheduling of the hearing. Pursuant to State law, a student or parents may further appeal an expulsion or suspension to the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas.

It is the policy of the Board that students shall not be permitted to return to school pending any appeal process with the administration or the court. The District will make every effort to promptly hear all appeals to minimize a student's absence from school. Should the Board, the Superintendent, or their designees reverse or modify a discipline decision and permit a student to return to school, such student shall be permitted ample time to make up all assignments and work missed as a result of his/her absence.

NWLSD
Code Of Conduct
2025-2026

Expectation: Students are expected to be an active part of a safe and respectful environment at all times and to not interfere with the learning of others or the orderly process of the school building.

The types of conduct prohibited by the Northwest Local School District Code of Conduct are as follows:

Level I Discipline:

Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process. Most Level I infractions are expected to be taken care of through student compliance with staff responses. If a student fails to follow basic staff directives in the classroom, they will be referred to the office for further intervention.

Staff Interventions:

- Verbal Warning using Restorative Practices and Affective Language
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- PBIS Classroom Consequence
- Teacher Assigned AM or PM Detention
- Use of Temporary Alternative Setting (R&R, Zone, Reset Rooms)
- Classroom-Based Recess Detention
- Classroom-Based Lunch Detention
- Office/Bus Referral for Repeated Violations

Administrative Interventions:

- Restorative Conference With Student
- Counselor Mediation
- Administrative Warning
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- Demerit
- Recess Detention
- Lunch Detention
- Detention
- Use of Temporary Alternative Learning Placement (ALP)

Code	Description
101	Misbehavior which disrupts or interferes with any school activity
102	Disrespect to a student
103	Disregard of reasonable directions or commands by school authorities
104	Tardy to Class
105	Excessive amount of time out of class on hall pass
106	Excessive tardies to class

107	Excessive tardies to school
108	Failure to abide by dress and appearance codes as set forth by administration and the Board of Education.
109	Non-approved use of personal communication device–See PCD Guidelines below
110	Non-approved use of technology other than personal communication device
111	Failure to maintain bus stop safety procedures as established by the NWLSD Bus Guidelines and Chapter 3301-83 of the Ohio Administrative Code.
112	Failure to maintain bus ride safety procedures as established by the NWLSD Bus Guidelines and Chapter 3301-83 of the Ohio Administrative Code

Level II Discipline:

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that typically require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated, but unrelated, acts of minor misconduct and misbehavior directed against persons or property but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety or well-being of others. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided, as school removal is used as a last resort. Due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. These may include such procedures as the procedural safeguards provided by the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Staff Interventions:

- Verbal Warning using Restorative Practices and Affective Language
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- PBIS Classroom Consequence
- Teacher Assigned AM or PM Detention
- Use of Temporary Alternative Setting (R&R, Zone, Reset Rooms)
- Office/Bus Referral for Repeated Violations

Administrative Interventions:

- Conference With Student
- Administrative Warning
- Parent/Guardian Contact
- Demerit
- Detention
- Alternative Learning Placement (ALP)
- Emergency Removal
- Support from District Behavior Specialist
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Bus Suspension
- Removal of privilege to attend or participate in extracurricular activities and events
- Office Time-Out

Code	Description
201	Repeated or escalated misbehavior which disrupts or interferes with any school activity
202	Repeated or escalated disrespect to a student

203	Disrespect to school staff
204	Repeated or escalated disregard of reasonable directions or commands by school authorities
205	Use of cursing (verbal or written) language or use of obscene gestures
206	Repeated non-approved use of personal communication device or disruption of the educational process through the use of PCD–See PCD Guidelines below
207	Repeated non-approved use of technology or disruption of the educational process through the non-approved use of technology other than personal communication device
208	Repeated or escalated failure to maintain bus stop safety procedure as established by the NWLSD Bus Guidelines and Chapter 3301-83 of the Ohio Administrative Code
209	Repeated or escalated failure to maintain bus ride safety procedures as established by the NWLSD Bus Guidelines and Chapter 3301-83 of the Ohio Administrative Code
210	Minor theft or possession of lower-valued stolen property
211	Skipping class
212	Disobedience of driving regulations
213	Presence in areas during school hours or outside school hours where a student has no legitimate business without permission of school staff
214	Leaving the classroom without permission
215	Engaging in activities that may cause fear or panic in an individual or group
216	Refusing to receive or serve properly administered discipline (Ex: Detention, ALP)
217	Forgery of school-related documents
218	Cheating or plagiarizing
219	Distribution of pamphlets, leaflets, buttons, insignia, etc, without the permission of proper school authorities or the placing of signs and slogans on school property or at school events without the permission of the proper authorities
220	Non-confrontational physical contact with a student that leads to a disruption of the school environment
221	(PreK-3rd Grade) Disrespect to student or inappropriate behavior that involves physical contact with another student
222	(PreK-3rd Grade) Any behavior that puts the safety of students and staff at risk
223	(6th-8th Grade) Repeated behavioral infractions resulting in behavior card threshold being reached
224	Repeated violations of the 100 Codes.

Level III Discipline:

Level III discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehavior that is similar in nature, serious disruptions of the school environment, threats to health, safety, or property, and other acts of serious misconduct. These offenses must be reported to the principal. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being imposed. Due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. These may include such procedures as the procedural safeguards provided by the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Staff Interventions:

- Office Referral
- Notify Administration Immediately

Administrative Interventions*:

- Use of Behavior Intervention Process
- Detention
- Long-Term Loss of Technology Privileges
- No Contact Order Between Students
- Referral to Counselor or Counseling/Therapy Services
- Alternative Learning Placement (ALP)
- Emergency Removal
- Removal of privilege to attend or participate in extracurricular activities and events
- Support from District Behavior Specialist
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Multiple Day Out-of-School Suspension

* For students in grades PreK-3rd grade, different administrative interventions may apply for Level III discipline offenses based on Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.68.

Code	Description
301	Failure to report the actions or plans of another person to staff where these actions or plans of another person, if carried out, could or did result in harm to another person or persons or damage property, when the student has information about such actions or plans.
302	Disrespect to student by using language that is purposely offensive to a student's or staff's race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (Policy 3362 & 5517)
303	Repeated or highly escalated disregard of reasonable directions or commands by school authorities resulting in disruption of the learning environment
304	Engaging in repeated or escalated activities that may cause fear or panic in an individual or group.
305	Disrespect to student or inappropriate behavior that involves physical contact with another student
306	Fighting
307	Engaging in activities to promote conflict between students
308	Repeated or highly escalated disrespect to staff

309	Falsifying of information given to school authorities or interfering with the administrative investigation
310	Willfully aiding another person to violate school regulations and/or interfering with school investigation.
311	Theft or possession of stolen property
312	Leaving school property without permission of proper school authority.
313	Damage or destruction of school property on or off of school premises.
314	Damage or destruction of private property.
315	On school property or participation in school activities (on campus or off campus) while on emergency removal, suspension or expulsion without permission.
316	Displaying excessive affection, inappropriate touching or other inappropriate behavior.
317	Possession of obscene, pornographic or libelous material.
318	Removal from assigned alternative learning placement (ALP, ISS, RAS)
319	Misuse of chemical substances.
322	Inappropriate use of computers and other technologies. Inappropriate use includes: vandalism, theft, or misuse of the hardware, unauthorized access to files not belonging to the student, tampering with security software or network privileges; logging onto the network with a fraudulent ID or password; using the facilities without proper supervision, installation of software on a computer or network, or unauthorized use, copying, or downloading of programs, files and/or pictures.
323	Audio recording, video recording, or photographing and/or sharing of the recording of any conflict.
324	Audio recording, video recording, or photographing of any student or staff member without the explicit knowledge and permission of the student, staff member, and the school administration.
325	Demonstrations by individuals or groups causing disruption to the school program.
326	Gambling.
327	Violation of no contact order between students.
328	Any other activity by a student which the student knows or should know will disrupt the academic process or a curricular or extracurricular activity while on school premises or while in the control or custody of the school district regardless of whether on or off of school premises, or at a school-related activity regardless of location.
329	Repeated violations of 200 infractions.

Level IV Discipline:

Level IV discipline offenses are the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the administration. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being

imposed. Due process procedures required by federal and state law will be followed. These may include such procedures as the procedural safeguards provided by the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Staff Interventions:

- Office Referral
- Notify Administration Immediately

Administrative Interventions*:

- Support from District Behavior Specialist
- Referral to Counselor or Counseling/Therapy Services
- No Contact Order Between Students
- Multiple Day Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)
- Recommendation for Expulsion
- Removal of privilege to attend or participate in extracurricular activities and events
- First-Time Drug Offense Intervention Procedures

* For students in grades PreK-3rd grade, different administrative interventions may apply for Level III discipline offenses based on Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.68.

Principals may suspend a student for up to ten days. If a student is recommended for expulsion, the NWLSD Student Services Office will arrange for a hearing with the Superintendent or an established designee to determine if the situation requires further discipline beyond the ten days of suspension.

Code	Description
401	Committing or promoting any act or expression of a threatening nature directed to any individual or group of teachers, other staff members, students, or other groups, including but not limited to actions such as making bomb threats, creating “kill lists,” posting threats on social media, etc.
402	Harassment, intimidation or bullying of a student, students, or school personnel on/off school grounds For the purposes of this policy, the term repeated “harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act toward a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior: (1) causes mental or physical harm to the other student; and (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student.
403	Engaging in escalated activities that may cause fear or panic in an individual or group.
404	Oral, written or social media threats to harm individuals, groups, or school community.
405	Disrespect to staff or an inappropriate behavior that involves physical contact with staff on the part of the individual.
406	Disregard of staff direction attempting to de-escalate confrontation or attempting to continue conflict despite staff intervention.
407	Assault on school employee or other person.
408	Assault on student.
409	Extortion of a student or school personnel.

