OTTAWA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

2026 - 2027



OTTAWA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

PARENT – STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

211 East Main Street
Ottawa, Illinois
District 140
www.ottawahigh.com
School Phone (815) 433-1323
Fax (815) 433-1338
Attendance (815) 433-1326 (24 Hour)
School Nurse (815)431-2461
Athletics (815) 431-2401
Counseling (815) 433-1323 Ext. 2494
Special Education (815) 431-2423

SCHOOL SONG
"PEP"

Crimson and white, we're marching onward
Courage and strength we owe to you
To Ottawa may we ever be true, in the life we may pursue
Each boy and girl ever loyal
Each loyal heart beating true, in meeting, defeating
Each task before us
Three cheers Old High for you.
Rah! Rah! Rah!

The rules and regulations contained within this handbook are not to be considered exclusive and are subject to change and revision during the school year. Updates during the school year will be posted to the online version posted at www.ottawahigh.com.

Cover Art by Mar Walker

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Ottawa Township High School, in a cooperative effort with students, parents and community, is to educate students in a safe, positive, challenging environment which promotes responsible citizenship and active lifelong learning.

Ottawa Township High School has the responsibility to:

Help students grow intellectually, personally, physically, and socially in proportion to their abilities to the extent that they will assume an increasing obligation for their own education, personal well-being, and social awareness.

Reaffirm our commitment to a government of the people and to encourage the obligations of good citizenship and respect for law and order.

Guide students in developing skills, attitudes, and habits needed by effective leaders and intelligent followers.

Demonstrate that many fields of knowledge are inter-related and that each area can contribute significantly to student's intellectual growth.

School Offices

MAIN OFFICE - Room 200		**815-433-1323**
Superintendent	Dr. Michael Cushing	
Principal	Mr. Jon Leslie	
STUDENT SERVICES AND ATTENDANCE OFFICE - ROOM 201		**815-433-1326**
Associate Principal	Mr. Jeff DeWalt	
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Jessica Gass	
Assistant Principal	Ms. Kate Lance	
Assistant Principal for Teaching and Learning	Mrs. Kari Benning	
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR - ROOM 401		**815-431-2401**
Athletic Director	Mr. Chad Gross	
COUNSELORS - ROOM 203		**815-433-1323 EXT. 2494**
Class of 2027	Mrs. Jennifer Rios	ext. 2501
Class of 2028	Mrs. Lauren Yates	ext. 3319
Class of 2029	Ms. Heather Dorton	ext. 2412
Class of 2030	Ms. Kate Pillen	ext. 2400
Special Needs – All Classes	Mrs. Emily Pytel	ext. 2448
SPECIAL NEEDS – ROOM 211		**815-433-1323 EXT. 2423**
Director of Special Education	Mrs. Sally Taliani	
School Social Worker	Mrs. Kim Hiland	EXT. 3318
School Social Worker	Mrs. Kylie McAlpine	EXT. 3527
School Psychologist	Mrs. Page Leonard	EXT. 3331
BUSINESS OFFICE – ROOM 206		**815-433-1323 EXT. 2478**
Chief Financial Officer	Mrs. Jyll Zeglis	EXT. 2406

Bell Schedules

3:06 Dismissal Schedule

First	8:00 - 8:46
Second	8:51 - 9:37
PEP	9:42 - 10:12
Third	10:17 – 11:03
Fourth	11:08 - 12:33
4A lunch	11:08 - 11:33
4B lunch	11:38 - 12:03
4C lunch	12:08 - 12:33
Fifth	12:38 - 1:24
Sixth	1:29 - 2:15
Seventh	2:20 - 3:06

2:05 Dismissal Schedule

First	8:00 - 8:38	
Second	8:43 - 9:18	
PEP	9:23 - 9:53	
Third	9:58 - 10:33	
Fourth	10:38 - 12:03	
4A lunch	10:38 - 11:03	
4B lunch	11:08 - 11:33	
4C lunch	11:38 - 12:03	
Fifth	12:08 - 12:43	
Sixth	12:48 - 1:24	
Seventh	1:29 - 2:05	****Buses Depart Promptly at 2:15

NOON SCHEDULE

First	8:00 - 8:30	
Second	8:35 - 9:05	
Third	9:10 - 9:40	
Fourth	9:45 - 10:15	
Fifth	10:20 - 10:50	
Sixth	10:55 - 11:25	
Seventh	11:30 - 12:00	****Buses Depart Promptly at 12:10

BUS SCHEDULE - Buses will arrive at the school parking lot between 7:30 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. and leave the parking lot 10 minutes after the end of the school day. Bus departure will vary due to grade school runs, please check with your bus driver.

SPECIAL SCHEDULES - Special schedules for assemblies, exams, or other special purposes will cause adjustment to the standard schedules. These adjustments will be announced prior to the date of the special schedule.

EXAM SCHEDULE - Exam schedules will be posted in classrooms and on the OTHS website.

Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race, nationality, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity, status of being homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy. Further, the District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status, except that the District remains viewpoint neutral when granting access to school facilities under School Board policy 8:20, Community Use of School Facilities. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using Board policy 2:260, Uniform Grievance Procedure.

Sex Equity

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.
Students wishing to file a sex equity complaint should do so with the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Residency and Registration

STUDENT RESIDENCY

Only students who are residents of the District may attend the District school without a tuition charge, except as otherwise provided below or in State law. A student's residence is the same as the person who has legal custody of the student.

A person asserting legal custody over a student, who is not the child's natural or adoptive parent, shall complete a signed statement, stating: (a) that he or she has assumed and exercises legal responsibility for the child, (b) the reason the child lives with him or her, other than to receive an education in the District, and (c) that he or she exercises full control over the child regarding daily educational and medical decisions in case of emergency. If the District knows the current address of the child's natural or adoptive parent, the District shall request in writing that the person complete a signed statement or Power of Attorney stating: (a) the role and responsibility of the person with whom their child is living, and (b) that the person with whom the child is living has full control over the child regarding daily educational and medical decisions in case of emergency.

A student whose family moves out of the District during the school year will be permitted to attend school for the remainder of the year without payment of tuition.

When a student's change of residence is due to the military service obligation of the student's legal custodian, the student's residence is deemed to be unchanged for the duration of the custodian's military service obligation if the student's custodian made a written request. The District, however, is not responsible for the student's transportation to or from school.

If, at the time of enrollment, a dependent child of military personnel is housed in temporary housing located outside of the District, but will be living within the District within six months after the time of initial enrollment, the child is allowed to enroll, subject to the requirements of State law, and must not be charged tuition.

Requests for Non-resident Student Admission

Non-resident students may attend the District school upon the approval of a request submitted by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) for non-resident admission. The Superintendent may approve the request subject to the following:

1. The student will attend on a year-to-year basis. Approval for any one year is not authorization to attend a following year.
2. The student will be accepted only if there is sufficient room.
3. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be charged the maximum amount of tuition as allowed by State law.
4. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.

Admission of Non-resident Students Pursuant to an Agreement or Order

Non-resident students may attend District schools tuition-free pursuant to:

1. A written agreement with an adjacent school district to provide for tuition-free attendance by a student of that district, provided both the Superintendent or designee and the adjacent district determine that the student's health and safety will be served by such attendance.

2. A written agreement with cultural exchange organizations and institutions supported by charity to provide for tuition-free attendance by foreign exchange students and non-resident pupils of charitable institutions.

3. According to an intergovernmental agreement.

4. Whenever any State or federal law or a court order mandates the acceptance of a non-resident student.

Homeless Children

Any homeless child shall be immediately admitted, even if the child or child's parent/guardian is unable to produce records normally required to establish residency. School Board policy 6:140, Education of Homeless Children, and its implementing administrative procedure, govern the enrollment of homeless children.

Challenging a Student's Residence Status

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a student attending school on a tuition-free basis is a non-resident of the District for whom tuition is required to be charged, he or she on behalf of the School Board shall notify the person who enrolled the student of the tuition amount that is due. The notice shall detail the specific reasons why the Board believes that the student is a non-resident of the District and shall be given by certified mail, return receipt requested. The person who enrolled the student may challenge this determination and request a hearing as provided by the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b.

Fees, Fines and Charges; Waiver of Student Fees

The school establishes fees and charges to fund certain school activities. Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in curricular or extracurricular programs of the school district due to the inability of their parent or guardian to pay fees or certain charges. Students whose parent or guardian is unable to afford student fees may request a fee waiver. A fee waiver does not exempt a student from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and/or equipment. A fee waiver applies to all fees related to school, instruction, and extracurricular activities. Fees must be waived, paid in full, or a payment plan arranged with the OTHS Business Office (815-433-1323, ext. 2478), before a student will be allowed to participate in extracurricular activity.

2026-2027 Fees

- Registration Fee $125.00
- Laptop (Technology) Fee $20.00 (Class of 2028 and after. See Acceptable Use Agreement for Class of 2028 and after for additional information).
- Student parking permits $40.00 (required to park in OTHS student lot). Replacement cost for decal is $3.00. Mid-Year graduates who would like to refund ½ of their parking fees must return the parking permit to the business office (206) by the last school day in January. Permits purchased after January 1 cost $20.00.
- Driver's Education Fee $175.00. Driver's Permit $20.00.
- Replacement cost for barcode decals is $7.00 per book.
- Yearbook $45.00 (optional).
- Some courses which require a workbook or have a lab will have an additional fee. Workbook prices and lab fees are included in the course description in the course catalog.

Registration fee refunds and late entry policy for a student moving into or out of the Ottawa Township High School District are as follows:

Late Entry	Refunds
First nine weeks $125.00	First nine weeks $93.75
Second nine weeks $93.75	Second nine weeks $62.50 (No Refund for Midyear Graduates)
Third nine weeks $62.50	Third nine weeks $31.25
Fourth nine weeks $31.25	Fourth nine weeks No Refund

A $3.00 charge will be assessed for any transcript requests made one year after graduation.

OTHS accepts Visa or MasterCard. A $25.00 NSF charge will be applied to all returned checks.

FEE WAIVERS

Applications for fee waivers may be submitted by a parent or guardian of a student who has been assessed a fee. A student is eligible for a fee waiver if at least one of the following prerequisites is met:

1. The student currently lives in a household that meets the same income guidelines, with the same limits based on household size, that are used for the federal free meals programs;
2. The student's parent is a veteran or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line.

3. The student is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The building principal or his designee will give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:

- An illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations; or
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

The building principal or his designee will notify the parent/guardian promptly as to whether the fee waiver request has been granted or denied. Questions regarding the fee waiver application process or an appeal of the District's decision to deny a fee waiver should be addressed to the building principal.

Pursuant to the Hunger-Free Student's Bill of Rights Act, the school is required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of whether the student has the ability to pay for the meal or snack or owes money for earlier meals or snacks. Students may not be provided with an alternative meal or snack and the school is prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for or owes money for a meal or snack.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE FOOD SERVICES; MEAL CHARGE NOTIFICATION

The following notification is provided to all households of students at the beginning of each school year as federally required notification regarding eligibility requirements and the application process for the free and reduced-price food services that are listed in Board policy 4:130, Free and Reduced-Price Food Services, and 4:140, Waiver of Student Fees. This notification is also provided to households of students transferring to the District during the school year. For more information, see www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/unpaid-meal-charges, and/or contact the Building Principal or designee.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE FOOD SERVICES ELIGIBILITY

When the parents/guardians of students are unable to pay for their child(ren)'s meal services, meal charges will apply per a student's eligibility category and will be processed by the District accordingly.
A student's eligibility for free and reduced-price food services shall be determined by the income eligibility guidelines, family-size income standards, set annually by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and distributed by the Ill. State Board of Education.