410	Theft or possession of school property or school employee property.
411	Engaging in any sexual acts.
412	Indecent exposure.
413	Using or possessing any substance containing nicotine or tobacco, including, but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, a pipe, rolling papers, a clove cigarette, e-cigarettes, vapes, and chewing tobacco, or paraphernalia such as matches or lighters.
414	Distributing any substance containing nicotine or tobacco, including, but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, a pipe, rolling papers, a clove cigarette, e-cigarettes, vapes, and chewing tobacco, or paraphernalia such as matches or lighters.
415	Using, buying, possessing, or being under the influence of any controlled substance (drugs, narcotics, intoxicants, THC, marijuana, prescription drugs, etc.) or inhalant or any counterfeit controlled substance (any substance that is made to look like a controlled substance, or is represented to be a controlled substance, or that the student believes is a controlled substance).
416	Sale or distribution of any controlled substance or paraphernalia (drugs, narcotics, intoxicant, THC, marijuana, prescription drugs, etc.) or any counterfeit controlled substance (any substance that is made to look like a controlled substance, or is represented to be a controlled substance, or that the student believes is a controlled substance).
417	Using, buying, possessing, selling, or distributing of any substance prohibited by school administration including but not limited to over-the-counter medications.
418	Using, buying, possessing, or being under the influence of an intoxicant of any kind including but not limited to alcohol or alcohol paraphernalia
419	Sale or distribution of an intoxicant of any kind including but not limited to alcohol or alcohol paraphernalia.
420	The taking, disseminating, transferring or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise. The activity may also constitute a crime under state and/or federal law which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and lifetime inclusion on sexual offender registries.
421	Violation of the district's sexual harassment policy. See Harassment BOE Policy
422	Turning in false fire, tornado, bomb, or disaster alarms. (As provided in Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 (A) (5), a student may be expelled for a period of up to one year for making a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the same time of the threat. The period of expulsion shall extend as necessary into the next school year.)
423	Arson or any other improper use of fire.
424	Possession and/or discharge, sale or distribution of any explosive substance or incendiary device.
425	Possession, conveyance or use of a firearm. Firearms are identified in Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code. (As provided in Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 and 3313.661 violations of the Code of

	Conduct involving firearms are subject to expulsion from school for one year).
426	Sale or distribution of a firearm. Firearms are identified in Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code. (As provided in Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 and 3313.661 violations of the Code of Conduct involving firearms are subject to expulsion from school for one year).
427	Possession, conveyance or use of any instrument, device or object which is designed to look like a firearm including but not limited to a toy gun.
428	Sale or distribution of any instrument, device or object which is designed to look like a firearm including but not limited to a toy gun.
429	Possession, conveyance or use of any instrument, device or object which is designed to look like any other type of weapon including but not limited to a knife.
430	Sale or distribution of any instrument, device or object which is designed to look like any other type of weapon including but not limited to a knife.
431	Commission by a student of any crime or infraction in violation of the Criminal Code, Traffic Code or Juvenile Code of the State of Ohio or, when applicable, of the State in which the crime or infraction was committed. This provision shall apply to any student while in the control or custody of the school district regardless of whether the act occurred on or off of school premises, or at a school-related activity regardless of location.
432	Any type of prohibited activity listed herein engaged in by a student on school premises, on a school bus, or while in the control or custody of the school district regardless of whether on or off of school premises or at a school-related activity regardless of location, shall be reason for expulsion, suspension or removal from school
433	Violation of code of conduct while amidst a probationary period known as days held in abeyance
434	Repeated 300 code infractions
435	Repeated 400 code infractions

The administration reserves the right to skip levels of discipline depending on the number of infractions for each referral and the severity of the violation.

NWLSD Dress Code

1. Clothing and accessories that could be interpreted as promoting hate or communicating a negative, profane, or vulgar message are not permitted. Additionally, jewelry and accessories that pose a safety concern for the student or others are not acceptable.
2. Undergarments should not be visible. Tops that expose the midriff or chest, tank tops, mesh tops, and shirts with no sleeves are not acceptable. Pants, shorts and skirts must be worn at the waist level.
3. No head coverings (hats, bandanas, hoods, etc.), or gloves should be worn during the school day.
4. No oversized coats are permitted during the school day.
5. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should reach to a length of mid-thigh or lower and not be overly revealing.
6. Footwear should be safe for the learning environment.

***Exceptions to these dress code items for religious reasons should be brought to administration at the beginning of the school year by parents and will require written documentation.

Face Covering Guidelines for Students

All students must follow district guidelines/policies regarding face coverings at all times. Any face coverings worn must serve a religious or medical purpose not just worn as outerwear. Please communicate with your student's building administration team for specific guidelines/policies.

NWLSD Personal Communication Device Usage Guidelines

Personal Communication Device use includes but is not limited to using a personal device (ex. phone, smartwatch, or tablet) and/or accessories (ex. headphones, earbuds, or airpods) to place or receive audio or video calls, text messaging, blogging and microblogging, e-mailing, using video or camera features, playing games, and accessing sites or services on the internet including but not limited to social media sites and applications.

Elementary Schools: Personal communication devices and/or accessories for personal communication devices must be stored with the students' other belongings during the school day and may not be accessed without administrative approval. Bluetooth devices that connect to other personal communication devices are not permitted in school (headphones, earbuds, etc).

Secondary Schools: Personal communication devices and/or accessories for personal communication devices must be stored in the appropriate location designated by the school during the school day and may not be accessed without administrative approval. Bluetooth devices that connect to other personal communication devices are not permitted in school (headphones, earbuds, etc).

Continued violation of the NWLSD Personal Communication Device Usage Guidelines will result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including school removal and may also result in individualized personal communication device plans which restrict access to devices during the school day.

Bus Guidelines

The safety of our students is paramount for the NWLSD. Students that ride school buses must conduct themselves with safety in mind at all times. Chapter 3301-83 of the Ohio Administrative Code contains operation and safety rules regulating pupil transportation, and governs all pupil transportation in Ohio. Even beyond the Ohio Administrative Code, while on a school bus, the NWLSD CODE OF CONDUCT applies to student conduct. Failure to comply with the student code of conduct, Ohio Administrative Code, or established procedures below may result in school disciplinary action and/or removal from bus riding privileges.

Bus Stop Safety Procedures: Students are expected to follow bus stop safety procedures at all times while waiting for, entering, or exiting the bus. (ORC 3301-83-13(B)(6))

- Students must be at the bus stop (in their place of safety) at least FIVE (5) minutes before the students scheduled stop time; the bus must run on schedule and cannot wait for those who are late.
- Students must be in their place of safety at the bus stop while waiting for the bus to arrive
- Students must never stand in, or play on, the roadway while waiting for the bus.
- Prior to boarding the bus, students must keep a safe distance from the bus while it is in motion and remain still.
- Students must not attempt to get on or off the bus while it is in motion.
- Students must enter the bus without crowding or disturbing others, and occupy their seat immediately.
- Students must keep out of the driver's seat.
- Students must not leave the bus without the driver's consent.

- In approaching the bus or a bus stop along the roadway, students must walk on the left side of the road facing traffic. Students should be sure that the road is clear of all traffic or that all traffic has stopped before crossing.
- Upon leaving the bus, students must immediately report to their place of safety by walking to the front of the bus and stop before crossing. Students must make sure that the road is either clear of all traffic or that all traffic has come to a complete stop before crossing **AND WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL TO CROSS FROM THE DRIVER.**
- All students must ride the bus to which they are assigned. If there is an emergency that requires a student to ride another bus, a note signed by the parent and school leader will be given to the bus driver before the student will be allowed to board the bus.
- Students must get on and off the bus at their assigned board approved bus stop.

the Danger Zone around a school bus is the area 10 feet around the bus. The two most dangerous areas are the front of the bus and the right rear tire area. The driver is not able to see these areas!!! Stay out of these areas.

Parents PLEASE do not call your child to your location until the bus has departed.

Bus Ride Safety Procedures: Students are expected to maintain a safe, conducive, and respectful bus environment. Student behavior on the bus should be the same as in the classroom. The drivers' primary responsibility is to operate the school bus on Ohio roadways in a safe manner (ORC 3301-83-08).

- Sitting in a seat on the bus. Each student shall sit in a position which will provide maximum protection by the seat back. ORC 3301-83-18). Students are asked to sit in the following manner: back to back, bottom to bottom, and feet to floor. Any other manner is unacceptable and unsafe. Backpacks and other items are to be kept in their laps. Students may not lay on seats or place feet on seats.
- Students must maintain a quiet bus environment. Students are permitted to talk quietly on the bus, and classroom conduct is to be observed while on the bus.
- Students are not permitted to open the bus window without permission from the driver or
- Students are not permitted to extend their head or arms out of the window.
- Students are not permitted to call out to passers-by.
- Students must help to keep the bus clean, sanitary and orderly. They must not damage or abuse the equipment.
- Students are not permitted to throw articles of any kind out of or around the bus.
- Students are not permitted to eat or drink while on the bus.
- All food items must be kept in a lunch box, bag, closed container or backpack.
- Students must remain in their seat and keep the aisle clear.
- Students must stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Students are not permitted to tamper with emergency doors, controls, or windows.
- Large items such as band instruments, shop projects, sports equipment, skateboards and other school projects shall not be permitted on the bus if they interfere with the driver or other passengers. The aisle, exits, and driver's vision shall not be blocked.

Parents/guardians are not permitted to enter the bus.

Any concerns must be addressed with the building administrator and/or the transportation administrator.

Other Policies & Information

Hazing and Bullying (Harassment, Intimidation and Dating Violence)

Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Throughout this policy the term bullying is used in place of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once. The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. The behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This behavior is prohibited on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

The District includes, within the health curriculum, age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 to 12. This instruction includes recognizing warning signs of dating violence and the characteristics of healthy relationships.

Prohibited activities of any type, including those activities engaged in via computer and/or electronic communications devices, are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times. No administrator, teacher or other employee of the District shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing and/or bullying activities. No students, including leaders of student organizations, are permitted to plan, encourage or engage in any hazing and/or bullying.

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying and/or dating violence. If any of the prohibited behaviors are planned or discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering District employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all such activities immediately. All hazing, bullying and/or dating violence incidents are reported immediately to the Superintendent/designee and appropriate discipline is administered.

District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State and Federal law.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance or assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual.

Administrative Response

The building principal/designee shall promptly investigate all reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying. All matters involving such complaints should remain confidential to the extent permitted by law.

1. The principal/designee will confer with the student, parent or guardian making the report in order to obtain a clear understanding of the alleged facts. If not already completed, the principal/designee will complete the harassment, intimidation or bullying complaint form. A copy of the complaint form is attached in the back of this handbook.
2. The principal/designee will meet with all witnesses identified by the person(s) making the report of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Witnesses will be asked to make a statement both orally and in writing regarding the alleged facts that form the basis of the complaint.
3. The principal/designee will meet with the student(s) accused of harassment, intimidation or bullying to obtain a response to the complaint both orally and in writing.
4. Following the completion of the investigation, any student(s) found to have violated this policy will be subject to any of the disciplinary actions described in the Student Code of Conduct.
5. Retaliation against any student who makes a complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying, or any student who becomes involved in the investigation of such complaint, is

strictly prohibited, and may result in discipline irrespective of the merits of the initial complaint.

6. The building principal/designee shall have the authority to involve local law enforcement if an individual believes danger is imminent due to the alleged harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Preventative Measures

To the extent that state or federal funds are appropriated for these purposes, the Board will provide training, workshops or courses on this policy to school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students.

Teachers, guidance counselors, coaches and building administration will educate students about this policy through class discussion, counseling and reinforcement of appropriate student behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student-on-student misbehavior, even if such conduct does not yet meet the frequency, severity or pervasiveness to constitute harassment, intimidation, or bullying that is prohibited by this policy.