MEAL CHARGES FOR MEALS PROVIDED BY THE DISTRICT

The Building Principal and District staff will work jointly to prevent meal charges from accumulating. Every effort to collect all funds due to the District will be made on a regular basis and before the end of the school year. Contact your Building Principal or designee about whether your child(ren)'s charges may be carried over at the end of the school year, i.e., beyond June 30th.
Unpaid meal charges are considered delinquent debt when payment is overdue as defined by Board policy 4:45, Insufficient Fund Checks and Debt Recovery and the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act (105 ILCS 123/). The District will make reasonable efforts to collect charges classified as delinquent debt, including repeated contacts to collect the amounts and, when necessary, requesting that the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) apply for meal benefits to determine if the student qualifies for such benefits under Board policy 4:130, Free and Reduced-Price Food Services. The District will provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one,, regardless of the student's ability to pay or negative account balance.

When a student's funds are low and when there is a negative balance, reminders will be provided to the staff, students, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) at regular intervals during the school year. State law allows the Building Principal to contact parents(s)/guardian(s) to attempt collection of the owed money when the amount owed is more than the amount of five lunches [or insert lower amount]. If a parent/guardian regularly fails to provide meal money for the child(ren) that he/she is responsible for in the District and does not qualify for free meal benefits or refuses to apply for such benefits, the Building Principal or designee will direct the next course of action. Continual failure to provide meal money may require the District to notify the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or take legal steps to recover the unpaid meal charges, up to and including seeking an offset under the State Comptroller Act, if applicable.

DEFERRED FEE PAYMENTS

Students who are unable to qualify under federal guidelines for a fee waiver may make payment arrangements in the Business Office (Room 206).

LUNCH ACCOUNTS

A separate check may be written to apply funds to your son/daughter's lunch account or you may pay on-line at www.ottawahigh.com under Parent Resources, Family Web Access.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

During registration each student will have the opportunity to purchase 24-Hour student accident insurance. The school does carry student accident insurance at no cost for all students for accidents that occur on school property or during a school-sponsored, school-supervised event and is secondary to parent's/guardian's insurance. Student accident insurance does not cover health-related issues. To obtain student insurance claim forms or for more information contact the Athletic Office (815-431-2401). There is no refund for those who purchase 24-Hour insurance.

Education of Homeless Children

Each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths, including a public pre-school education. A homeless child is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and the Ill. Education for Homeless Children Act. The Superintendent or designee shall act as or appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children to coordinate this policy's implementation.

A homeless child may attend the District school that the child attended when permanently housed or in which the child was last enrolled. A homeless child living in any District school's attendance area may attend that school.

The Superintendent or designee shall review and revise rules or procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Transportation shall be provided in accordance with the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and State law. The Superintendent or designee shall give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. If a child is denied enrollment or transportation under this policy, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall immediately refer the child or his or her parent/guardian to the ombudsperson appointed by the Regional Superintendent and provide the child or his or her parent/guardian with a written explanation for the denial.

Whenever a child and his or her parent/guardian who initially share the housing of another person due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar hardship continue to share the housing, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall, after the passage of 18 months and annually thereafter, conduct a review as to whether such hardship continues to exist in accordance with State law.

Parents or guardians should contact the school social worker for assistance and support related to the educational organization, food bank and meal programs, family shelters, medical services, and other supports.

General Information & Procedures

DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES

OTHS provides students with access to the District Technology System, which includes each student having a laptop computer. Eligibility is dependent upon parent/guardian acceptance of the District Technology System Student Responsibilities and Acceptable Use Guidelines which are available at www.ottawahigh.com or by request from the Student Services Office, room 201. Acceptance is included with other parent/guardian permissions included in the registration process that is to be completed before school starts each summer. Please contact the Student Services Office (815)433-1326 with questions or concerns.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Every student must have a current Ottawa Township High School ID card in their possession at all times during the school day and must produce it upon request by OTHS staff. ID cards are required to charge items in the cafeteria to a student's account. Students intending to buy lunch without their ID cards will be sent to the end of the line. ID cards must also be presented to gain entrance to school activities.

CAFETERIA

A few simple rules must be followed when using the cafeteria:

1. ID cards are required to charge items in the cafeteria to a student's account. Students intending to buy lunch without their ID cards will be sent to the end of the line.
2. Students must throw their trash away and return their trays to the proper place. Those who do not will receive a detention or extended day detention.
3. Students in unauthorized areas are subject to detention, extended day detention, or out of school suspension.

STUDENT LUNCHES

The cafeteria is designated as the commons area for lunch periods. Other areas of the grounds are off limits during 4th hour lunches. Students who are outside of the designated commons area without permission will receive a consequence for being out of area.

A full range of entrees is offered in the cafeteria with menus and prices posted. Parents interested in pre-paying are able to do so by contacting the business office or pre-paying at registration. A free lunch program is available

dependent upon need. The proper form must be obtained, completed by parents, and returned to the Main Office. Students are also welcome to bring a lunch from home. **Students may not have food from area restaurants delivered for lunch.**

HALLWAYS

1. Throw waste paper and other trash in the trashcans. Keep our halls clean.
2. Do not block hallways.
3. Loitering in stairways or other unsupervised areas is not permitted.
4. Do not run in hallways.
5. Public display of affection is not permitted.
6. Food and drink are permitted in the hallways before and after school hours. Students are responsible for keeping hallways clean.
7. Kingman Gym is not a hallway, and is not to be used as such for access to the woodshop, voc. tech. building, or student parking lot. Do not cut through the gym as a short cut. All areas of the school are closed throughout the lunch periods with the exception of the passing periods.

FOOD AND DRINK DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Food and drink, except water, is not allowed in hallways or classrooms throughout the school day. Only water is to be brought into classrooms, and this must be in a container with a screw-on lid.

Students are not to access the vending machines in the cafeteria except during their lunch period.

Students are not to eat lunch in classrooms, labs, or other areas outside of the cafeteria.

HALL PASSES

Any student who is in the halls during the school day, except during passing periods, will utilize SmartPass to document their being out of class. A faculty-issued paper pass is required if the destination is not listed in SmartPass. Students without a pass are subject to disciplinary consequences.

LOCKERS AND LOCKS

Each student is assigned a hall locker with a lock for his/her own use. The locker number appears on the student's schedule that is issued during registration. **Students must use their assigned locker only**. If a student has problems with his/her own locker, it should be reported to the Student Services Office, Room 201. **Book bags or any other book carrying type device will be left in the locker during school hours.**

Lockers and other school property are loaned to the student. Therefore, they are subject to be inspected by school officials if it is believed necessary for the safety and/or welfare of the students and/or school; or if there is reasonable suspicion the student has violated or is violating a law or rule of the school.

CANCELLATION DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

School cancellation information will be announced via multiple information sources, including:

- WCMY (1430 AM)
- Automated caller system (Parents are responsible for providing current contact information)
- Posted to the school website, www.ottawahigh.com
- Posted to OTHS social media (Facebook and Twitter) accounts

PHONE CALLS

A student phone is provided in Room 201 for school related business. Students are not to receive passes out of class to use the phone except on an emergency basis. Parents are requested to limit messages to emergencies only. Parents may communicate a message to their student by calling the counseling office, room 203, 815-433-1323 Ext. 2494. **STUDENTS WHO PHONE OR TEXT PARENTS FROM THEIR PERSONAL CELL PHONE, OR RECEIVE TEXT MESSAGES FROM A PARENT ON THEIR PERSONAL CELL PHONE DURING TIMES WHEN CELL PHONE USE IS NOT PERMITTED WILL RECEIVE CONSEQUENCES CONSISTENT WITH THE SCHOOL CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY.**

MESSAGES & NOTES

Due to the disruption to classes, the delivery of personal messages and notes will be made during school hours only in an emergency. Parents who need to get information to their student(s) in an emergency should contact the counseling office (815-433-1323 ext. 2494) and the message will be delivered to the student as soon as possible. The delivery of flowers, balloons, and other gift items will not be allowed at any time. These gifts should be delivered to the student at an alternative location. Deliveries will be limited to items necessary for educational and school related purposes only.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and proceed immediately to the main office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school.

Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag on their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school.

Any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespassing and/or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:
1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local, or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and District policies.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including rollerblading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

Any person who engages in prohibited conduct may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with State law. The person may also be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year.

PARENT COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHER

The proper procedure for parents to communicate with a teacher is as follows:

1. Contact the teacher by phone at school or email to set up a meeting or phone conversation. The school phone number is (815)433-1323.

2. The teacher will return your call or email. If they do not do so in a timely manner, please contact the student services/attendance office and an administrator will see to it that the teacher contacts you at his/her earliest convenience.
3. If a meeting is to take place at school, please sign in at the front desk and come to the student services/attendance office, room 201. The teacher will be notified of your arrival and the meeting will take place in a classroom or office.

SCHOOL VISITATION RIGHTS

The School Visitation Rights Act permits employed parents/guardians, who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict, the right to time off from work under certain conditions to attend necessary school functions such as parent-teacher conferences, academic meetings and behavioral meetings. Letters verifying participation in this program are available from the school office upon request.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS DURING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER HEALTH EMERGENCY

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably. Your child's school and district play an essential role, along with the local health department and emergency management agencies, in protecting the public's health and safety during a pandemic or other health emergency.

During a pandemic or other health emergency, you will be notified in a timely manner of all changes to the school environment and schedule that impact your child. Please be assured that even if school is not physically in session, it is the goal of the school and district to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Additionally, please note the following:

1. All decisions regarding changes to the school environment and schedule, including a possible interruption of in-person learning, will be made by the superintendent in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.
2. Available learning opportunities may include remote and/or blended learning. Blended learning may require your child to attend school on a modified schedule.
3. Students will be expected to participate in blended and remote instruction as required by the school and district. Parents are responsible for assuring the participation of their child. Students who do not participate in blended or remote learning will be considered truant.
4. All school disciplinary rules remain in effect during the interruption of in-person learning. Students are subject to discipline for disrupting the remote learning environment to the same extent that discipline would be imposed for disruption of the traditional classroom.
5. Students and parents will be required to observe all public health and safety measures implemented by the school and district in conjunction with state and local requirements.
6. During a pandemic or other health emergency, the school and district will ensure that educational opportunities are available to all students.
7. School personnel will work closely with students with disabilities and other vulnerable student populations to minimize the impact of any educational disruption.
8. Students who have a compromised immune system, live with an individual with a compromised immune system, or have a medical condition that may impact their ability to attend school during a pandemic or other public health emergency should contact school officials.
9. During a pandemic or other health emergency, teachers and school staff will receive additional training on health and safety measures.
10. In accordance with school district or state mandates, the school may need to conduct a daily health assessment of your child. Parents and students will be notified of the exact assessment procedures if this becomes necessary.
11. Parents should not send their child to school if their child exhibits any symptoms consistent with the pandemic or other health emergency.

12. Please do not hesitate to contact school or district officials if you have any concerns regarding your child's education, health or safety.

PROFESSIONAL AND APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others. In addition, the Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated by reference into this policy. Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, GROOMING BEHAVIORS, AND BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS

Child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations harm students, their parent/guardian, the District's environment, its school communities, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn.

Warning signs of child sexual abuse include the following.