If the building principal/designee finds that a student has been the victim of harassment, intimidation or bullying, in addition to the imposition of disciplinary action against the student-offender, the following strategies may be implemented to protect the victim from additional harassment, intimidation or bullying:

1. Staff may be instructed to observe and record the behavior of the student-offender in less-supervised settings such as the cafeteria, playground and restrooms. If the student-offender's misbehavior persists, administration may assign the student-offender to recess, lunch or class-release times different from those of the student-victim.
2. The offending student and parent(s) or guardian(s) may be requested to participate in a conference with building administration and staff in an attempt to enlist the parent(s) or guardian(s) to work cooperatively with the school to stop the harassment, intimidation or bullying.
3. In consultation with the student-victim and parent(s) or guardian(s), examine the student's daily schedule to identify those activities where harassment, intimidation or bullying most often occur. Make arrangements to increase supervision or adjust the student's schedule to reduce or eliminate under-supervised activities.
4. Change classroom layout or rearrange seating to eliminate "blind spots" where future acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may occur.

The Board designates the Director of Student Services and Director of Special Education to serve as the District's "Compliance Officers" (also known as "Civil Rights Coordinators") and may be contacted by email at studentservices@nwlsd.org or phone at (513) 923-1000 extension 3907.

Threats or Intimidation

Threats of violence or intimidation toward another student are serious violations of the student code of conduct and will result in appropriate discipline. As provided in Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 (A) (5) a student may be expelled for a period of up to one-year for making a bomb threat to a school building or to any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat. The period of expulsion shall extend as necessary into the next school year.

Alternative Learning Placement (ALP)

The purpose of ALP is to provide targeted behavior supports to students who have been identified through the Student Support Process as needing increasingly more intense behavior interventions. ALP services allow for these more intensive behavior interventions to be put in place while allowing learning to continue.

Alternate School Assignment (ASA)

Subject to the discretion of a building administrator, a student violating school rules may incur an alternate school assignment not to exceed three consecutive days. A student serving an alternate school assignment shall remain in a room within the school building separated from the regular classes and school activities. The student shall complete the class assignments provided by the student's regular teachers under the supervision of a staff member.

The student will receive a copy of the alternate school assignment rules at the beginning of the school day. A student violating these rules may incur additional disciplinary action. While serving an alternate school assignment, the student shall not participate in extracurricular activities.

The following procedures apply to students who are serving an alternate school assignment:

1. The student will be required to complete all class assignments and tests provided while in the alternate school assignment. However, it may not be feasible or possible to make up some tests.
2. If a make-up test is not required, no grade entry will be made nor will a penalty be assessed.
3. If a make-up test is required, the student will have the equivalent number of days served in the alternate school assignment to make up tests unless the time is extended by the teacher or a building administrator. The student may receive a zero for all tests not made up.
4. The student shall turn in long-range assignments, such as science projects and book reports, to the alternate school assignment staff member on the day they are due for all students.
5. The student must abide by the rules and procedures for alternate school assignment or be subject to more serious disciplinary action.

Detention of Students

After school detention may be used by teachers and principals. Parents must be notified by phone or in writing at least one day in advance, unless it is mutually agreed that the student will remain on the day the detention is issued. When a student receives a detention, he/she forfeits his/her right to bus transportation. A student is not to be excused from detention to participate in athletic events or extracurricular activities.

Suspension, Expulsion & Removal of Students

This policy governs suspension, expulsion or emergency removal of a student from school, or the suspension or removal of a student from a team or other extracurricular activity.

1. Suspension

Whenever the Superintendent/designee or building principal finds it necessary to suspend a pupil from school for not more than 10 school days, the following procedure shall be followed prior to the suspension of said pupil:

- A. The pupil will be given written notice of said administrator's intention to suspend said student and the written notice will contain reasons for the intended suspension.
- B. The pupil will be given an opportunity for an informal hearing before the principal, assistant principal, Superintendent/designee to challenge the reasons for the intended suspension or explain the reason for the action.
- C. If the pupil is suspended after the hearing, the administrator shall notify the pupil's parent, guardian or custodian and the Treasurer of the Board within 24 hours. The notice shall include:
 - 1) the reason(s) for suspension.
 - 2) the right of the pupil, parent, guardian or custodian to appeal said suspension to the Board of Education's designee and
 - 3) the right to be represented at the hearings before the Board's designee.

D. Appeal Procedure: Should a student or a student's parent(s) choose to appeal the suspension, he/she must do so within 10 calendar days of the notice of suspension. The appeal shall be in writing and made to the Student Services. The Student Services department will schedule the meeting with the Board Appointed Hearing Officer and notify the family. All witnesses are sworn and a recording is kept of the hearing. The decision of the Hearing Officer will be relayed after the hearing is complete. The student may be excluded from school during the appeal process.

E. Appeal to Court: Under State law, appeal of the Board's or its designee's decision may be made to the Court of Common Pleas.

2. Expulsion

Whenever a Superintendent intends to expel a pupil from school, the following steps must be taken prior to the expulsion:

- A. A written notice of intention to expel must be given to the pupil and the parent, guardian or custodian.
- B. Said notice to the pupil and the parent, guardian or custodian must include the following:
 - 1) The reason(s) for the intended expulsion.
 - 2) Notification of the opportunity of the pupil, parent, guardian or custodian or their representative to appear before the Superintendent or administrative designee, to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion.
 - 3) Notification of the time and place to appear before the Superintendent or administrative designee, said time to be not earlier than three nor more than five days after the notice is given, unless an external circumstance delays the timeline or unless an extension is granted by the administrator at the request of the pupil, parent, guardian or custodian, or their representative. If an extension is granted after giving the original notice, the administrator shall notify the pupil, parent, guardian, custodian or representative of the new time and place for the hearing.
- C. The pupil and the parent, guardian or custodian and their representative must be given an opportunity to appear before the Superintendent or administrative designee, to challenge the reasons for the intended expulsion, or to explain the pupil's actions.
- D. If the pupil is expelled after the hearing, the administrator will notify the pupil's parent, guardian or custodian and the Treasurer of the Board within 24 hours. This notice shall include:
 - 1) The reason(s) for the expulsion;
 - 2) The right of the pupil, parent, guardian or custodian to appeal said expulsion to the Board/designated hearing officer;
 - 3) The right to be represented at the appeal before the Board-designated hearing officer. Any student who is expelled from school for more than 20 days or into the following semester or school year is referred to an agency which works towards improving the student's attitudes and behavior. The Superintendent provides the student and his/her parent(s) with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the public and private agencies providing such services.
- E. Appeal to the Board: A student or a student's parent(s) may appeal the expulsion by the Superintendent to the Board/designated hearing officer. The expulsion appeal must be within 14 calendar days after the notice of intent to expel was provided to the student, parent, guardian or custodian. The appeal request shall be in writing to the Director of Student Services. The student may be represented in all such appeal proceedings and is granted a hearing before the Board or its designee. All witnesses are sworn and a record is kept of the hearing. The student may be excluded from school during the appeal process.
- F. Appeal to the Court: Under State law, the decision of the Board may be further appealed to the Court of Common Pleas.

Expulsion Hearing Results

The superintendent may expel a pupil from school for a period not to exceed 80 school days. Students who violate the Gun Free Schools policy or make a bomb threat to a school building or any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat (ORC 3313.66 A 5) will be subject to expulsion from school for one calendar year. If at the time an expulsion is imposed, the number of school days remaining in the school year is less than the number of days of expulsion that is given, the superintendent may apply any remaining part or all of the period of the expulsion to the following school year.

If the student is expelled for ten (10) days or less during a quarter, the student is eligible for credit for the courses passed. Make-up privileges as outlined in these procedures will apply to expulsions of ten (10) days or less during a quarter.

When the student is expelled for more than ten (10) days during a quarter, the student may not be eligible to make up work for that term.

When a student is expelled for more than 20 days, or for any period of time if the expulsion will extend into the following semester or school year, the school district will provide the student and his or her parent, guardian or custodian information about services or programs offered by public and private agencies to work toward improving those aspects of the pupil's attitude and behavior which contributed to the incident that gave rise to the pupil's expulsion.

While on expulsion, the student may not attend school or school related functions, including after-school activities. The policy applies to all school buildings, grounds and all school functions within the Northwest Local School District.

3. Emergency Removal

Whenever a pupil's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process within the classroom or elsewhere on the school premises, school personnel may take the following actions:

- A. The Superintendent, principal, or assistant principal may remove the pupil from the school premises.
- B. A teacher may remove the pupil from any activity under the teacher's supervision.
- C. These actions may be taken without written notice or informal hearing to the pupil.
- D. If the pupil is removed by a teacher under this section, the teacher shall submit the reason(s) for said removal in writing to the principal.
- E. If a pupil is removed by a teacher under this section for more than 24 hours, written notice of a hearing and the reasons for removal shall be given to the pupil as soon as practicable prior to the hearing and said hearing will be held within 72 hours from the time of the initial removal.
- F. The hearing will be held in accordance with the requirements under the rules for suspension from school unless expulsion is probable, in which case the hearing shall be held in accordance with the rules for expulsion from school. If suspension or removal from a team or an activity is probable, the hearing will be conducted under the rules for suspension or removal from a team or activity.
- G. The party ordering, causing, or requesting the removal of the pupil on an emergency basis shall be present at the hearing.
- H. In the case of removal under emergency removal (b), if a pupil is reinstated to the activity under the teacher's supervision prior to a hearing, the teacher shall, upon request, be given the reasons for such reinstatement in writing.
- I. None of the notice or hearing requirements as set forth in suspension, expulsion or denying the privilege of participation in extracurricular activities shall be necessary where a pupil is removed from activities for a period less than 24 hours and is not subject to suspension from school and/or expulsion from school and/or suspension or removal from a team or activity.

Damage to School Property

It is the responsibility of the school district to protect its property from damage and destruction. A student may be required to pay for school property damaged or destroyed as a result of negligence. The parents or guardians of students who intentionally damage or destroy school property may be held responsible for restitution in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code. As a reminder, Chromebooks that students use are considered the property of the school district. The administration will pursue restitution in all acts of vandalism or intentional damages or destruction of school property.

Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown Crisis Drills

Periodically, the school reviews and practices procedures in the event of an emergency. During these drills, students follow the instructions of their teachers. Directions for leaving the building and shelter locations are posted in each room.

Safe School Hotline

The SaferOh tip line will accept both calls and texts 24 hours a day regarding bullying, potential suicide risks, violence, or other school safety issues. This information is anonymous and reported directly to the designated administrator at your school. This tip line allows students and adults to anonymously share information with school officials and law enforcement about threats to student safety – whether that involves a threatened mass incident or harm to a single student. Call or Text to **844-SaferOh (844-723-3764)**

Self-Harm Concerns

- It is critical for the school counselors to know if your student is experiencing thoughts around self-harm.
- Your school counselor will help you navigate the supports available and connect you to resources.
- Both high schools and all middle schools have a student Hope Squad. Reach out to the counseling center for more details.
- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#): Call or text 988 to talk with a crisis counselor 24/7.
- [Crisis Text Line](#): Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor 24/7.
- You should also consider contacting Cincinnati Children's Hospital at (513) 636-4200 or the Psychiatric Intake Response Center (PIRC) at 513-636-4124.
- You should also consider contacting Best Point Urgent Care (3:00pm - 10:00pm) at 513-527-3040.