- Physical signs:
    - Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or other genital infections
    - Signs of trauma to the genital area, such as unexplained bleeding, bruising, or blood on the sheets, underwear, or other clothing
    - Unusual weight gain or loss
- Behavioral signs:
    - Excessive talk about or knowledge of sexual topics
    - Keeping secrets
    - Not talking as much as usual
    - Not wanting to be left alone with certain people or being afraid to be away from primary caregivers
    - Regressive behaviors or resuming behaviors that the child had grown out of, such as thumb sucking or bedwetting
    - Overly compliant behavior
    - Sexual behavior that is inappropriate for the child's age
    - Spending an unusual amount of time alone
    - Trying to avoid removing clothing to change or bathe
- Emotional signs:
    - Change in eating habits or unhealthy eating patterns, like loss of appetite or excessive eating
    - Signs of depression, such as persistent sadness, lack of energy, changes in sleep or appetite, withdrawing from normal activities, or feeling "down"
    - Change in mood or personality, such as increased aggression
    - Decrease in confidence or self-image
    - Anxiety, excessive worry, or fearfulness
    - Increase in unexplained health problems such as stomach aches and headaches
    - Loss or decrease in interest in school, activities, and friends
    - Nightmares or fear of being alone at night
    - Self-harming behaviors or expressing thoughts of suicide or suicidal behavior
    - Failing grades
    - Drug or alcohol use

School and District employees are expected to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels.
Prohibited grooming is defined as (i) any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, (ii) by an employee with direct contact with a student, (iii) that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student.

Examples of grooming behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Sexual or romantic invitations to a student
- Dating or soliciting a date from a student
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog with a student
- Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
- Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- Sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student
- Failing to respect boundaries or listening when a student says "no"
- Engaging in touching that a student or student's parents/guardians have indicated is unwanted
- Trying to be a student's friend rather than filling an adult role in the student's life
- Failing to maintain age-appropriate relationships with students
- Talking with students about personal problems or relationships
- Spending time alone with a student outside of their role in the student's life or making up excuses to be alone with a student
- Expressing unusual interest in a student's sexual development, such as commenting on sexual characteristics or sexualizing normal behaviors
- Giving a student gifts without occasion or reason
- Spending a lot of time with a student
- Restricting a student's access to other adults

School and District employees breach employee-student boundaries when they misuse their position of power over a student in a way that compromises the student's health, safety, or general welfare.
Examples of boundary violations include:

- Favoring a certain student by inviting the student to "hang out" or by granting special privileges
- Engaging in peer-like behavior with a student
- Discussing personal issues with a student
- Meeting with a student off-campus without parent/guardian knowledge and/or permission
- Dating, requesting, or participating in a private meeting with a student (in person or virtually) outside of a professional role
- Transporting a student in a school or private vehicle without administrative authorization
- Giving gifts, money, or treats to an individual student
- Sending a student on personal errands
- Intervening in a serious student problem instead of referring the student to an appropriately trained professional
- Sexual or romantic invitations toward or from a student
- Taking and using photos/videos of students for non-educational purposes
- Initiating or extending contact with a student beyond the school day in a one-on-one or non-group setting
- Inviting a student to an employee's home
- Adding a student on personal social networking sites as contacts when unrelated to a legitimate educational purpose
- Privately messaging a student
- Maintaining intense eye contact with a student
- Making comments about a student's physical attributes, including excessively flattering comments
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- Making sexually suggestive comments directed toward or with a student
- Disclosing confidential information
- Self-disclosure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- Full frontal hugs
- Invading personal space

If you believe you are a victim of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or boundary violations, or you believe that your child is a victim, you should immediately contact the Building Principal, a school counselor, or another trusted adult employee of the school.

Additional Resources include:

- National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) National Sexual Abuse Chatline at online.rainn.org

- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE (2-2873)
- Illinois State Board of Education Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Resource Guide at Faiths-Law-Resource-Guide.pdf (isbe.net)

ACCESS TO NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On-Campus

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the School District.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or sexting as defined by School Board policy and the Parent-Student Handbook;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use; or
5. *Encourages or* incites students to violate any Board policies.

Accessing or distributing on-campus includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.

Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT DISTRIBUTION OF NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS

A student or group of students seeking to distribute more than 10 copies of the same material on one or more days to students must comply with the following guidelines:

- The student(s) must notify the Associate Principal of the intent to distribute, in writing, at least 24 hours before distributing the material. No prior approval of the material is required.
- The material may be distributed at times and locations selected by the Building Principal, e.g., before the beginning or ending of classes at a central location inside the building.
- The Building Principal may impose additional requirements whenever necessary to prevent disruption, congestion, or the perception that the material is school-endorsed.
- Distribution must be done in an orderly and peaceful manner, and may not be coercive.
- The distribution must be conducted in a manner that does not cause additional work for school personnel. Students who distribute material are responsible for cleaning up any materials left on school grounds.
- Students must not distribute material that:
    - Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;
    - Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to, material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;
    - Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the students' maturity level, including but not limited to, material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or sexting as defined by School Board policy and Student Handbook;
    - Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use; or
    - Incites students to violate any Board policy.
- A student may use the School District's Uniform Grievance Procedure to resolve a complaint.

- Whenever these guidelines require written notification, the appropriate administrator may assist the student in preparing such notification.

A student or group of students seeking to distribute 10 or fewer copies of the same publication on one or more days to students must distribute such material at times and places and in a manner that will not cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities and in compliance with paragraphs 4, 5, 6, and 7.

ANNUAL NOTICE TO PARENTS ABOUT EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY VENDORS UNDER THE STUDENT ONLINE PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT

School districts throughout the State of Illinois contract with different educational technology vendors for beneficial K-12 purposes such as providing personalized learning and innovative educational technologies, and increasing efficiency in school operations.

Under Illinois' Student Online Personal Protection Act, or SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/), educational technology vendors and other entities that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes are referred to in SOPPA as operators. SOPPA is intended to ensure that student data collected by operators is protected, and it requires those vendors, as well as school districts and the Ill. State Board of Education, to take a number of actions to protect online student data.

Depending upon the particular educational technology being used, our District may need to collect different types of student data, which is then shared with educational technology vendors through their online sites, services, and/or applications. Under SOPPA, educational technology vendors are prohibited from selling or renting a student's information or from engaging in targeted advertising using a student's information. Such vendors may only disclose student data for K-12 school purposes and other limited purposes permitted under the law.

In general terms, the types of student data that may be collected and shared include personally identifiable information (PII) about students or information that can be linked to PII about students, such as:

- Basic identifying information, including student or parent/guardian name and student or parent/guardian contact information, username/password, student ID number
- Demographic information
- Enrollment information
- Assessment data, grades, and transcripts
- Attendance and class schedule
- Academic/extracurricular activities
- Special indicators (e.g., disability information, English language learner, free/reduced meals or homeless/foster care status)
- Conduct/behavioral data
- Health information
- Food purchases
- Transportation information
- In-application performance data
- Student-generated work
- Online communications
- Application metadata and application use statistics
- Permanent and temporary school student record information

Operators may collect and use student data only for K-12 purposes, which are purposes that aid in the administration of school activities, such as:

- Instruction in the classroom or at home (including remote learning)
- Administrative activities
- Collaboration between students, school personnel, and/or parents/guardians
- Other activities that are for the use and benefit of the school district

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Parents/guardians may request information about the qualifications of their student's teachers and paraprofessionals, including:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification and licensing criteria have been waived;
- Whether the teacher is teaching in a field of discipline of the teacher's certification; and
- Whether any instructional aides or paraprofessionals provide services to your student and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the school office.

STUDENT PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

Surveys by Third Parties

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request. This applies to every survey: (1) that is created by a person or entity other than a district official, staff member, or student, (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified, and (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Parents who object to disclosure of information concerning their child to a third party may do so in writing to the building principal.

Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one or more of the following items:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Behavior or attitudes about sex.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
8. Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

The student's parent/guardian may: (1) inspect the survey or evaluation upon, and within a reasonable time of, their request, and/or (2) refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

Instructional Material

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon their request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

Selling or Marketing Students' Personal Information Is Prohibited

No school official or staff member may market or sell personal information concerning students (or otherwise provide that information to others for that purpose). The term personal information means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent's first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) a telephone number, (4) a Social Security identification number or (5) driver's license number or State identification card.

The above paragraph does not apply: (1) if the student's parent/guardian have consented; or (2) to the collection, disclosure or, use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

TITLE I - DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

From the Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A Non-Regulatory Guidance (April 23, 2004)

PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Ottawa Township High School District 140 agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs, consistent with section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Those programs, activities and procedures, including the process of school review and improvement under section 1116, will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

- Consistent with section 1118, the school district will work to ensure that the required school-level parental involvement policies meet the requirements of section 1118(b) of the ESEA, and each include, as a component, a school-parent compact consistent with section 1118(d) of the ESEA.

- The school district will incorporate this districtwide parental involvement policy into its LEA plan developed under section 1112 of the ESEA.

- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parental involvement requirements, to the extent practicable, the school district will provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111 of the ESEA in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.

- If the LEA plan for Title I, Part A, developed under section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.

- The school district will involve the parents of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parental involvement is spent, and will ensure that not less than 95 percent of the 1 percent reserved goes directly to the schools.

- The school district will provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under section 1118 of the ESEA as the parents may request.

- The school district will be governed by the following statutory definition of parental involvement, and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parental involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring—

(A) that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;

(B) that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;

(C) that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child;

(D) the carrying out of other activities, such as those described in section 1118 of the ESEA.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Ottawa Township High School District 140 will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its districtwide parental involvement plan under section 1118 of the ESEA:

- Membership on OTHS School Improvement Team
- Membership on OTHS Handbook Committee

Ottawa Township High School District 140 will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review and improvement under section 1116 of the ESEA:

- Participation on OTHS School Improvement Team
- Participation on OTHS Handbook Committee
- Participation in Title I Parent Meetings

Ottawa Township High School District 140 will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement

activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:

- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Title I Parent Meetings
- Tutoring Options
- ACCESS Reports to Parents
- Open Houses for 8th grade, freshman, and all school.
- Report Cards
- Access to Student Management System

Ottawa Township High School District 140 coordinates and integrates parental involvement strategies in Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs such as: Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Parents as Teachers, Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and state-operated preschool programs by:

Ottawa Township High School District 140 is a 9-12 district; therefore, it does not have pre-school or early elementary programming.

Ottawa Township High School District 140 will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents), its parental involvement policies.

Ottawa Township High School District 140 will build school and parent capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following activities specifically described below:

The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following, by undertaking these actions: the state's academic content standards, the state's student academic achievement standards, the state and local academic assessments including alternate assessments, the requirements of Part A, how to monitor their child's progress, and how to work with educators:

- Parent Teacher Conferences
- Title I Parent Meetings
- Freshman Academy Parent Contacts
- Tutoring Options
- ACCESS Reports to Parents
- Open House
- Report Cards
- Access to Student Management System
- OTHS Parent/Student Handbook & Committee
- Board of Education Meetings and Reports

The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

- Assessment and placement information
- Materials and resources are available for parents in the counseling office (Room 203) regarding:
    - Testing taking strategies
    - Homework strategies
    - Getting good grades strategies

- Skyward Access
- Taking notes
- Getting organized
- Writing a paper
- Reading a textbook
- Succeeding in class

The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by providing professional development in the areas of:

- Skyward Student Management System
- Creation and development of Teacher Web pages and class Microsoft Teams pages
- E-mail account use
- How to have successful parent/teacher meetings

The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, Home Instruction Programs for Preschool Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, public preschool, and other programs. The school will also conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- Ottawa Township High School District 140 is a 9-12 district and does not have pre-school or early elementary programming.