Threats or Other Concerns for Safety

- It is important that we work together as a community to ensure safety. The “[See Something, Say Something Form](#)” is a place where information about potential threats can be shared. Threats may include reason to suspect harm to self or others. There will be a follow up on each concern.

Search and Seizure

The Board recognizes that the privacy of students and their belongings may not be violated by an unreasonable search and seizure, and directs that no student be searched without reasonable suspicion or in an unreasonable manner. Random locker searches may be conducted without reasonable suspicion of a violation of the law or Board policy.

School authorities are charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the safety and well-being of the students in their care. In the discharge of that responsibility, school authorities may search a student's person or property, including, but not limited to: book bags, purses, wallets, clothing and motor vehicles. When appropriate, the building principal shall seek the freely offered consent of the student to the inspection. However, if a student refuses to consent, a search may still be conducted when the

administrator has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will discover evidence that the student has violated or is violating either a law or a school rule. Searches shall employ reasonable measures that are not excessively intrusive considering the age and gender of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction. Whenever possible, a search will be conducted by the building administrator in the presence of the student and a staff member other than the building administrator.

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

This authorization to search shall apply to all situations in which the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board — including all curricular and extracurricular activities and events, regardless of location.

The Board acknowledges the need for in-school storage of student possessions and shall provide storage places, including desks and lockers, for that purpose. Such spaces remain the property of the Board and, in accordance with law, may be subject to random searches. Where locks are provided for such places, students may lock them against incursion by other students, but in no such places shall students have an expectation of privacy as to prevent examination by a school official. This policy will be posted in every building near in-school storage areas.

The Board reserves the power to search any locker or lockers in emergency situations that immediately threaten the health or safety of any person, or threaten to damage or destroy any property under the control of the Board, or when such an emergency appears to exist. Such searches are allowed whenever it is reasonably believed to be necessary to avert a threat or apparent threat.

The Board also authorizes the use of canines trained in detecting the presence of illegal materials. This means of detection shall be used only to determine the possible presence of illegal materials in locker areas, parking areas and other places on school property where such materials could be concealed. Canine detection must be conducted in collaboration with law enforcement authorities and is not to be used to search individual students unless a warrant has been obtained.

General use of canine detection does not constitute a search, and may be employed at any time. A subsequent search is proper when a canine has indicated the presence of illegal materials, even if a reasonable suspicion regarding that particular area containing illegal materials did not exist before the canine detection.

Sexual Harassment Involving Students

All persons associated with the District, including, but not limited to, the Board, the administration, the staff and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or nonverbal, occurring inside or outside of District buildings, on other District-owned property or at school-sponsored social functions/activities, is illegal and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community is in violation of this policy.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development;
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual or

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment-type conduct may include, but are not limited to, unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment or continued employment; repeated sexual jokes, flirtations, advances or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal commentary relating to an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; coerced sexual activities; any unwanted physical contact; sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures; or displays in the workplace of sexually suggestive or obscene objects or pictures. Whether any act or comment constitutes sexual harassment-type conduct is often dependent on the individual recipient.

The Board directs the Superintendent to appoint one or more administrators who are vested with the authority and responsibility for investigating all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedures set forth in the accompanying procedure and staff and student handbooks.

Sexual harassment matters, including the identity of both the charging party and the accused, are kept confidential to the extent possible. Although discipline may be imposed against the accused upon a finding of guilt, retaliation is prohibited.

The Board has developed complaint procedures that are made available to every member of the school community. The Board has also identified disciplinary penalties that could be imposed on the offenders.

- Occurrences involving students as offenders will be handled in the same manner as other disciplinary situations. These procedures will include full due process protections, and could result in suspension, expulsion, referral to law enforcement agencies and/or recommendations for counseling.

- Occurrences involving employees as offenders toward students will be investigated by the building principal. If further investigation is warranted, the compliance officers will investigate. The information obtained from the investigations will be reported to the Superintendent for proper disposition.

- Occurrences involving members of the general public as offenders toward students will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

Retaliation

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

Interviewing Students

When law enforcement officers, agency representatives, or other officials request to question a student regarding a matter that is not school-related, school officials will make reasonable efforts to notify parents of the official's request to question their child. However, since it is unlawful to impede a police investigation, if after reasonable efforts to notify parents have failed, police officials will be allowed to question the child in the presence of an administrator. In such instances, parents will be promptly notified following any such interview or questioning. When parents request to be present during these interviews, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow time for parents to promptly arrive at school. However, if parents are unable or unwilling to arrive at school in a timely manner, police officials will be allowed to question the child in the presence of an administrator. School officials may not impede a police investigation indefinitely. Parents will be notified by school officials following any such interview or questioning.

Only students whose parents or guardians reside in the District can attend District schools. School officials may question students about issues of residency without parent notification or permission.

Locker Searches

In order to protect the health and safety of all students, school administrators may conduct random locker searches. Lockers are the property of the school district. Consequently, administrators may open the lockers and examine the contents contained therein without prior notice to the students.

Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education does not permit discriminatory practices and views harassment as a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as intimidation by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation, by whatever means, of a climate of hostility or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting or stigmatizing an individual.

All students are responsible to help assure that the district does not discriminate. If an individual feels that he/she has experienced, witnessed or has information regarding possible discrimination, the individual should immediately notify the administration of the district. The Board of Education prohibits retaliation against anyone, who in good faith, reports possible discrimination, makes a discrimination complaint, or cooperates in a discrimination complaint investigation or any related proceeding.

The district's policy is to investigate all discrimination complaints promptly and thoroughly. To the fullest extent practicable, the district will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential. If an investigation confirms that discrimination has occurred, the district will take corrective action including, but not limited to, appropriate disciplinary action.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to discrimination does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Equal Educational Opportunities

All students of the District have equal educational opportunities. Students have the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, religion, sex, economic status, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability or military status in all decisions affecting admissions; membership in school-sponsored organizations, clubs or activities; access to facilities; distribution of funds; academic evaluations or any other aspect of school-sponsored activities. Any limitations with regard to participation in a school-sponsored activity are based on criteria reasonably related to that specific activity.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ppra/index.html>

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98) applies to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). PPRA is intended to protect the rights of parents and students in two ways:

- It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with an ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and
- It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors obtain written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
 1. Political affiliations;
 2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
 3. Sex behavior and attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;

6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; or
7. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

NWLSD Enrollment/Attendance Office

Student Absences and Excuses

Regular attendance by all students is very important. The Superintendent shall develop procedures governing student absences and excuses as part of the attendance handbook. The Board will adopt the attendance handbook on an annual basis. The student absences and excuses procedures will be Board policy for the year of adoption.

Acceptance of notes from doctors and other documentation of absence

Legitimate verification of absence from a third party source (doctor's notes, etc.) will be accepted up to **5 work days after the absence**. In the case of absences of multiple days, notification must be received by the fifth work day after the student returns to school. When there is an extended period of absence, contact should be maintained between the home and school. More than one note from a medical professional may be necessary in this situation. If a student/parent does not provide third party documentation, he/she will be marked unexcused and may be referred for truancy and/or failure of classes.

Due to House Bill 410:

Regular school attendance is required by Ohio Law and is a key factor for student success in school. House Bill 410, of the Ohio Legislature, mandates that students attend school every day that school is in session. It is important to establish good attendance patterns early in a child's school experience. Custodial parents/guardians will be notified when a student incurs either of the following:

Excessive Absences

38 or more hours in any month (Excused & Unexcused) ONLY

65 or more hours in a year (Excused & Unexcused)
(Unexcused ONLY)

Habitual Truancy

30 or more consecutive hours (Unexcused)

42 or more hours in any month

72 or more hours in a year

(Unexcused ONLY)

Please keep in mind, only third-party and/or medically excused absence hours do not count toward unexcused absences (court notice, doctor note for example).

House Bill 410 Required Action Steps

1. Any student who has received this letter under the Excessive Absence guidelines, all further absences for the remainder of the school year must be verified by third party documentation to be counted as excused absences. A parent note or phone call is not sufficient for an absence to be excused. Your son/daughter must bring a statement from a third party, such as a medical professional, or the absence will be **unexcused**. The documentation must be received **within five working days of the absence**.
2. Any student who has received this letter that is under the Habitual Truancy guidelines or reach Habitually Truant criteria, will have an Absence Intervention Team convened within 14 days of this letter and the student will be referred to this group. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to attend the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the causes for absenteeism, and work together with the team to develop interventions that can be implemented at school and home to help address the absences and improve attendance in school.
3. The school and parent(s)/guardian(s) will work to develop a positive working relationship with open lines of communication to address attendance, and will continue to actively monitor attendance from the date the plan is put into effect for the student.
4. If at any time since the implementation of this plan the student again incurs any of the triggering events described above for Habitual Truancy, the school will then file a complaint with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court and bring charges against the parent and/or student for truancy. If however, after 60 days of attempting this Absence Intervention Plan, the student does not incur any of the triggering events, but shows little progress in improving his/her attendance, the school can then also file a complaint with the Hamilton County Juvenile Court and bring charges against the parent and/or student for truancy.

Student Absences and Excuses

It is important to note that excused absences are included in the excessive absence criteria but do not count towards the habitually truant criteria per the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. Reasons for which students may be excused **when third-party documentation is provided** include, but are not limited to:

1. personal illness of the student;
2. illness in the student's family;
3. needed at home to perform necessary work directly and exclusively for parents or legal guardians (applies to students over 14 years of age only);

4. death in the family;
5. quarantine for contagious disease;
6. religious reasons;
7. traveling out of state to attend a Board-approved enrichment activity or extracurricular activity (applies to absences of up to four days); or
8. or as determined by the Superintendent.

Each student who is absent must immediately, upon return to school, make arrangements with his/her teacher(s) to make up any work missed. Students who are absent from school for reasons not permitted by State law may, or may not, be permitted to make up work. Each case is considered on its merits by the principal and the respective teacher(s). Students are requested to bring a note to school after each absence explaining the reason for the absence or tardiness.

The Board does not believe that students should be excused from school for vacations or other non-emergency trips out of the District. The responsibility for such absences resides with the parent(s), and they must not expect any work missed by their child to be retaught by the teacher. If the school is notified in advance of such a trip, reasonable efforts are made to prepare a general list of assignments for the student to do while he/she is absent.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish a hearing and notification procedure for the purpose of denying a student's driving privileges if that student of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse for more than 10 consecutive days or a total of at least 15 days during a semester or term.

Acceptable Third Party Documentation

The following items will be accepted as third party documentation. All third party documentation must be provided within 5 school days of the student's absence. In the case of absence of multiple days, notification must be received by the fifth school day after the student returns to school. In the case of prolonged absence, contact should be maintained between the home and school. More than one note from a medical professional may be necessary in this case.