The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent-programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. Parents can check for information through the following methods:

- All School Mailings
- Web Site
- Student Management System
- Parental Notification System
- Newspaper
- Radio
- OTHS Publications such as the Parent/Student Handbook

PART III. DISCRETIONARY DISTRICTWIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

The Districtwide Parental Involvement Policy may include additional paragraphs listing and describing other discretionary activities that the school district, in consultation with its parents, chooses to undertake to build parents' capacity for involvement in the school and school system to support their children's academic achievement, such as the following discretionary activities listed under section 1118(e) of the ESEA:

- Involving parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training
- Providing necessary literacy training for parents from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for that training
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parental involvement activities, including transportation and childcare costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions
- Training parents to enhance the involvement of other parents
- Arranging school meetings at a variety of times or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, arrange meetings with parents who are unable to attend conferences at school; in order to maximize parental involvement and participation in their children's education
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving parental involvement

- Establishing a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in Title I, Part A programs
- Developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in parental involvement activities

PART IV. ADOPTION

This Districtwide Parental Involvement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs. This policy was adopted by the Ottawa Township High School District 140 on March 17, 2014 and will be in effect through FY2016. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before August 13, 2015.

Academic Information

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduates must complete 8 semesters of full-time student status. This means that students must carry at least 4 classes and PE for 8 semesters. (The only exception to this requirement is seniors who have applied and have been approved for early graduation)

Course/Credit Requirements - Total of 40 credits or more

English – 8 credits*

Math – 6 credits (2 credits from Algebra I and 2 credits from a course that includes geometry content. 2 credits may be acquired via successful completion of an Advanced Placement computer science course with approval of the Associate Principal.

Science – 4 credits of laboratory science (2 credits from Biology and 2 credits from the Physical Sciences: Geoscience, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy, Geology, Meteorology).

Social Science – 4 credits (2 credits from U.S. History are required. Every student must take World History and American Government)

Consumer Education – 1 credit (Applied Consumer Economics, Economics, Personal Finance, Introduction to Business, Cooperative Education, or Agribusiness Management)

Fine Arts, World Language, or Career and Technical Education – 2 credits

Health – 1 credit

PE –7 credits (7 semesters). PE waivers may be granted to junior and senior students who are varsity athletes, or are in marching band (fall only), or have a seventh academic class in their schedule for the purpose of college preparation or credit recovery. All waiver options require completion of a waiver form.

***Intensive Writing Courses** – 4 credits from intensive writing courses, two of which may be English and the other two of which may be English or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other graduation requirements.

Computer Literacy - For students first entering high school in the 2022-23 school year, one year of a course that includes intensive instruction in computer literacy, which may be English, social studies, or any other subject and which may be counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation requirements.

TESTING - Must pass an examination on patriotism, principles of representative government, and proper use and display of the American flag. Must take the ACT.

FAFSA – Must complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or FAFSA opt-out form. Students have two avenues for assistance with the FAFSA, both accessible in room 203: 1. Their counselor; 2. The ISAC representative for OTHS.

Attendance – In order to graduate from OTHS, a student must have eight semesters of attendance. Seniors who have all of their credits/requirements completed by the end of the 7th semester may petition for early graduation. A student must be enrolled for a minimum of four academics and P.E. for the full semester to meet this requirement. A petition for summer school or a college course must be approved by the Principal before the start of the class.

ACADEMIC COURSE LOAD

Minimum Course Load per semester = 5 academic classes, 1 study hall, and physical education

Recommended Course Load per semester = 6 academic classes and physical education

Every student must successfully complete a physical education class each semester, except as follows:

10th grade

Students enrolled in health may replace one semester of P. E.

11th and 12th grade

A student may receive a waiver out of PE for one of the following reasons:

- Per individualized education plan (IEP) – utilization of PE time to receive special education support services
- To enroll in academic classes for students to meet post-secondary entrance requirements
- To enroll in courses required for student to graduate with his/her class
- On-going participation in an interscholastic athletic program
- On-going participation in Marching Band

Marching Band or Athletic Waiver Guidelines:

1. Students must report to PE on the first day of the semester to receive the waiver form. All other information pertaining to the waiver is on the form.

GRADES, CLASS RANK AND RELATED TOPICS

Letter grades are used for all subjects, A, B, C, D, and F (failure, no credit). A special education student may receive any of the grades, A, B, C, D, or F depending upon the teacher's evaluation. No student is considered a special needs student unless designated by proper testing and a multidisciplinary staffing.

An incomplete (I) will be assigned to a student who finds it impossible because of reasons beyond his or her control, such as illness, to complete the required work by the end of the semester.

- All work for a 1st semester Incomplete must be completed and submitted to the teacher within 6 weeks of the first day of school in second semester.
    - Students who are seniors must complete and turn in work by the first day of the second semester to accommodate placement into another course to meet graduation requirements second semester.
- All work for a 2nd semester Incomplete must be completed and submitted to the teacher within 6 weeks of the last day of school in second semester.
- The student's grade will be adjusted as soon as all work to be completed is submitted and graded or after the 6 weeks has expired. Students will earn zero credit for work not submitted and this will be reflected in the final grade awarded.
- Students with special circumstances may petition the principal or their designee for extended time.
- The grade of "I" carries no credit, therefore courses carrying that grade may not be counted toward scholastic eligibility for IHSA events.

Honor reports will be issued at each nine-week grading quarter to students with four subjects that earn 13 honor points, with five subjects that earn 16 honor points, and with six subjects that earn 19 honor points. Classes, *excluding the behind the wheel portion of driver education*, with a grade of "D, F, or I" will disqualify a report for honor status regardless of the number of honor points. If there is an update to a reported grade a new report card is printed, copies available on request.

Ottawa Honor Roll requirement is a 3.167 grade point average.

Ottawa Honor Society requirement is a 3.5 grade point average.

Grade reports will be issued every nine weeks. All nine-week grades are temporary grades and should be used to determine the student's progress during the semester. Progress may be checked online through the OTHS website (www.ottawahigh.com) using the student's identification number and password. The permanent grade will be the final mark for each semester.

ACADEMIC GRADES	Regular Course Point Value	Weighted Course Point Value
A ---------Outstanding Achievement	4.0	5.0
B----------High Quality	3.0	4.0
C----------Average	2.0	3.0
D ---------Below Average	1.0	1.0
F ----------Failing – Not Sufficient for Credit	0.0 No Credit	0.0
P ----------Medical Excuse/Pre-Excused	0.0 No Credit	0.0
I----------Incomplete	0.0 No Credit	0.0

W---------Sports Waiver ----------0.0 No Credit----------0.0
M --------Medical Excuse ----------0.0 No Credit----------0.0

CLASS RANK
Class rank is determined by the total number of GPA points.

CREDIT RECOVERY – GPA-CLASS RANK
School Year Credit Recovery classes (Apex online learning program and repeating a course in the regular classroom setting) will be graduation-credit and will be applied to the student's GPA and Class Rank.

Summer Credit Recovery classes (Apex online learning program and in-person summer classes) will be graduation-credit-only and will not be applied to the student's GPA or Class Rank.

CALCULATION OF 9-WEEK AND SEMESTER GRADES
Performance over the entirety of the semester will determine the student's grades. Each of the two 9-week grades will reflect the student's cumulative average for work completed up to that point in the semester. The semester grade will be calculated using the final average for coursework and the score on the final exam. 90% of the semester grade will come from the student's cumulative average for the two 9-week grading periods. The other 10% will come from the final exam score.

MASTERY INITIATIVE
OTHS has implemented a mastery initiative allowing students the opportunity to relearn material and retake an assessment to better their grade. Complete information regarding the Mastery Initiative can be referenced on the school website, www.ottawahigh.com, under Student Resources.

LATE WORK GUIDELINES
- Late work guidelines cover short-term/daily assignments. The teacher has discretion over and will inform students of his/her policy for papers, projects, labs, etc.
- Students must be allowed a minimum of 5 school days after the original due date to turn in late work.
- Teachers may extend deadlines at their discretion.
- Teachers may adjust point deductions up to a maximum of 10% from the earned final grade per late day at their discretion (50% maximum).
- Following an absence:
    - Work assigned prior to an absence that is due during the absence is due the day the student returns to school to be considered on time.
    - Students will have no less than the number of days absent to complete work assigned during an absence before it will be counted as late.
    - The 5 days is in addition to the number of days absent following return from any absence.
        - If a student is absent Monday and Tuesday, work turned in Wednesday and/or Thursday is on time and is worth full credit. Work turned in Friday through the following Thursday is applicable to the late work policy.
- **All work is due the last day of the semester, regardless of date assigned, unless the student has an <u>excused</u> absence on that date.**

GRADING AND PROMOTION
The Superintendent shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents/guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, and/or other assessments. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. The administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted.

Every teacher shall maintain an evaluation record for each student in the teacher's classroom. A District administrator cannot change the final grade assigned by the teacher without notifying the teacher. Reasons for changing a student's final grade include:
- A miscalculation of test scores,

- A technical error in assigning a particular grade or score,
- The teacher agrees to allow the student to do extra work that may impact the grade,
- An inappropriate grading system used to determine the grade, or
- An inappropriate grade based on an appropriate grading system.

When a grade change is made, the administrator making the change must sign the changed record.

FINAL EXAM ATTENDANCE

Students are required to take final exams during the scheduled exam period unless there is an excused absence. Students may only take an exam early if permission has been granted by administration. Students having excused absences during exams have the responsibility of re-scheduling a time to make up the exam with the teacher.

HONORS/ADVANCED PLACEMENT/DUAL CREDIT COURSES

Ottawa Township High School offers courses at the Honors level. Students enrolled in Honors courses experience a more in-depth and challenging study of the subject matter at an accelerated pace of instruction. Honors courses are so noted on the official transcript.

Successful completion, a grade of C or better, of the previous course in the honors/weighted course sequence is the prerequisite for placement in subsequent weighted coursework.

Students must earn a grade of "A", "B", or "C" during each nine-week grading period and for the semester cumulative grade to maintain placement and to earn a weighted grade.

Students taking dual credit and/or weighted courses must take the final exam for each semester they are enrolled in the course.

Dual Credit status is dependent upon teacher credentials and may be edited at any time.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:
Advanced Placement Courses are college level courses taken as a part of a high school program. AP courses offer students the opportunity to take courses with more challenging college–level content. Students who participate in AP courses are better prepared to take the AP exams, administered each May by the College Board at OTHS. These exams are scored on a scale of 1–5. Students scoring between a 3 and 5 may qualify for college credit at most colleges and universities. To find more information visit the College Board Advanced Placement website at www.collegeboard.com.

Dual Credit Courses:
Ottawa Township High School offers students the option of being dually enrolled with IVCC for qualifying classes. An OTHS student taking a dual credit course can earn OTHS credit, and by registering with IVCC, can earn college credit at the same time. Potential dual credit enrollment students must meet all IVCC admission guidelines, which may include IVCC placement exams prior to enrolling. Students who do not meet IVCC admissions guidelines may enroll in a dual credit course taught at OTHS, for which they may earn OTHS credit only. Please see Mrs. Swords in room 203 for additional information.

Weighted Math Courses and Class Rank:
Weight may be earned in a maximum of four mathematics courses. In the event a student takes five weighted math courses, weight will be calculated based on the four classes nearest the student's graduation date.

Level Change Information:
Level changes out of weighted courses by student/parent request must take place by the first Progress Report (midpoint of the first 9-week grading period) for the class. Level changes for year-long courses may also be made at the end of 1st semester.

Level changes out of weighted courses due to failure to maintain a cumulative average of at least 70% (grade of C) may take place at each 9-week midpoint, ends of each 9 weeks, and ends of semester.

Level changes for Dual Credit courses will be determined on an individual basis per IVCC guidelines.

Weighted Courses:

Honors English I	Honors Algebra I
Honors English II	Honors Geometry

Honors English III
Advanced Speech (Dual Credit)
Advanced Composition (Dual Credit)
AP English Literature and Composition

Honors Algebra II/Trigonometry
Honors Pre-Calculus
AP Calculus

Honors Biology
Honors Chemistry
Advanced Biology
Accelerated Physics
Advanced Chemistry (Dual Credit)

Honors World History
AP American Government
AP United States History

AP 2D Studio Art

Dual Credit CTE Courses (not weighted):

Computer Concepts (Juniors and Seniors only)
CAD I
Vocational Child Care

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE RESOURCE FOR ATHLETES

The NCAA has passed rules now governing both Division I and Division II member institutions that determine eligibility for freshman athletes. A sliding scale between grade point average and SAT/ACT is used by the clearinghouse to determine whether the student qualifies. **These requirements must be achieved to be eligible to practice and compete on all intercollegiate athletic teams during the first year of collegiate attendance with or without scholarship assistance.** Visit the NCAA web site for core course requirements. Use **143340** as the school code for OTHS.

Student-athletes and parents should meet with their guidance counselor during the freshman year to map out a four-year plan that meets the NCAA academic requirements. **Keep in mind that Ottawa Township High School must submit core courses on a yearly basis. Students interested in college athletics should follow the college core classes.**

Testing and Core Course Credits

- ACT or SAT can be taken: National and State exams are accepted
- The sum of the sub scores: English, math, reading and science are calculated
- Requires four years in each core area (English, mathematics, science, social science)
- NCAA will NOT accept ACT/SAT scores on the transcript
- Use code 9999 when completing ACT registration applications

Comparing grades with test scores

- ACT or SAT sum of scores are compared to the core courses GPA
- No weight is added to any GPA
- A sliding scale issued: Division I core course minimum GPA of 2.3. Division II core course minimum GPA of 2.2.

How can I tell if I will be eligible?

- Talk to your counselor and coach!
- Download approved course handout that lists acceptable OTHS courses (see next page)
- Registering through the NCAA Clearinghouse will give absolute answer

How and when do I register?

- Register at the beginning of your sophomore year
- Prospective athletes can register online at www.eligibilitycenter.org
- NCAA will generate a report indicating deficiencies
- NCAA will not accept ACT scores on your transcript. You must have scores sent directly from ACT either by using code 9999 when registering for a National Test date or by contacting ACT

What Can Parents Do?

- Help your athlete remain eligible to play during the school year

- Be informed on the NCAA Clearing house: www.ncaa.org/playcollegesports
- Help with selecting the college and coach
- Work with your counselor throughout this process

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE LIST OF APPROVED CORE COURSES
(The list of approved courses may change, please check with your counselor)

English
English I
Honors English I
English II
Honors English II
English III
Honors English III
English IV
Advanced Speech
AP English Literature & Composition
Advanced Composition
Creative Writing

Mathematics
Algebra A **(.5 credit/year)**
Algebra B **(.5 credit/year)**
Algebra I
Honors Algebra I
Geometry
Honors Geometry
Algebra II
Honors Algebra II/Trig
Pre-Calculus
Honors Pre-Calculus
AP Calculus

Science
Biology
Honors Biology
Chemistry
Honors Chemistry
Advanced Biology
Advanced Chemistry
Astronomy
Ecology
Environmental Science
Geology
Human Anatomy and Physiology
Meteorology
Physical Science

Physics
Accelerated Physics
Topics in Physics

Social Science
World History
Honors World History
American Government
AP American Government
AP U.S. History
U.S. History
Current Problems
Economics
Minorities
Personality and Behavior
Psychology
Sociology
State & Local History

World language
German I, II, III, & IV
Spanish I, II, III, IV

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM POLICY

Cheating, plagiarism, and/or academic dishonesty in ANY FORM will not be tolerated at Ottawa Township High School. Any student who engages in such behavior is subject to academic consequences up to and including loss of course credit.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The policies, procedures, and information herein are applicable as inclusive of the rules related to students' use of technology per the OTHS Parent-Student Handbook, OTHS District Technology System Student Responsibilities and Acceptable Use Guidelines, and Board of Education policy.

"Artificial intelligence" or "AI" is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning.

Examples of AI

Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

Ethical Use

Users must not employ AI to engage in activities that are illegal, unethical, or harmful, including but not limited to cheating, cyberbullying, or spreading misinformation. Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

Academic Integrity

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes academic dishonesty. In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software to ensure academic integrity.

Privacy and Security

Personal data and sensitive information should be protected when using AI technologies. Users must adhere to data privacy laws and school policies.

AI systems should not be used to collect, store, or share personal information without explicit consent.

Consequences of Misuse

Violations of these standards may result in academic penalties, including but not limited to loss of access to district technology, loss of credit on assigned work, or other appropriate measures as determined by school administration.

STUDENT RECORDS

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school busses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes, though such electronic recordings may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the District receives a request for access.

The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copy rights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent/guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the District may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access. The District charges $.35 per page for copying but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost.

These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.

2. The right to have one or more scores received on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript.
Parents/guardians or eligible students may have one or more scores on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript. The District will include scores on college entrance examinations upon the written request of the parent/guardian or eligible student stating the name of each college entrance examination that is the subject of the request and the dates of the scores that are to be included.

3. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/ guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.
A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the District to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought.

If the District decides not to amend the record, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

4. The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.
Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.

Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; to another school district that overlaps attendance boundaries with the District, if the District has entered into an intergovernmental agreement that allows for sharing of student records and information with the other district; any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; *to the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) for the sole purpose of assessing or evaluating the student's eligibility for Medicaid waiver benefits consistent with the rules adopted by the DHS;* and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

5. The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.
The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent/guardian or to the student, if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.

6. The right to prohibit the release of directory information.
Throughout the school year, the District may release directory information regarding students, limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Grade level
- Birth date and place
- Parent/guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
- Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sporting or fine arts programs
- Academic awards, degrees, and honors
- Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
- Major field of study
- Period of attendance in school

Any parent/guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.

7. The right to request that military recruiters, institutions of higher learning, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission not be granted access to your student's information without your prior written consent.
Federal law requires a secondary school to grant military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon their request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers, unless the student's parent/guardian, or a student who is 18 years of age or older, submits a written request that the information not be released without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. Similarly, State law requires a secondary school to provide to military recruiters, public institutions of higher education, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission access to the same types of information, in addition to a secondary student's birth date, unless the student's parent/guardian submits a written request before the end of the student's sophomore year (or if the student is a transfer student, by another time set by the District) that such information not be released. If you wish to opt your child out of the release of this information so that it is not released without your prior written consent, notify the building principal where your student is enrolled for further instructions. Students age 18 and older may also opt out by contacting the building principal for further instructions.

8. The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.

9. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.
The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education
Student Privacy Policy Office
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington DC 20202-8520

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED PUBLICATIONS, PRODUCTIONS, AND WEBSITES

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are governed by the Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act, school board policies and the student/parent handbook. Student journalists are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of those publications, productions, and websites.

Student journalists must:

1. Make decisions based upon news value and guided by the Code of Ethics provided by the Society of Professional Journalists, National Scholastic Press Association, Journalism Education Association, or other relevant group;
2. Produce media based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness;
3. Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
4. Check and verify all facts and verify the accuracy of all quotations;

5. In the use of personal opinions, editorial statements, and/or letters to the editor, provide opportunity and space for the expression of differing opinions within the same media to align with the District's media literacy curriculum mandate; and
6. Include an author's name with any personal opinions and editorial statements, if appropriate.

Student journalists may not create, produce, or distribute school sponsored media that:

1. Is libelous, slanderous, or obscene;
2. Constitutes and unwarranted invasion of privacy;
3. Violates Federal or State law, including the constitutional rights of third parties; or
4. Incites students to (a) commit an unlawful act; (b) violate any school district policy or student handbook procedure; or (c) materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operations of the school.

The District will not engage in prior restraint of material prepared by student journalists for school-sponsored media, unless the material fits into one of the four prohibited categories listed above, in which case the Building Principal, or other District Administrator, and/or student media advisers may review, edit, and delete such media material before publication or distribution of the media.
No expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press under this policy shall be deemed to be an expression of the School, District or an expression of Board policy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION INFORMATION

P.E. Locks
The school will furnish a P.E. lock. If the lock is lost, another lock will be furnished at replacement cost ($7.25). Forgetting the combination will not be an excuse for not dressing. Students will be assigned their own lock and locker and must use only that locker. As with hall lockers, P.E. lockers are loaned to the student. Therefore, they are subject to be inspected by the administration if it is believed necessary for the safety and/or welfare of the student and/or school. OTHS is not responsible for items stolen or removed from lockers.

P.E. Uniform
Students will be required to wear a P.E. Uniform consisting of:

- Ottawa t-shirt (white or grey)
- Athletic shorts, yoga pants, joggers, or sweatpants (black, grey, or red)
    - Pajama pants, skorts, jeans, cargo pants, etc., will not be accepted
- Tennis Shoes

Students who have fees waived will continue to get the Ottawa P.E. shirt and red shorts.
The physical education department has P.E. shirts and shorts available at all times for purchase at a reasonable cost. Clean rental uniforms are also available to students daily.
NOTE: If weather or modesty dictates, the student may wear a sweatshirt.

Students are required to dress daily for P.E. since it is an essential part of the physical education learning process. Students earn 30% of their semester grade by dressing and being prepared for class. After 10 no dresses, a student's classroom readiness grade will be a zero. You will see this grade reflected in the gradebook, titled classroom readiness.

Failure of a physical education class will require the student to retake the class. The student may need to schedule two PE classes during the same semester in order to complete requirements.

P.E. Medical Excuses
Short-Term Medical Excuse:

A. A parent's note may excuse a student from participation for up to three days. A doctor's excuse must be submitted to the physical education teacher to be excused from activity up to five days. Any student being excused up to five days must dress in his/her P.E. uniform and report to his/her physical education teacher. DO NOT REPORT TO THE NURSE. Written homework will be assigned to be completed for credit to replace participation during these classes.

B. If the doctor's excuse is for longer than five days, the student should report to the school nurse.

Long-Term Medical Excuse:

A. A student who will have a medical excuse for an entire semester or year should report to the school nurse before the start of the semester/year. The student should see his/her counselor to discuss credit and grading options for

long-term medical excuses.

B. Students who have a medical excuse from PE must participate in their PE class a minimum of nine (9) weeks during the semester to earn credit. The semester grade will be determined by the grade earned during days of participation.

C. Students who are on a long-term medical (over a 9 week grading period) can choose to do weekly course work to obtain P.E. credit. Students must discuss this option with their counselor so arrangements can be made with the P.E. teacher.

Sports and Marching Band Waivers:
Students must participate in PE until the Friday before the start of practice for waivers beginning after the start of a semester and must return to participation in PE on the Monday following conclusion of the season for waivers ending after the start of a semester. The semester grade will be determined by the grade earned during days of participation.

Religious Exemption:
A student may be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of physical education during a period of religious fasting upon written notice from the student's parent/guardian.