1. Personal illness – documentation from a licensed medical professional
2. Illness in family – documentation from a licensed medical professional
3. Quarantine of home – notification from the Board of Health
4. Death of a relative – obituary or memorial card from the funeral
5. Homework due to absences of parents or guardians – verification of this excuse should be obtained from a building administrator or counselor. This should be used rarely by families and not for regular child care of family members.
6. Observance of a religious holiday – knowledge by administrator of the existence of a holiday on this date
7. College visits (maximum of 2 days, for seniors only) – documentation from college provided after return from visit
8. Court appearances – subpoena or receipt from court
9. Medical and dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours – verification of attendance at appointment from a medical professional
10. Driver's examination which cannot be scheduled outside school hours – verification of attendance by Bureau of Motor Vehicles employee
11. Educational/psychological testing – documentation of attendance by a licensed medical professional
12. Vacations or extended travel with parents when pre-arranged with building administrator and if such travel would not cause the student to exceed the Excessive Absence Procedures and risk failing classes – notification from a Building administrator (Note: If a request is made

- and approved for a student to miss more than 10 days for vacation, an educational option should be set up).
13. Farm work (maximum of 3 days) – verification from a building administrator
 14. Other reasons approved by a school administrator – the only district-wide approval in this area is ½ day excused absence for Reds Opening Day. If a student attends this he/she will need to provide a ticket stub as verification.

Attendance Policy for Military-Connected Students

The Northwest Local School District believes that with the many challenges for military families, there is a need for flexibility related to school attendance policies. Therefore, Northwest Local Schools will grant up to five days of excused absences for military connected students whose parents are experiencing a deployment. The conditions under which the Northwest Local Schools may approve excused absences are:

1. The absence is pre approved; {written notice of deployment sent to the school by parent and school fax a copy to Enrollment Office}
2. The student is in good standing; GPA of 2.0 or greater
3. The student has a prior record of good attendance; {not involved in an open truancy case}
4. Missed assignments are completed and turned in within the school's allotted time period; {if student uses 1-5 days of excused absences, student should be allowed the same number of days to make up assignments}
5. The absence is not during standardized testing dates.

Tuition

Any student enrolled in the Northwest Local School District whose parents move out of the district may finish the semester in which the move occurs upon advance payment of tuition. A student who completes the eleventh grade in the Northwest Schools and whose parents or guardian moves out of the district may complete the senior year upon advance payment of tuition.

Student Attendance at School Events

The Board of Education encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Any student who wishes to participate in any extra-curricular activities after school hours is expected to attend school that day (see Student Activities and Athlete Handbook). This includes rehearsals, plays, practices, concerts or athletic events. Any student enrolled in a Career Center co-op program or on early job placement, which requires the student to work, must be in school in order to work in the afternoon unless they receive permission from the Building Director of the Career Center Education or the Building Principal.

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 as nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, the Board recommends that all elementary and middle school students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they arrive at the event and throughout its duration. The Board will not be responsible for students if they attend without an adult chaperone.

Adequate supervision will be provided for all students who are participants in District-sponsored events. (Board Policy #5855)

Student Employment

The Board of Education believes that attendance at school should occupy a student's full attention and should take precedence over nonschool-related employment. If a student must work while attending school, s/he should receive counseling and assistance in seeking appropriate job opportunities and in correlating work schedules with school studies and activities. The District and schools will ensure that

student employment complies with Ohio laws. All students employed in out-of-school jobs are closely monitored by staff regarding school attendance and achievement in order to determine the effects on school performance of the student assuming out-of-school work commitments.

Students as Precinct Election Officials

In conjunction with the County Board of Elections, the Board of Education will permit high school students to apply and, if appointed by the Board of Election, to serve as precinct officers at a primary, special, or general election.

As part of the application process, the student shall declare his/her political party affiliation with the Board of Election. Any student selected shall be excused from school on the day of an election at which the student is serving as a precinct officer. (Board Policy #5725)

Release Time for Religious Instruction

The Board of Education desires to cooperate with those parents who wish to provide for religious instruction for their children but also recognizes its responsibility to enforce the attendance requirements of the State.

Students may be provided "released time" from school to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a private entity off District property, provided that the following requirements are met, such students will not be considered absent when the:

- A. student's parent or guardian gives consent in writing;
- B. sponsoring entity maintains attendance records and makes them available to the District;
- C. sponsoring entity provides and assumes liability for the student; and
- D. student assumes responsibility for any missed school work.

Transportation of students to and from Released Time instruction is the complete responsibility of the sponsoring entity, the parent, guardian, and/or student. The Board of Education, its members, and employees are immune from liability for any injuries arising from transportation to and from Released Time instruction. Further, no Board funds will be expended for, and no District personnel shall be involved in, the provision of religious instruction.

Students shall not be excused from a core curriculum subject course to attend Released Time instruction.

Staff members shall not promote or discourage participation in release time programs for any religious instructional program.

Nothing herein shall constitute an endorsement of religion or infringe upon an individual's First Amendment rights. (Board Policy #5223)

Religious Expression Days

Students are given up to three religious expression days per school year provided that the parent or guardian provides written notice to the school of the selected days within 14 days of the start of the school year (or within 14 days of a newly enrolled student's first day in the school/district).

Students are permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics or other extracurricular activities on a religious expression day. These three religious expression days do not count towards parental notification requirements under ORC 3321.191 (C) (1) for excessive absences.

NWLSD Health Services Department

Emergency Medical Authorization Forms (EMAs)

By state law, schools are required to keep on record an Emergency Medical Authorization (EMA) for each student. The Emergency Medical Authorization (EMA) is a critical form that is used by the Administrators and Health Office to contact parents. Parents are required to go online and verify/update their information each year. Every family is required to update their information annually through our online Student Information System (Infinite Campus). Links and details are made available each summer to be completed by September of each school year.

If phone numbers or other information changes throughout the year, it is imperative that you notify the school to ensure you can be reached when necessary for the student. Contact the Health Office and speak with the nurse concerning any changes that occur in the student's health over the summer or during the school year. Communication is the key to making sure the student's health needs are met during the school day.

Student Health

All Northwest Local School District school buildings have a health clinic. It is open during the school day to support the students

and staff. The Health Office staff may be a Registered Nurse (RN), a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) or a Health Assistant. We believe that a healthy student is better able to participate actively in his/her education.

The Nurse/Health Assistant is responsible for: ensuring proper immunization of all students in accordance with Ohio law, performing hearing, vision and postural (scoliosis) screening as required and recommended by the Ohio Department of Health, providing emergency care of illness and injury during the school day, decreasing communicable diseases by excluding students from school with signs of disease or illness that can be spread, developing individual health plans and emergency action plans in collaboration with parents and health care providers (physicians and/or nurse practitioners) for students with health conditions such as asthma, seizure disorders, diabetes, migraine headaches and allergies. The nurse/health assistant is also responsible for administering medications and treatments, and training appropriate school personnel in the proper administration of medication and treatments, as well as acting as a resource for staff in the area of health and health concerns.

The Nurse/Health Assistant reviews the immunization records provided by the parent to ensure the proper immunization of all students in accordance with Ohio law. If it is determined that the student needs additional immunizations, it is expected that the parent/guardian immediately obtains updated immunization records upon notification from the Health Office. *Any parent/guardian has the right to exercise their objections to immunization by claiming an immunization exemption.* If an exemption is desired, the parent must submit an official NWLSD philosophical, religious or medical exemption form. Please contact the health office in your child's school building if you need information on where you can obtain vaccination for your child, or if you require an immunization exemption form; **this form is required to be kept on file in the Health Office.**

If a student is found to be out of compliance with Ohio law, the student may be excluded after 14 days into the school year per Ohio law, this is not an excused absence and will count towards unexcused absences. The following chart is from the Ohio Department of Health and outlines the immunizations which are currently required by Ohio law. Immunization requirements for school may change annually, current requirements are listed below.

Ohio School Immunization Requirement Details	
DTaP Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis	<p>Grades K-12</p> <p>Four or more doses of DTaP or DT vaccine, or any combination. If all four doses were given before the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is required. If the fourth dose was administered at least six months after the third dose, and on or after the fourth birthday, a fifth dose is not required.</p> <p><i>Recommended DTaP or DT minimum intervals for kindergarten students are four weeks between the first and second doses, and the second and third doses; and six months between the third and fourth doses and the fourth and fifth doses. If a fifth dose is administered prior to the fourth birthday, a sixth dose is recommended but not required.</i></p>
Hep B Hepatitis B	<p>Grades K-12</p> <p>Three doses of hepatitis B vaccine. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose. The third dose must be given at least 16 weeks after the first dose and at least eight weeks after the second dose. The last dose in the series (third or fourth dose) must not be administered before age 24 weeks.</p>
MMR Measles, Mumps, Rubella	<p>Grades K-12</p> <p>Two doses of MMR vaccine. The first dose must be administered on or after the first birthday. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose.</p>
Polio	<p>Grades K-12</p> <p>Three or more doses of IPV vaccine. The FINAL dose must be administered on or after the fourth birthday with at least six months between the final and previous dose, regardless of the number of previous doses.</p> <p><i>If any combination of IPV and OPV was received, four doses of either vaccine are required. Only trivalent OPV (tOPV) counts toward the U.S. vaccination requirements. Doses of OPV administered before April 1, 2016, should be counted (unless specifically noted as administered during a campaign). Doses of OPV administered on or after April 1, 2016, should not be counted.</i></p>
Varicella (Chickenpox)	<p>Grades K-12</p> <p>Two doses of varicella vaccine must be administered prior to entry. The first dose must be administered on or after the first birthday. The second dose should be administered at least three months after the first dose; however, if the second dose is administered at least 28 days after the first dose, it is considered valid.</p>
Tdap Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis	<p>Grades 7-12</p> <p>One dose of Tdap vaccine must be administered on or after the tenth birthday. Tdap can be given regardless of the interval since the last tetanus or diphtheria-toxoid containing vaccine.</p> <p><i>Children aged seven years or older with an incomplete history of DTaP should be given Tdap as the first dose in the catch-up series. If the series began at age seven to nine years, the fourth dose must be a Tdap given at age 11-12 years. If the third dose of Tdap is given at age 10 years, no additional dose is needed at age 11-12 years.</i></p>
Meningococcal Meningococcal ACWY	<p>Grades 7-11</p> <p>One dose of meningococcal (serogroup A, C, W, and Y) vaccine must be administered on or after the 10th birthday.</p> <p>Grade 12</p> <p>Two doses of meningococcal (serogroup A, C, W, and Y) vaccine. Second dose on or after age 16 years. If the first dose was given on or after the 16th birthday, only one dose is required</p>

Administration of Medicine

Northwest Local School District Policy for Administration of Medication is consistent with the O.R.C. 3313.613 – The Medication Policy Law.