STUDY HALL

Study halls are designed to provide students with time and a place to complete academic work. Students should bring study materials with them. **Sleeping and card playing are not allowed in study hall.**

DRIVER EDUCATION

Driver Education is a privilege, not a right. Students earn one credit for successfully completing Driver Education.

Registration Fees:
Permit - $20.00
School Year - $175.00
Summer - $230.00

Students must earn eight credit hours during the previous two semesters to be eligible for Driver Education.

Students may not check in and out of school to attend driving class only.

Students must satisfactorily complete 30 class hours of instruction before moving to behind the wheel instruction. Students who accumulate three days of absence while enrolled in Driver Education will be dropped from the program on the fourth absence, as they are no longer able to meet this requirement. Students may make up time for a maximum of three absences by scheduling time during PEP with Mr. Davis, Driver's Education Lead Teacher, within five school days of the absence. Example: If a student is absent two days, and makes up two days upon return with Mr. Davis, the accumulated absences returns to zero. If the student misses four more days a few weeks later, s/he may make up one of these days, keeping accumulated absences at three. If the student is absent one more time s/he will be dropped from the driver education program for that semester.

Students who fail and wish to retake behind-the-wheel lessons should contact Mr. Davis to schedule driving days. Driving retakes are not guaranteed, they are assigned based on the student schedules and class openings.

Students taking Summer Driver Education will receive credit toward graduation, but the grade earned will not effect GPA or class rank.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, AND PROGRAMS; REQUEST TO EXAMINE MATERIALS, AND STATUTORY OPT-OUTS

Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum. A parent/guardian may request that his/her child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a Curriculum Objection Form.

Request to Examine Family Life and National Sex Ed Standards Materials

A sample of the District's instructional materials and course outline for family life instructional materials are available from the classroom teacher for parent/guardian inspection.

The scope and sequence of instructional materials for the National Sex Ed Standards (NSES) is posted on the District's Internet website, along with the name and contact information, including an email address, of staff members who can respond to your inquiries.

You may request to examine the above instructional materials by completing the "Request to Examine Materials and Statutory Opt-Outs" form.

Parent or Guardian Opt-Outs

No student is required to take or participate in the following classes or courses, and no disciplinary or academic penalty exists for refusing to take or participate in such a course or program.

- Family life (emotional, psychological, physiological, hygienic and social responsibilities, including evidence-based and medically accurate information regarding sexual abstinence).
- AIDS, including in grades 6 through 12, its prevention, transmission and spread.
- Comprehensive Personal Health and Safety and Sexual Health Education Program NSES Standards, including sexual abuse and sexual violence education.
- Donations and transplants of organs/tissue and blood organ/tissue transplantation, in grades 9 and/or 10.
- CPR, including training on how to properly administer CPR in accordance with standards of the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another nationally recognized certifying organization.
- How to use an AED.

If you do not want your child to participate in these classes or courses, please complete the "Request to Examine Materials and Statutory Opt-Outs" form.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Independent Study Program is designed to allow students to pursue their academic interests on an individual basis. This program is open only to seniors on a limited basis. Students interested in Independent Study should complete the application and submit it to the Assistant Principal by each semester deadline. Courses taken as an Independent Study will be listed as such, not as the specific name of the course, and will count only as an elective credit on student's grade reports and transcripts. Weight will not be assigned for any Independent Study course.

OFF CAMPUS CLASSES

All students shall ride the bus to any OTHS off campus class. Students may drive their own cars only with the permission of instructor and the Assistant Principal.

SAIL PROGRAMS (STUDENTS ACHIEVING IN LIFE)

The Ottawa Township High School SAIL Programs are designed to assist students who are not able to function adequately within regular high school scheduling because of academic, personal, and/or family problems.

The SAIL Programs are designed to provide a more individualized relationship between students, their teachers and the school. Determination for admission to the SAIL Programs are done by an initial staffing. This may involve the administrative staff, teachers, counselors, school psychologist, social worker, the SAIL program teachers, the student, and student's parents.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

The school offers opportunities for resident English Learners to achieve at high levels in academic subjects and to meet the same challenging State standards that all children are expected to meet.

Parents/Guardians of English Learners will be informed how they can: (1) be involved in the education of their children, and (2) be active participants in assisting their children to attain English proficiency, achieve at high levels within a well-rounded education, and meet the challenging State academic standards expected of all students.

For questions related to this program or to express input in the school's English Learners program, contact Mrs. Jessica Gass at 815-433-1326 or jgass@ottawahigh.com or Mrs. Jennifer Jobst at 815-433-1323, ext. 3393 or jjobst@ottawahigh.com.

CREDIT RECOVERY COURSES

OTHS offers students the opportunity to recover credits lost to failed courses via in-person and online utilizing the Apex online learning system. Please see the following grade-specific guidelines regarding credit recovery pathways:

9th Grade

- Students will stay in their planned schedule. No school-year credit recovery.

- Students who fail algebra I semester 1 should be moved to algebra a semester 2.
- May not recover credits via Apex if the course is offered in-person during summer credit recovery.
- Credits not recovered in summer will be taken in the classroom sophomore year.

10th Grade

- Failed 9th grade 1st semester classes are retaken in the classroom 1st semester of 10th grade.
  - No Apex credit recovery 1st semester.
- Failed 9th grade 2nd semester classes are retaken in the classroom 2nd semester of 10th grade.
- May be placed in Apex during 2nd semester for 1st semester classes that have been failed twice in the classroom.
  - Example: Student fails English 1, semester 1 as a freshman and again in the fall of sophomore year, replace an elective with Apex English 9 in spring.
- No restrictions on in-person or Apex for summer credit recovery.

11th Grade

- Core classes failed for the 1st time in 10th grade are retaken in the classroom.
- Apex may be utilized for core classes already failed twice in the classroom and for electives.
- Students who have earned fewer than 20 credits after 10th grade may be enrolled in one period of Apex Credit Recovery in 1st semester, and may make up multiple credits as needed.
- Students who have earned fewer than 25 credits after 1st semester of 11th grade may be enrolled in two periods of Apex Credit Recovery in 2nd semester, and may make up multiple credits as needed.
- No restrictions on in-person or Apex for summer credit recovery.

12th Grade

- Core classes failed for the 1st time in 11th grade are retaken in the classroom unless the student has earned fewer than 30 credits after 11th grade.
- Unlimited 1st semester access to Apex for credit recovery if the student has earned fewer than 25 credits after 11th grade.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES THAT COUNT TOWARD CALCULATION OF CLASS HOURS (Added 7/9/26)

Pupil attendance in any of the following activities shall be counted toward the calculation of clock hours of schoolwork per day:

1. Instruction in a college course where the student is dually enrolled for both high school and college credit.

2. Participation in a Supervised Career Development Experience in which student participation and learning outcomes are approved by a licensed educator assessment of competencies. Participation may include, but is not limited to, scheduled events of local, State, and national youth organizations, career and technical education organizations, FFA associations, and 4-H programs as part of organized competitions, exhibitions, or conferences.

3. Participation in any work-based learning experience, including supervised agricultural experiences, in which student participation and learning outcomes are approved by an educator who holds an Educator License with Stipulations with a career and technical educator endorsement and a work-based learning designation.

4. Participation in a youth apprenticeship in which student participation and learning outcomes are approved by a licensed educator for assessment of competencies.

5. Participation in a blended learning program approved by the district in which course content, student evaluation, and instructional methods are supervised by a licensed educator.

Students shall not be penalized for work missed for participating in any of the above activities and will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for equivalent academic credit. A student and the student's parent or legal guardian are responsible for obtaining coursework that is missed while the student participates in any of the above an activities.

Students who desire to participate in any of the above activities should contact the building principal for approval.

CREDIT FOR PROFICIENCY, NON-DISTRICT EXPERIENCES, COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS AND ACCELERATED PLACEMENT (Updated 1/1/25)

Credit for Non-District Experiences

A student may receive high school credit for successfully completing any of the listed courses or experiences even when it is not offered in or sponsored by the District:

1. Distance learning course, including a correspondence, virtual, or online course.
2. Courses in an accredited world exchange program.
3. Summer school or community college courses.
4. College or high school courses offering dual credit at both the college and high school level. [2]
5. World language courses taken in an ethnic school program approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.
6. Work-related training at manufacturing facilities or agencies in a Tech Prep Program.
7. Credit earned in a Vocational Academy.

Students must receive pre-approval from the building principal or designee to receive credit for any non-District course or experience. The building principal or designee will determine the amount of credit and whether a proficiency examination is required before the credit is awarded. Students assume responsibility for any fees, tuition, supplies, and other expenses. Students are responsible for (1) providing documents or transcripts that demonstrate successful completion of the experience, and (2) taking a proficiency examination, if requested. The building principal or designee shall determine which, if any, non-District courses or experiences, will count toward a student's grade point average, class rank, and eligibility for athletic and extracurricular activities.

Students who do not otherwise meet a community college's academic eligibility to enroll in a dual credit course taught at the high school may enroll in the dual credit course, but only for high school credit.

Proficiency Credit

Proficiency credit is available in limited subjects where a student demonstrates competency. Contact the building principal for details.

Substitutions for Required Courses

Vocational or Technical Education

A student in grades 9-12 may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing related vocational or technical education courses if:

1. The building principal approves the substitution and the vocational or technical education course is completely described in curriculum material along with its relationship to the required course; and
2. The student's parent/guardian requests and approves the substitution in writing on forms provided by the District.

Registered Apprenticeship Program

A student in grades 9-12 who is 16 years or older may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing a registered apprenticeship program listed by the school district. Students may find a registered, but not listed, apprenticeship program with a business or organization if a registered apprenticeship program is not offered in the school district.

Advanced Placement Computer Science

The advanced placement computer science course is equivalent to a high school mathematics course. A student in grades 9-12 may substitute the advanced placement computer science course for one year of mathematics. The transcript of a student who completes the advanced placement computer science course will state that it qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative course.

Volunteer service credit

A student participating in the District's Volunteer Service Credit Program, if any, may earn credit toward graduation for the performance of community service. The amount of credit given for program participation shall not exceed that given for completion of one semester of language arts, math, science, or social studies.

Accelerated Placement

The District provides for an Accelerated Placement Program (APP) for qualified students. It provides students with an educational setting with curriculum options that are usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student. Accelerated placement includes but may not be limited to: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, accelerating a student in a single subject and grade acceleration. Participation is open to all students who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement. It is not limited to students who have been identified as gifted or talented. Please contact the building Principal for additional information.

EARLY GRADUATION

Students desiring early graduation from Ottawa Township High School must meet the following requirements:

1. Complete a minimum of seven semesters of high school coursework.
2. Have written approval of their parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. Complete all graduation requirements (See above)

Students desiring early graduation are to observe the following procedures:

1. Apply for early graduation no later than November 1st of their 7th semester.
2. Return approval sheet signed by a parent(s)/guardian.
3. Consult with a counselor to verify that graduation requirements can be met by the anticipated date for early graduation.

Parents/guardians should consider the following before deciding about early graduation:

1. Students meeting all other requirements for graduation may have one semester of the physical education requirements waived and one semester of attendance waived.
2. Students who graduate one semester early will exit with the grade point average designation earned, but will not qualify for Valedictorian status designated during the graduation ceremony. Class rank based on actual 7th semester GPA would be used to determine eligibility for scholarships that are dependent on class rank.
3. Candidates for early graduation will not be permitted active participation in school or class activities after leaving Ottawa Township High School. This includes participation in athletic teams, clubs, and/or similar school activities. OTHS will allow early graduates to participate in prom and the graduation ceremony.
4. Registration fees will not be refunded to students who choose to graduate early.