Students are not to carry any prescription or over the counter medicine with them during the school day. School personnel are not authorized to administer prescribed medication or perform medical procedures unless they are prescribed by a physician and authorized by a parent.

Whenever possible, the administration of medication required by a student during the school day should be given before or after school hours. However, certain students may require the administration of medication during the school day to maintain an optimum health status for learning. In the event that a student requires the administration of any medication; **prescription or over-the-counter**, during the school day the following procedure must be followed:

1. **Administration of Medication Form** physician's order and parental permission must be completed in its entirety and signed by the prescribing physician and parent/guardian for prescription and/or over-the-counter medication.
2. Medication is to be brought to the school building by the parent/guardian in the **original** container.
3. A parent, guardian, or adult designated by the parent is responsible to personally deliver any medication to the school building. **Never send medication with a student.**
4. All medication is kept in a locked storage unit in each school building.
5. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to instruct the student to come to the Health Room at the appropriate time for medication administration.
6. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain an updated physician's order when the medication changes in any way.
7. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure refills of medication are brought to the health office during the school year to avoid any gaps or delays in medication administration.
8. Any unused medication not claimed on the last day of school will be destroyed.
9. A new administration of medication form/order must be submitted each school year.

Administration of a Prescribed Medical Treatment

A student may require a prescribed medical treatment (non-medication) during the school day such as tube feeding, dressing change, or catheterization. The prescribing provider and the parent/guardian must complete the **Administration of Prescribed Medical Treatment Form** before school personnel may initiate the medical treatment. This form may be obtained in the Health Office.

Inhalers for Asthma

Students have the right to possess and use a metered-dose inhaler or a dry-powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms or before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms. The right applies at school or at any activity, event or program sponsored by or in which the student's school is a participant. In order for a student to possess the inhaler, he/she must have written approval from the student's physician and, if a minor, from his/her parent or other documented caretaker. **Written approval must be on file with the health office.** If self-carry status is not desired or endorsed by a licensed medical provider, personal inhalers may be kept in the school health office. NWLSD does not stock inhalers for generalized use.

Epinephrine Auto injectors

Students are permitted to carry and use an epinephrine auto injector (epi-pen) to treat anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions). The right to carry and use an epi-pen extends to any activity, event or program sponsored by the student's school or activity, event or program in which the school participates. Student possession of an epi-pen is permitted only if the student has written approval from the prescriber of the medication and, if a minor, from his/her parent or other documented caretaker. **Written approval must be on file with the health office.**

Policy for Administration of School Health Screenings

The Ohio Department of Health requires that vision and hearing screenings are performed on students at specific grade levels. A referral letter is sent to the parent for additional care if they do not pass the screening.

Vision is screened at the following grade levels: pre-k, kindergarten, first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth and eleventh.

Hearing is screened at the following grade levels: pre-k, kindergarten, first, third, fifth and ninth and eleventh.

Students new to the District, requested by teachers or parents and students as a part of the Special Education evaluation for services process may also be screened by the health office staff.

Postural screening may be performed in accordance with the recommendations by the AAOS (American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons) and SRS (Scoliosis Research Society). This screening helps identify students with curvature of the spine known as scoliosis as well as other spinal problems. Postural screening may occur only in grade seven for both boys and girls. Students are referred for additional care if a concern is noted. In the event that a parent does not want the student participating in one or all of the screenings, the parent must contact the Health Office or Building Principal.

Guidelines for Keeping Students Home from School

The following guidelines are used to determine whether a student should be in school or kept home. Please keep in mind that our exclusion from school guidelines may change as advised by Local, State and/or Federal guidance as a response to Public Health concerns.

STUDENTS SHOULD BE KEPT HOME FROM SCHOOL IF:

Temperature of 100.0 F+ degrees. Your child should remain home until they have been fever free for a full 24 hours without the use of a fever reducing medication (Tylenol, Advil or Motrin). If your child is sent home from school with a fever they should not return to school on the following day.

Vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours. If your child is sent home from school with vomiting and /or diarrhea or if your child has an episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea during the night, they should not be sent to school the following day.

Cold symptoms (uncontrolled) including an excessively runny nose, persistent cough, sore throat and headache. Over the counter medications will not be given by school staff. If the symptoms are severe and/or disruptive to the school environment they should be kept at home until the symptoms have resolved.

Skin rash. Skin rashes are often difficult to evaluate. Skin rashes of unknown origin should be evaluated by your physician to determine what the rash is prior to sending your child to school. A student with a skin rash of unknown origin may be sent home from school until the rash is identified as non-contagious.

Open and draining area on skin. All open wounds should be covered when your child is in school. A wound that is red, warm to touch, or looks like a boil should be evaluated by your physician.

Pink Eye. Reddened eye(s) with discharge that causes crusting on the eyelashes and difficulty opening the eye(s) upon awakening. This may indicate Pink Eye or conjunctivitis. This can be contagious and requires a visit to your physician. Your child should remain home for 24 hours after beginning medical treatment.

Head Lice. NWLSD follows a nit-free policy, see supplement below for detailed information regarding head lice/nits. Your child may not be in school until they are completely nit free. All students home from school with head lice are to report to the Health Office with a parent/guardian upon their return to school prior to going to the classroom to be cleared for re-entry. Head lice should be treated and the student nit free and return to school. Up to 3 school days will be excused for treatment. Check with the Health Office at your child's school for more information.

Head lice protocol supplement.

NWLSD is a nit-free (egg free) District.

A child will be sent home for nits and or live lice and is not permitted to return until they are completely nit (egg) free.

If any child has nits or lice discovered at home, it is the parents responsibility to report this to the health office at the school immediately so that the class may be checked and the appropriate parties be notified, to reduce the spread of headlice.

Treating Head lice/nits is the parent/guardian's responsibility. Students should be treated to kill live lice and the hair should be picked diligently to remove all presence of nits. NWLSD Staff will not treat or remove lice/nits at school.

All students home from school with head lice are to be escorted by a parent/guardian to the health room to be cleared for return to class. Students who have not been screened by the nurse/health assistant are **not** permitted to be sent to school on the bus, or dropped off without parental accompaniment to the health room to be re-checked.

Absence from school for lice is excused for a maximum of three days. It is the parent's responsibility to communicate with the nurse/health assistant for needs extending beyond this three day period. The child will need to return to the health office every two days beyond the 3 day window, **with the caregiver** to ensure progress is being made towards returning to school. The nurse/health assistant may be able to offer assistance with referrals, and instruction on how to remedy the situation when support is needed.

Pain and/or generally not feeling well. If your child has pain and is not their typical self in the morning, ask yourself whether the child will be able to pay attention and participate in class. If the answer is no, keep your child home; they may be coming down with an illness. We realize that you know your child best and we want them in school healthy, and ready to learn.

While these guidelines are not all inclusive, the Nurse/Health Assistant may send a student home if it appears that the student may have an illness. The parent may be asked for documentation from the physician prior to the student returning to school. The Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease chart serves as the guidelines for determining the recommendations for the student.

In the event of a true emergency, 911 will be called first and then every attempt will be made to contact the parent or designated persons on the Emergency Medical Authorization.

If at any time the parent has questions or concerns about the health and well-being of the student, please contact the Health Office and speak with the Nurse or Health Assistant.

Covid-19 Supplemental Information:

This information is subject to change based on current, local health recommendations. Contact your students health office for the most up to date information regarding Covid-19.

Has your child been tested for COVID-19 and the result is positive?

When results are *positive*, please notify the school and keep your child(ren) isolated at home until he/she is cleared by a physician or health department for return. Siblings of students who test positive for COVID-19 should be closely monitored for symptom development, but do not have to quarantine at home. Siblings of students who test positive for COVID-19, who do not develop symptoms of illness and do not test positive are allowed to continue to report to school.

Control of Casual-Contact Communicable Diseases

To keep everyone healthy, our school follows state rules to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses like strep throat, measles, mumps, and others that can be passed through everyday contact.

If a student shows signs of one of these illnesses at school, they will be separated from others and a parent or guardian will be contacted. The school will follow guidelines from the Health Department to manage the situation safely. (Policy 8450)

Direct Contact Communicable Diseases

Our school is committed to keeping students and staff safe by helping everyone understand how certain diseases—like HIV and Hepatitis—can be spread through contact with blood or other body fluids (such as vomit or urine), not through casual contact like talking, touching, or being near someone.

To support this, the school provides educational programs to help students and staff learn how these diseases are transmitted and how to prevent them. These programs explain the risks, how to manage them, and emphasize that these diseases are preventable when basic safety precautions are followed.

If the school becomes aware that a student or staff member has had known contact with a blood-borne communicable disease, parents/guardians will be notified in a timely manner, following health and privacy guidelines.

The school also respects the privacy of anyone who may be affected by a blood-borne disease and keeps their information confidential. (Policy 8453)

Blood-Borne Pathogen Safety

Our school is committed to keeping students safe by taking steps to prevent exposure to blood-borne pathogens—germs that can spread through contact with blood or other body fluids.

Even though the risk is low, students should treat all body fluids as potentially infectious and follow safety rules (called "universal precautions") to reduce the chance of accidental infection during school activities.

The school has procedures in place to:

- Identify situations where students might come into contact with blood or other fluids,
- Ensure staff are trained to follow safety precautions,
- Respond quickly and properly to any incidents where exposure happens, and
- Keep records of any such incidents and how they were handled.

(Policy 8453.02)

NWLSD Special Education Department

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. This protection applies not just to students, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

The laws define a person with a disability as anyone who:

- A. has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one (1) or more major life activities;
- B. has a record of such an impairment; or
- C. is regarded as having such an impairment.

The District has specific responsibilities under these two (2) laws, which include identifying, reviewing and, if the child is determined to be eligible, affording access to appropriate educational accommodation.

Additionally, in accordance with State and Federal mandates, the District seeks out, assesses, and appropriately services students with disabilities. Staff members use a comprehensive child study process to systematically screen, assess, and, if appropriate, place students in special education and related services. Students are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment."

A student can access special education and related services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEIA), A.D.A. Section 504) and State law. Contact Director of Special Education at (513) 923-1000 to inquire about evaluation procedures, programs, and services.

The District is committed to identifying, evaluating, and providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students within its jurisdiction who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, regardless of the nature or severity of their disabilities.

Response to Intervention/Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports

The Board of Education recognizes that the needs of individual pupils in the Northwest School District vary widely and that the highest educational standards should challenge each child, based upon the individual's ability. The Northwest Local School District utilizes Response to Intervention and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports as part of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in addressing individual needs. Academic and behavioral interventions are provided by teachers and staff as determined by data collection and/or parent and teacher concerns. Data-based decision making is the most effective means to determine the effectiveness of an intervention.

An MTSS Team is composed of evaluators, parents, members of the staff who review the data and determine program eligibility.

The federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA), specifies each State's obligation to develop agreements with non-educational public agencies to ensure that all services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) are provided to children with disabilities at no cost to the parent. If you have concerns regarding your child's academic performance, or behavioral needs, please contact your child's principal, or the Office of Special Education (513) 923-1000.

Seclusion and Restraint Annual Notice

Safety of each student is always a priority, and in some instances it may become necessary to seclude or restrain a student to assure safety to him/herself or others. The Board of Education has adopted policy 5630.01 regarding the limited use of Restraint and Seclusion within district school buildings. Each building and program have staff trained in de-escalation strategies and implementation of safe holds to support the needs of students in a crisis situation. Restraint and seclusion are only used in rare situations when a student is a risk to themselves or others, and need support to keep everyone safe. If your child is subject to a restraint or seclusion, parents are notified within 24 hours, and if a child is restrained or secluded for three or more times in a school year, a team will convene including the parent to review the needs of the student and determine if a functional behavior assessment is needed. If you are concerned regarding the use or implementation of restraint or seclusion for your child, you may file a complaint with the Office of the Superintendent in writing. The Superintendent or designee will investigate the complaint and schedule a meeting with the parent or guardian who files the complaint to discuss the resolution.

Medicaid Annual Notice

School districts are permitted to seek payment from public insurance programs (Medicaid) for some services provided at school. Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), *parent* consent is required for the school system to release information about their child to the Ohio Department of Medicaid in order to access *the parent or child's* public benefit. *Parents* are entitled to a copy of any information the school system releases to the state Medicaid program.

The Northwest Local School District has the opportunity to receive Federal Medicaid dollars through a program called the Ohio Medicaid School Program (MSP). Through this program, school districts can receive Medicaid dollars for services such as Speech, Audiology, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursing, Psychology, Counseling, and Social Work services. The district can receive funding when a student receives one or more

of these services and the student has current Medicaid insurance coverage. In the process of billing Medicaid for these services, certain billing information must be shared with the Ohio Department of Medicaid. Before the district can submit claim data for Medicaid billing purposes, we must obtain a signed Parental Consent to Share Information and Access Medicaid.

This annual notice is to inform you of all of your legal protections and rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Your consent is voluntary. You have the right under 34 CFR Part 99 and Part 300 to withdraw your consent at any time. You are not required to enroll in Medicaid. Billing Medicaid will not require you to incur any out-of-pocket expenses such as a deductible or co-pay, decrease lifetime coverage, increase premiums or lead to the discontinuation of benefits, or result in you paying for services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid. No matter whether you grant consent, refuse consent, or revoke your consent, your child will still be provided with an evaluation and/or the services listed in their IEP at no cost to you. For a more detailed explanation of Medicaid Parental Consent, please see the following Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 34 CFR 300.154, 34 CFR 300.503, 34 CFR 300.622, 34 CFR 99.30.

For specific questions regarding the Medicaid School Program Parental Consent, please contact Healthcare Billing Services, Inc. at (740) 639-4218 or at info@teamhbs.com

NWLSD Business Services Office

School Closing and Delays

The inclement weather plans for the Northwest Local School District will be announced as follows:

1. Northwest Schools will be closed.
2. Two hour delay with limited transportation, no AM preschool
3. Two hour delay (with full transportation), no AM preschool
4. Limited transportation (with regular starting time)

When a two-hour delay is announced, continue to monitor school closing announcements since the delay could be changed to 'CLOSED'. This information will be made available to radio and television stations through a network system set up by the media. The information will also be distributed via text message, email, and phone calls as well as social media and the District website. Please make sure that all contact information is current and up to date. Please contact your school building office staff if any changes are necessary. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. If you have any questions contact the Northwest Local School District Transportation Dept. at 825-4600 or Business Office at 923-1000

Insurance

The school system will make available to all students a student accident group insurance plan each year. A specific plan is available for students participating in football.

Injuries

All accidents to students which require medical attention shall be reported immediately by the person in charge, the principal, the school nurse, and, if serious enough, to the parents or guardian. A record of all accidents shall be made by the appropriate school official and kept in the principal's office.

Student Insurance

Inexpensive coverage is offered to students in September. Information and payment envelopes are available in the main office.

Student Network and Internet AUP and Agreement

The Northwest Local School District is pleased to make available access to interconnected systems within the district and to the Internet for the purpose of productivity, research, curriculum delivery, professional development activities and electronic storage in the pursuit of learning. The District Board of Education has policies, which govern the access and use of computer and network systems. This Acceptable Use Policy is a guideline for use and a contractual agreement between the student and the Board of Education. All students must take responsibility for appropriate and lawful use of their access. Misuse under the guidelines of this document may result in disciplinary action under Board Policy and/or the governing code of conduct.

Upon review of this policy and signing the handbook release page, each student will be given the opportunity to enjoy access to computer and network systems at school and is agreeing to follow this Policy.

If you have any questions about the guidelines below, please contact your building principal.

I. Personal Responsibility

You agree not only to follow the rules in this Policy and Agreement, but also agree to report any misuse of the network to a teacher or building principal. Misuse means any violation of this policy, Board of Education Policy, or any other use that is not included in the policy, but has the effect of harming another person or his or her property.

II. Terms of Permitted Use

Technology can greatly enhance the instructional program, as well as the efficiency of the District. The Board recognizes that careful planning is essential to ensure the successful, equitable and cost-effective implementation of technology-based materials, equipment, systems and networks.

Computers and use of the District network or online services support learning and enhance instruction, as well as assist in administration. Computer networks allow people to interact with many computers; the Internet allows people to interact with hundreds of thousands of networks.

All computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Failure to adhere to this policy and the guidelines below will result in the revocation of the user's access privilege. Unacceptable uses of the computer/network include but are not limited to:

1. violating the conditions of State and Federal law dealing with students' and employees' rights to privacy, including unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information;
2. using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive to another user or intended to harass, intimidate or bully other users;
3. accessing personal social networking websites for non-educational purposes;
4. reposting (forwarding) personal communication without the author's prior consent;
5. copying commercial software and/or other material in violation of copyright law;
6. using the network for financial gain, for commercial activity or for any illegal activity;
7. "hacking" or gaining unauthorized access to other computers or computer systems, or attempting to gain such unauthorized access;
8. accessing and/or viewing inappropriate material and
9. downloading of freeware or shareware programs.

The Superintendent/designee shall develop a plan to address the short- and long-term technology needs and provide for compatibility of resources among school sites, offices and other operations. As a basis for this plan, he/she shall examine and compare the costs and benefits of various resources and shall identify the blend of technologies and level of service necessary to support the instructional program.

Because access to online services provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents of users who are under 18 years old) must understand that neither the school nor the District can control the content of the information available on these systems. Some of the information available is controversial and sometimes offensive. The Board does not condone the use of such materials. Employees, students and parents of students must be aware that the privileges to access online services are withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others or who do not follow the rules and regulations established. A user's agreement is signed to indicate the user's acknowledgment of the risks and regulations for computer/online services use. The District has implemented technology-blocking measures to prevent students from accessing inappropriate material or materials considered to be harmful to minors on school computers that protect against access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to the use of computers by minors, harmful to minors.

"Harmful to minors" is defined as any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:

1. taken as a whole and with respect to minors appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;
2. depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts and/or a lewd exhibition of genitals and/or
3. taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

The District will educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals in grades K-12 on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response. The Superintendent/designee will develop a program to educate students on these issues.

Personal devices may be used on the school network under limited circumstances and with prior approval of a building administrator and the district Technology Supervisor. Devices must be registered with the technology department. Additional software or apps may be required to register the device for access to the network. Compliance with district policies is required, and all network traffic may be monitored. Use of cellular networks or nonschool Wi-Fi to bypass filtering is prohibited. Use of personal hotspots or non-district access points is prohibited. Additional restrictions may be set by the building principals and classroom teachers.

Annually, a student who wishes to have computer network and Internet access during the school year must read the acceptable use and Internet safety policy and submit a properly signed agreement form. Students and staff are asked to sign a new agreement each year after reviewing the policies and regulations of the District.

III. Privacy

The Northwest Local School District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and without prior notice, any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the Northwest

Local School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

IV. Warranties/Indemnification

The Northwest Local School District makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, in the connection with its provision of access to and use of its computer networks and the Internet provided under this Policy and Agreement. It shall not be responsible for any claims, losses, damages or costs (including attorney's fees) of any kind suffered, directly or indirectly, by any user or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) arising out of the user's use of its computer networks or the Internet under this Policy and Agreement. Users take full responsibility of his or her usage and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Northwest Local School District and its Board members, administrators, teachers, and staff from any and all loss, costs, claims, or damages resulting from the user's access to its computer network and the Internet, including but not limited to any fees or charges incurred through purchases of goods or services by the user. The user or, if the user is a minor, the user's parent(s) or guardian(s) agrees to cooperate with the Northwest Local School District in the event of the initiation of an investigation into a user's use or his or her access to its computer network and Internet, whether that use is on a District computer or on another's outside the Northwest Local School District's Network.

Visitors in School

The Board of Education welcomes and encourages visits to school by parents, other adult community members and interested educators. All exterior doors are locked during the school day. Visitors must use the buzzer at the main entrance. All visitors must report to the office or welcome center immediately upon entering a school building, check in and receive a visitor's badge. NWLSD has incorporated the use of Raptor as a visitor check in and check out system. To maintain the safety of students and staff and to ensure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings, all visitors must comply with the District's procedures regulating visitors. The administrative procedures will be posted conspicuously at or near the entrance to school premises. In addition, those procedures shall be posted in a central location in each school and are made available to all students, staff and community members upon request. All participants and spectators of school programs, assemblies, graduations and athletic events are expected to abide by all applicable law, local ordinances, Board policies and District and building procedures pertaining to public conduct on District property. School principals and their designees are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent and remove, if necessary, unauthorized persons from entering District buildings and loitering on the grounds.

Building administrators have the authority to prohibit the entry of any person to a school of this district, or to expel any person, when there is reason to believe that the presence of such person would disrupt the good order of the school or pose a threat to the safety of students or staff. If such an individual refuses to leave the school grounds or creates a disturbance, building administrators are authorized to request whatever assistance is needed, including local law enforcement agencies, to remove the individual.

Visitors must follow these procedures while in any district schools or on district property.

1. Visitors must report to the school office or other designated area immediately upon entering a district school. The area where visitors report will be listed on the notice displayed near all school and office entrances.
2. Visitors must sign in and wear any tags or badges that are required by school visitors' procedures.
3. School tours, which do not include class visits, must be scheduled a minimum of 24 hours in advance through the principal or a designee.
 - a. If the tour cannot be scheduled on the requested date, an alternate date(s) will be offered.
 - b. A school staff member must accompany all visitors on school tours.
4. Class visits by parents or guardians of current students may be scheduled one time each

semester under the following procedures:

- a. Requests must be made to the principal, or a designee, one week, or five school days in advance.
- b. The principal, or a designee, must approve all requests.
- c. The teacher(s) must approve the requested date, or offer alternative date(s).

Exceptions:

1. Regular or frequent class visits by parents or guardians as part of a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) or similar program.
2. Class celebrations or special events.
5. The principal, or a designee, has the sole responsibility of determining when visitors must be removed from a school for disruptive, dangerous or potentially dangerous behavior.
6. Visitors who must be removed from school may be expelled from district schools, offices and facilities for up to one year on the authority of the principal. Expulsions of a longer duration must be approved by the superintendent or a designee.

Smoking

Schools within the Northwest Local School District are smoke and e-cigarette free environments. This smoke and e-cigarette free policy extends to extra-curricular events, as well as during daily arrival and dismissal routines. Please refrain from smoking or using e-cigarette at any time while on school property, whether indoors or outdoors.

Concealed Carry Law

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 2923.122, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey, or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordinance into a school safety zone.

NWLSD Food Services Department

NWLSD is a participant in the National School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program

National School Breakfast Program (SBP)

Research has shown that starting the day with a nutritious breakfast helps students stay alert and perform better in school. Northwest Local School District offers breakfast to all enrolled students. Please come visit us & benefit from eating a deliciously nutritious breakfast!

National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

Goals of Child Nutrition Programs:

- Safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children;
- Encourage domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural foods; and
- Give children an understanding of the relationship between proper eating habits and good health.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

All enrolled students in **Elementary** and **Middle** School are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at no charge through the District's participation in the CEP program.

Household Information Surveys will be used to determine eligibility for school instructional fee waivers and other district programs for students in CEP buildings. Surveys are available online at <https://northwestoh.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/northwest.jsp> or in the school office for anyone wishing to apply. A copy can also be found online at <http://nwlsd.org>. Completed surveys can be returned to the school, faxed to 513-385-3769, or emailed to foodservice@nwlsd.org.

Free and Reduced School Lunch/Breakfast for High School Students

Free and Reduced Priced Meals

The Board of Education has established procedures for providing free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch to disadvantaged children in the Northwest Local School District in conformance with Public Law 91-248 known as the School Food Services Bill enacted May 14, 1970. The school food authority assures the State Department of Education that the school system will uniformly determine children's eligibility for free and reduced-priced meals in all National School Lunch Program schools under its jurisdiction.

Free/Reduced applications can also be used to determine eligibility for school instructional fee waivers and other district programs. Applications are available online at <https://northwestoh.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/northwest.jsp> or in the school office for anyone wishing to apply. A copy can also be found online at <http://nwlsd.org>. Completed applications can be returned to the school, faxed to 513-385-3769, or emailed to foodservice@nwlsd.org.

Northwest Local School District Meal Charge Guidelines

Northwest Local School District's Food Service Department is a self-sustaining operation that receives no money from the district's general fund. All operating expenses and food costs are covered by Federal and State reimbursements. Federal Law states that the Food Service Department's revenue must meet or exceed expenditures. Therefore, unpaid charges directly affect the ability of the Department to support itself.

The Board recognizes on occasion, students may not have meal money either in hand or on their prepaid accounts. The intent of this policy is to ensure compliance with State and Federal reporting requirements and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

1. High School - Families of students are encouraged to apply for free and reduced price meal benefits. If you wish to see if your students qualify for free/reduced meals based upon the income of all family members, you may complete a meal application in two ways:
 - a. Meal applications can be printed from the Food Services webpage on the NWLSD website (www.nwlsd.org), picked up at the student's home school or picked up at the Food Service Office. These meal applications need to be completed in their entirety and returned to the student's home school or the Food Service Office.
 - b. Meal applications can be completed online by going to <https://northwestoh.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/northwest.jsp>
2. Families are encouraged to prepay for meals through the parent portal in Infinite Campus. Cash is only accepted at the high school level for payments on the day of service. Written notification of prepayment options occurs at the beginning of each school year, is given to each new transfer student, is posted on the Food Service website, and is included in the student handbook.

3. The district understands that funds on a student's cafeteria account may become depleted at times for various reasons. We believe in the importance of our students' nutrition and will therefore allow students to "charge" for a meal under certain circumstances. Charging for a meal will result in a negative balance on a student's account. It is imperative that our cafeteria collects the balance owed. Students will be discreetly notified upon charging their account.
4. Families will be notified of the school Unpaid Meal Charge Guideline in writing before the school year begins. This guideline will also be posted on the Food Service Website.
5. The district will provide school meal account refunds over \$5.00 for those students who do not owe school fees. If school fees are owed, the funds will be transferred to pay towards the outstanding fees.
 - a. Please contact the Food Service Department at foodservice@nwlsd.org or 513-522-6700 to request a school meal account refund.
 - Note: refunds may take up to 3 weeks to process.
 - b. If a positive balance remains on the account of a graduating senior or a student leaving the district, that balance will be transferred to a sibling. If there are no siblings, the funds can be donated to unpaid meal debt or refunded upon request.
 - If there is no response from the parent/guardian after three months, these funds become property of Northwest Local School District Food Service Department.
 - ***Please note, if a request is not received by the end of the school year, senior account balances will be transferred to the donation account to help families with unpaid meal debt.***
6. Elementary & Middle School - Families may add money to a student's account for the purchase of snacks by paying online with your credit card or PayPal account, by visiting <https://northwestoh.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/northwest.jsp>
Cash or checks are not accepted payment methods at the elementary and middle school level.

The purpose of this guideline is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district as unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. We greatly enjoy serving your child and hope you continue to give us the opportunity to do so! Thank you for your time and cooperation.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Ohio Summer Food Service Program

Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does a child's need for good nutrition end. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to help children in low-income areas get the nutrition they need to learn, play and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school. Children ages 1 through 18 may receive free meals and snacks through SFSP. Meals and snacks also are available to individuals with disabilities through age 21 who participate in a recognized school program for individuals with developmental or physical disabilities.

Ohio Summer Food Service Map is updated weekly during the summer months:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Food-and-Nutrition/Summer-FoodService-Program>

USDA Summer Meals for Kids Site Finder:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids>

NWLSD Public Relations Department

Distribution of Materials in School

Northwest Local School District has partnered with Peachjar to provide digital distribution of important school and community information directly to parents. Adoption of this new platform is in line with our efforts to help close the achievement gap and provide our students with access to beneficial programs and resources. We believe that increased participation in school and afterschool programs can help improve student outcomes at our district. Based on NWLSD contract with PeachJar all flyers must be uploaded and distributed through the Digital platform. *Concessions can be made on a case-by-case basis for PTA/Booster and student organizations that utilize PeachJar but need to distribute information in common areas of school buildings. Concessions must be approved by the District Public Relations Office. (See asterisk below.)

For purposes of this policy, “non-school-related materials” pertain to activities, events and subject matter that are not officially sponsored or endorsed by the District, and promote educational programs and activities appropriate for the children in District schools. All flyers must adhere to all guidelines and must contain the Northwest Local School District Disclaimer. All flyers must be approved by the District Public Relations Office prior to being distributed at schools. The Flyer Distribution Form can be found online. Political materials and material promoting “for profit” ventures will not be distributed.

The Superintendent/designee has sole discretion to restrict or prohibit the distribution of non-school-related materials that are pervasively vulgar, lewd, obscene, sexually explicit, libelous, or harmful to students; that promote activities that are illegal or inappropriate for the students of the school; or that disrupts or interferes with school activities.

Classrooms shall be considered closed forums and the distribution and posting of materials shall be limited to school-sponsored activities and those items compatible with the curriculum. Students may be prevented from distributing materials during class time or when the distribution of such materials interferes with classroom instruction, pedagogy and curriculum.

*Approved non-school related materials may be posted in the common areas of a school building that are specifically designated by the building principal or designee for such purpose. The building principal or designee may restrict or prohibit the distribution of non-school related materials if the time and or manner of distribution disrupts or interferes with school activities.

*Approved non-school related materials may be distributed by employees of the school district only as part of "Friday folders" or other packets that regularly contain materials providing information on both school sponsored and non-school related activities and events. In schools where there is no regular weekly packet sent home to parents, the principal or designee will determine the appropriate time, place and manner to distribute approved materials.

ALL Approved non-school related materials must prominently display the following disclaimer: *“These materials are for informational purposes only. The Northwest Local School District does not endorse the persons or organizations providing these materials or the messages contained therein. Unless explicitly stated, the activities promoted are not affiliated with or sponsored by the Northwest Local School District.”*

Photo Release

By signing the handbook, I (parent/guardian) grant permission to Northwest Local School District (NWLSd), its employees, volunteers and agents, to take and use visual/audio images of my student. Visual/audio images are any type of recording, including but not limited to photographs, digital images, drawings, renderings, voices, sounds, video recordings, audio clips or accompanying written descriptions. NWLSd will not materially alter the original images. I agree that NWLSd owns the images and all rights related to them. The images may be used in any manner or media without notifying me, such as NWLSd Web sites, publications, promotions, social media posts, broadcasts, advertisements, posters and other promotional uses. I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished images or any printed or electronic matter that may be used or to be compensated for them.

I (parent/guardian) release NWLSd and its, employees, volunteers and agents, including any firm authorized to publish and/or distribute a finished product containing the images, from any claims, damages or liability which I may ever have in connection with the taking of use of the images or printed material used with the images. I am at least 18 years of age and competent to sign this release. I have read this release before signing, I understand its contents, meaning and impact and I freely accept the terms.

If you do not wish the Northwest Local School District to use your son/daughter's photo and/or name, please notify us **in writing**, including the student's name, grade, and school he/she attends. Please send notification via email or in writing to: Email: Marta Cacini mcacini@nwlsd.org or by mail:

Northwest Local School District
Attn: Marta Cacini
3377 Compton Road, Suite 100, Cincinnati, OH 45239
Phone (513) 923-1000, Ext. 3902
Fax (513) 923-3644

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

(O.R.C. 3319.321)

FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and Ohio law prohibit the release of student records without the written consent of the parent, or student who is 18 years of age or older. An exception is made in the case of "directory information." The directory information is defined to include the student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, date of graduation, and awards. Directory information is considered public information and may be released without parental consent in some cases. Directory information may not be released to an individual or group representing businesses or other profit-making agencies except for private entities contracted by the Northwest Board of Education. If a parent does not want any or all directory information disclosed about his/her child, this objection must be put in writing and sent to:

Northwest Local School District
Public Relations Office
3377 Compton Road, Suite 100, Cincinnati, OH 45239

**NORTHWEST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying**

Complaint Form

A student, parent or guardian may file a complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying pursuant to Board policy. The complaint must be specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Complete this form and submit it to the building principal.

Person(s) _____
involved _____

Time and Place _____

Specifically describe the conduct or incident(s) giving rise to the suspicion of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Continue on back if necessary.

Number of Such Incidents _____

Target of the above-described conduct

Student or Staff Witnesses

Signature and Date

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Response to complaint:

Summary of Disposition (full report attached)

Signature and

Date _____