Counseling

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT (ROOM 203)

Ottawa Township High School counselors are dedicated to providing their students with a positive, healthy atmosphere that enhances the learning experience and builds upon their academic, career, and social/emotional foundation. The Counselors will guide and inspire their students while being served by a comprehensive school counseling program. Counselors will be assigned to a class beginning freshman year and will follow students through to senior year and graduation. We will work collaboratively with teachers, parents, students, staff and the community to foster student growth.

Students will understand:

- That the Counseling Department offers services including: Academic counseling, career counseling, college counseling and social/emotional/individual counseling.
- That counseling is a vital part of college and career preparation.
- That thru the exploration of their interests and strengths, students will become aware of their abilities to possess acceptance, empathy, integrity, and responsibility/accountability throughout their academic years and beyond
- That their ethnic, cultural and racial differences and special needs are considered while developing their academic plans.
- That they have access to the knowledge and skills to become contributing members of society.

Counselor Goals:

- Work with students, parents, and faculty to develop an academic plan that meets a student's academic needs and interests.
- Assist student in the development of plans for post high school training and education.
- Assist students in dealing with challenging life situations which may impact their success at school.
- Counselors use data driven program development and evaluation, and actively monitor student results.
- Counselors participate in professional development essential to maintaining quality within the school counseling program.

Student Goals:

- Students are encouraged to explore their interests, values and life experiences while developing career goals with their counselor (9-12).
- During freshman year, students will create an individual career plan (ICP) which will include a 4-year academic plan with their counselor.
- All students have a capacity to learn and to be supported academically by their counselors. Students will stay on top of graduation requirements, and grade concerns throughout the school year.

- Develop self-awareness and self –management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

SCHEDULE CHANGE INFORMATION

During the first four (4) days of each semester, schedule changes will be allowed **ONLY** under the following circumstances:

1. If an error was made by OTHS staff in processing a request.
2. If a course conflict is present on a schedule.
3. If an improper course placement has been made.
4. If a compelling educational reason is cited. A request will only be granted if space is available.

Additionally, schedules may change due to the following circumstances:

1. Level changes out of weighted courses (honors/AP/dual credit), with a compelling educational reason, by student/parent request must take place by the end of the 4th full week of class for the course. Level change requests for year-long courses may also be made at the end of 1st semester.
2. Level changes out of weighted courses (honors/AP/dual credit) due to failure to maintain a cumulative average of at least 70% (grade of C) may take place at each 9-week midpoint, ends of each 9 weeks, and ends of semester.
3. A student may drop a class with written permission from a parent/guardian. Any courses dropped after the fifth day of each semester will receive a grade of "F" for that semester and will be considered a drop/fail. Students requesting to drop will be placed in a study hall only. If a study hall is not available or the student already has a study hall in his/her schedule, no change will be granted.

TEACHER CHANGE INFORMATION

Students looking to change teachers will be expected to take advantage of available supports before a teacher change will be considered. Expectations of the student include completing assignments, going to the teacher for assistance on a regular basis before and/or after school or during PEP, taking advantage of OTHS' Mastery Initiative, attending and working during Support PEP where available, and attending and working during Student Success School. Students who are still struggling after making these efforts should see the Associate Principal to discuss a teacher change.

COURSE REGISTRATION

OTHS course selection begins in November. The OTHS course catalog is available on the website, www.ottawahigh.com, under the Parent Resources tab. You will find course descriptions, requirements and pre-requisites. Each counselor will work with their students in this process.

COLLEGE INFORMATION

The OTHS Counseling Office provides resources and support to aid in the college process. Juniors and seniors must take charge of these decisions as they determine their future educational direction. Each counselor will work with their students in providing up to date information, timelines, ACT/SAT testing and course requirements for college admission. All information can be found in various locations: announcements, website, homerooms and room 203.

Colleges Visiting OTHS: Students are encouraged to take advantage of the many college representatives that visit throughout the year and should sign up for presentations in room 203.

College Days/Off Campus Visits: Students and their families are encouraged to visit various college campuses. College curriculum, activities and the community play an important role in finding the right fit. There are many open house offerings on school holidays as well as Saturday visit options. A reservation is made by visiting the college's website or calling the admissions office.

Junior and senior students may visit colleges, universities, trade schools and other institutions to explore post-high school opportunities. These absences can be excused by a parent, in which case they will be marked as an excused absence. The absence may be changed to school excused if the student returns with an artifact (business card, letterhead, etc.) from the place of the visit with the name of the person s/he met with appearing on the artifact, and signed and dated by that person. Students may have a maximum of three school excused absences for college days during each of the junior and senior years.

College Applications: Applications are available online either through college websites or by using the Common Application.

Transcript Request: Students will be required to sign a release of records in the registrar's office, room 210, for an official transcript to be sent.

Testing: Colleges and Universities will require either an ACT or SAT for admissions. The ACT is administered at OTHS five times per year. Registration is done online at www.actstudent.org. The SAT test dates and locations are available online at www.collegeboard.com. See your selected college's admissions information for testing requirements.

Financial Aid: Beginning in October of the senior year, a family may fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). This process may gain a student access to scholarship, grant and loan opportunities through the state and federal government. OTHS hosts a Financial Aid Information Night and then hosts a FAFSA Completion Night.

CAREER INFORMATION

Career planning and development is an essential role of the school counselor. Students will learn about careers and life planning during their four years at OTHS. Our goal is that every student will set goals, learn effective problem solving, and be able to make appropriate career and educational decisions when making plans and preparing for his or her future. These same skills will assist students in school to work transition, as well as finding and maintaining employment. Many resources are available to our students, including, but not limited to; Career Cruising, Occupational Outlook Handbook, a variety of career interest inventories, the development of the 4-year plan (freshman year), Job Board, Weekly Featured Careers, and many internet resources.

MILITARY INFORMATION

The military is a way of life chosen by a number of students, either through the military academies or by enlistment. Meetings with recruitment officers are handled by a counselor. It is the policy of Ottawa Township High School to share directory information with military agencies. Parents must notify the Student Services Office if they do not want this information shared with the military.

FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

In order to receive financial aid, grants or scholarships at the local, state and federal level, students/parents must complete the FAFSA. Counselors are available to assist in that process. OTHS hosts a variety of scholarships for our students. The list is available on our website and shared with each senior via the "Senior Guidebook" given in September at an assembly. All scholarship applications are housed in room 203 and are posted on the "Scholarship Board", outside room 203 and announced throughout the school year.

2023-2024 TESTING CALENDAR

Please visit the OTHS Counseling Department website, https://othscounseling.weebly.com/testing.html, for test dates and information.

Please verify posted dates by checking with Mrs. Swords, your counselor, or the website of the test you plan to take.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST & SOCIAL WORKERS

Ottawa Township High School's school social workers and school psychologist are dedicated to helping students with social and emotional issues that may be interfering with a student's overall academic and social potential. Our services include crisis intervention, brief-solution focused individual and group counseling, consultation with teachers and administrators, special education evaluations, 504 Plan evaluations, classroom presentations, student advocacy, and providing families with community resource information.

COUNSELING SUPPORTS

Most school social workers and school psychologists' referrals result in **short-term counseling**. For students and families in need of more clinical/specialized therapy or long-term treatment, Ottawa Township High School can provide a list of outside resources and services. This can be obtained by contacting the school social workers or school psychologist. The school social workers and school psychologist each have a caseload of students. Both the school social workers and school psychologist can assist any student experiencing a temporary crisis or who is experiencing issues which are affecting their ability to be successful in school for a **time-limited basis**. Referrals can be made by administrators, staff, students, or families by contacting the school social workers and/or school psychologist.

CRISIS INTERVENTION

The school social workers and school psychologist are mandated reports. If there is suspected abuse or neglect occurring, it is their responsibility to report this to DCFS. In addition, the school social workers and school psychologist may conduct a suicide screening on an at risk student and provide appropriate supports to that student. Ottawa Township High School's suicide protocol is followed and appropriate steps are taken to ensure student safety. The school social workers and school psychologist are also a part of the school wide crisis team and are available to assist students and staff during any school wide crisis.

SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school's ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important goals of the school district.

The school district maintains student and parent resources on suicide and depression awareness and prevention. Much of this information, including a copy of school district's policy, is posted on the school district website. Information can also be obtained from the school office.

If you need assistance, help is also available from the following organizations:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Call or text 988

Crisis Text Line
Text HOME to 741741

Safe2Help Illinois
Call 844-4-SAFEIL (723345)
Text SAFE2 (72332)

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

Mrs. McAlpine is the Homeless Services Liaison. Mrs. Hiland is the Foreign Exchange Student Coordinator for the district. Mrs. Leonard is the 504 Plan Coordinator for the district. Information on these supports can be obtained by contacting them directly.

SPECIAL NEEDS DEPARTMENT

There are many types of disabilities that make it difficult, or even impossible, for a student to learn in a regular school setting. Some of these disabilities are readily identifiable; vision and hearing problems, physical disabilities, and speech problems. Other disabilities, which cause severe difficulties for the student, may be more subtle. These disabilities require trained professionals to determine the source of the problem and to recommend the proper program to maximize the educational development of the student.

Examples of these disabilities include perceptual problems, emotional disorders, and serious social or personal problems. Students with any of the above disabilities are referred to as "Exceptional Children" because they have exceptional (special) educational needs. Regardless of the nature or severity of the child's disability, the child has a right to receive a free appropriate public education.

In most cases, the exceptional student's needs will be recognized and the proper special education program prescribed. However, the parents of the student may request the school district to evaluate the student to determine special education eligibility. According to state regulation, the School District has 60 school days from the date the parent or guardian has given signed consent to complete the evaluation.

Both the psychologist and social worker are involved in placement of special need students within the Special Education Program. The school psychologist completes testing and the evaluations required for placement. The school social worker contacts students and parents as part of the evaluation process in conjunction with this testing. Referral to various agencies can be made for students.

If a student is determined to be eligible for special education, then a program designed to meet the student's needs must be provided. If the parents are dissatisfied with the evaluation or the program provided for the student, the parents may request information from the Superintendent concerning procedures for resolution. Copies of Procedural Safeguards are available in the Special Needs Office, Room 211.

SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATIONS

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services.
The School provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the school. The term "children with disabilities" means children between ages 3 and the day before their 22nd birthday for whom it is determined that special education services are needed**,** except those children with disabilities who turn 22 years of age during the school year are eligible for special education services through the end of the school year. It is the intent of the school to ensure that students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.
A copy of the publication "Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities" may be obtained from the school district office.
Students with disabilities who do not qualify for an individualized education program, as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and implementing provisions of this Illinois law, may qualify for services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the student (i) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of a physical or mental impairment, or (iii) is `
For further information, please contact Mrs. Sally Taliani, Director of Special Needs, OTHS room 211, by calling 815-433-1323, ext. 2423, or 815-431-2423.

SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS

Board Policy recognizes the "special needs" of the physically disabled. Those students with permanent or temporary disabilities who require special services to meet their educational needs, i.e., transportation, parking, special facilities, etc., should contact the Principal.

Parents with physical disabilities, or other school visitors requiring special parking, elevator use, etc., when visiting the school during the school day or for evening extra-curricular programs should contact the Assistant Principal to make special arrangements to meet their individual needs.

INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Interpretation services are available at IEP meetings for parents whose native language is other than English, or who are deaf, to assist with participation in the meeting.
If you would like an interpreter at your child's IEP meeting, please request an interpreter by completing a Request for Interpreter Form, found on the District website at www.ottawahigh.com or by contacting the Special Needs office at 815-431-2423.
You have the right to request that the interpreter serve no other role in the IEP meeting other than as an interpreter and the District will make reasonable efforts to fulfill this request.
Please contact Mrs. Sally Taliani, Director of Special Needs at 815-431-2423 if you have any questions or complaints about interpretation services.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Based on Public Act 89-191, it is the policy of Ottawa Township High School, District 140, to develop such behavioral intervention procedures for disabled students that: emphasize positive intervention with students that respect human dignity, are consistent with generally accepted practices of behavioral intervention, include criteria for determining when a student with a disability may require a behavioral intervention plan, reflect consideration of the ISBE guidelines, and include procedures for monitoring the use of such interventions. This policy will be reviewed and the administrative procedures are developed with input from parents, teachers, administrators, advocates for persons with disabilities, and those with expertise in behavioral intervention. Such policy and procedures will be made available to parents of students with individualized educational plans as stipulated in state law. The intent of this policy is to implement, as necessary, specific interventions(s) to alter the behavior of student(s) with disabilities to create a positive learning environment and enhance learning.

STUDENT RIGHTS PROCEDURE (TITLE IX AND SECTION 504)

All students attending OTHS have certain rights and responsibilities. The Board of Education, the State of Illinois, and the Federal Government each have provided policy, rules and regulations to clarify these rights and responsibilities. Please be advised therefore, that students may be eligible for assistance (such as free lunches, etc.) or offered an opportunity to "work" off certain fees and costs.

The following procedure is provided to ensure that students are afforded equal rights to all classes regardless of race,

color, national origin, age, sex, religion, or handicap. This procedure is not intended to limit the option of the district and a grievant(s) to resolve any grievance mutually and informally. Hearings and conferences under this procedure shall be conducted at a time and place, which will afford a fair and equitable opportunity for all persons.

The grievance procedure is not required if the grievant prefers other alternatives such as the Office of Civil Rights or the courts. Due process shall exist throughout the procedure with the right to 1) representation, 2) present witnesses and evidence 3) confidentiality 4) review relevant records and 5) proceed without harassment and/or retaliation.

More detailed information is available in the offices of the Principal and Director of Special Needs. Time limits refer to days when school is in session.

Step 1

The student and/or parent should discuss the matter with the person directly responsible for the grievance issue within 14 days of the time when a reasonably alert person should have been aware of the event giving rise to a grievance. An oral response must be made within 5 days.

Step 2

If the grievance is still not resolved, it should be submitted in writing within 5 days to Mrs. Sally Taliani, Director of Special Needs. The grievance should be described as specifically and completely as possible. A thorough investigation of the issue will be documented. Extra time may be mutually agreed upon if needed. A meeting must be held between the grievant and district representative with 10 days and a written response made within 5 days.

Step 3

If the problem is not resolved, the grievance should be referred informally to the Principal. A meeting must be held within 5 days from notification of referral and an oral response made within 5 days.

Step 4

If a satisfactory solution is not reached, the grievant may appeal the issue in writing to the Office of the Superintendent within 10 days from the receipt of the response on Step 3. A meeting between parties will be held within 10 days and a written response made within 5 days. A complete record of this meeting shall be kept and signed by both parties for possible future reference.

Step 5

If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved on Step 4, the grievant may appeal the grievance in writing to the Board of Education within 5 days from the receipt of the written response. The Board shall consider the appeal within 60 days and a written response shall be given within 5 days.

RELATED SERVICE LOGS

For a child with an individualized education program (IEP), the school district must create related service logs that record the type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related service that has been administered. The school will provide a child's parent/guardian a copy of the related service log at the annual review of the child's IEP and at any other time upon request.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

If your child receives special education services and is also Medicaid eligible, the school district can seek partial reimbursement for Medicaid for health services documented in your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Medicaid reimbursement is a source of federal funds approved by Congress to help school districts maintain and improve diagnostic and therapeutic services for students.

- The reimbursement process requires the school district to provide Medicaid with your child's name, birthdate and Medicaid number. Federal law requires your written consent to release these data to Medicaid.
- Only data for Medicaid eligible students will be released.
- You can deny the district the right to release this data now or at any time in the future.

Regardless of your decision the district must continue to provide, at no cost to you, the services listed in your child's IEP.

When considering your decision, please note that this program has **no impact** on current or future Medicaid benefits for you, the student or your family. Under federal law, your decision to participate in this program CANNOT:

- Decrease lifetime coverage or any other public insurance benefit,
- Result in the family paying for services that would otherwise be covered by Medicaid,

- Increase your premiums or lead to discontinuation of benefits or insurance, or
- Result in the loss of eligibility for home and community-based waivers.

Your consent allows us to recover a portion of the costs associated with providing health services to your child. Consent will be obtained through a Medicaid Data Release Consent form.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Director of Special Needs, Mrs. Sally Taliani.

Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Service (PUNS)

PUNS is a statewide database that records information about individuals with developmental disabilities who are planning for or seeking services through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Developmental Disabilities. At each annual review for a student with a disability, the IEP (Individualized Education Program) team must determine if the student is registered for PUNS and, if not, refer the family to a designated employee who has completed the PUNS training. For information on PUNS, please contact one of the following trained employees: Tasha West, Special Education Division Chair, 815-433-1323, nwest@ottawahigh.com.

SERVICE ANIMALS

A student with a disability, as defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), may be permitted to have a service animal to accompany that student to all school and school-related functions, whether in or outside the classroom. The student's right to have a service animal at school and school-related functions must be carefully balanced with the rights of other students and staff members. Parents/guardians interested in the possibility of a service animal accompanying their student to school should contact the Director of Special Needs to request additional information.

Definitions

Service Animal – A dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to perform tasks or work for the benefit of a student with a disability.

Handler – An individual who has and maintains control over the service animal at school and school related functions. This individual may be the student using the service animal. Control of the service animal means using a harness, leash, or other tether, unless the handler is unable because of a disability to use one of these devices or their use would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If or when these devices are not used, control of the service animal must be accomplished through voice control, signals, or other effective means. The school is not responsible for handling, caring for or cleaning up after the service animal.

Adult Handler - The adult who has been trained to handle and control the service animal (if the student is unable to do so due to his/her disability) and has agreed to handle and control the service animal at school and school-related functions.

Direct Threat – A significant risk to the health and safety of others posed by the service animal that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The determination of whether the service animal poses a direct threat must be based upon that particular animal's actual behavior or history and not upon speculations, generalizations or stereotypes.

Fundamental Alteration – A change so significant that it alters the essential aspect of the program or activity.

School Nurse, Illness & Appointments

NURSE AND ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

The nurse is located in Room 205. The nurse will assist students with health concerns. The Nurse Office number is (815) 431-2461, Nurse Fax number is (815) 431-3350.

If a student becomes ill or is injured, he/she must report to the nurse's office. Students must obtain a pass from their teacher to see the nurse. Students should schedule visits to the nurse's office during study periods or before school, except in case of sudden illness or injury. DO NOT TRY TO SEE THE NURSE DURING THE PASSING PERIODS.

If it is necessary for a student to leave school because of an injury or sudden illness, the nurse will notify parents. The student will be given a pass to leave the building. STUDENTS WHO LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT CHECKING OUT WITH THE NURSE AND 201 WILL BE CONSIDERED UNEXCUSED AND/OR TRUANT.

REPORTING STUDENT'S ILLNESS

A parent or guardian is required to phone the 24-hour attendance number (815-433-1326) on the day that the student is absent. A call should be made each day of absence unless the office has been notified of an extended illness. **IF THE**

STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE, ROOM 201, HAS NOT BEEN NOTIFIED WITHIN 24 HOURS, THE STUDENT WILL BE AWOL (UNEXCUSED ABSENCE.

MAKE-UP WORK

Assignments given prior to the absence are due the same day the student returns to school. Upon return, students will have no less than the number of days absent to complete work assigned during an absence. Students who miss a quiz or test due to an absence must make arrangements to take the quiz or test upon return to school.

MEDICAL OR DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Medical and dental appointments should be limited to times outside of school hours. However, if it is necessary for a student to be absent for such an appointment, a pre-arranged call or note from a student's parent/guardian must be presented to 201specifying the date and time of the appointment, as well as the name of the physician who will be seen for the appointment. **The student is expected to be at school before the appointment when possible and must "check out" of school with the Student Services Office (201) before leaving. All students are expected to return to school and "check in" with the Student Services Office (201) after the appointment to provide proof of the appointment and receive a pass to return to class.** If the student becomes ill, the student's parent/guardian must contact the student services office, room 201, to inform them that their son/daughter will not be returning from the appointment.

EXTENDED ILLNESS

Students should follow their classes via class Teams pages to the extent possible and stay in contact with teachers via email when absent. If unavailable online, students and parents may request homework by contacting the Guidance Office (815-433-1323, ext. 2494) and making arrangements for someone to pick up assignments and necessary materials. If a student is going to be absent for medical reasons in excess of 10 days, the parents should request that their physician completes the Illinois State Board of Education Medical Certification for Home and Hospital Instruction.

HOME AND HOSPITAL INSTRUCTION

A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant or licensed advance practice registered nurse anticipates his or her absence from school, because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving the Illinois State Board of Education Medical Certification for Home and Hospital Instruction from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program. The ISBE Medical Certification for Home and Hospital Instruction form is located on the school website under Parent R

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction before (1) the birth of the child when the student's physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice nurse indicates, via completion of the Illinois State Board of Education Medical Certification for Home and Hospital Instruction, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction, and (2) for up to 3 months after the child's birth or a miscarriage.

Contact Mrs. Lauren Yates, counselor, for additional information on home or hospital instruction.

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION
PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATIONS - MEDICAL INFORMATION

No student will be allowed to enter Ottawa Township High School without a physical examination and proper immunization. All freshmen are required by state law and board policy to have a physical before entering school in the fall.

Required Health Examinations and Immunizations

A student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall present proof that the student received a health examination and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases, as required by the Illinois Department of Public Health, within one year prior to:

1. Entering the ninth grade; and

2. Enrolling in an Illinois school, regardless of the student's grade (including nursery school, special education, Head Start programs operated by elementary or secondary schools, and students transferring into Illinois from out-of-state or out-of-country).

As required by State law:

1. The required health examinations must be performed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches, an advanced practice nurse who has a written collaborative agreement with a collaborating physician authorizing the advanced practice nurse to perform health examinations, or a physician assistant who has been delegated the performance of health examinations by a supervising physician.

2. A diabetes screening including height, weight and BMI is a required part of each health examination; diabetes testing is not required.

3. A physician's signature is required on all physicals.

4. A parent/guardian is to fill out the health history, including any allergies and/or medications, and sign and date the form

Unless the student is homeless, failure to comply with the above requirements by the first day of school of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the District. New students who are first-time registrants shall have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization regulations. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by the first day of school, the student must present, by the first day of school, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by the physician, advanced practice nurse, physician assistant, or local health department responsible for administering the immunizations.

Eye Examination

Parents/guardians are encouraged to have their children undergo an eye examination whenever health examinations are required.

Parents/guardians of students entering an Illinois school for the first time shall present proof before October 15 of the current school year that the student received an eye examination within one year prior to entry of the school. A physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches or a licensed optometrist must perform the required eye examination.

If a student fails to present proof by October 15, the school may hold the student's report card until the student presents proof: (1) of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified of this eye examination requirement in compliance with the rules of the Department of Public Health. Schools shall not exclude a student from attending school due to failure to obtain an eye examination.

Exemptions

In accordance with rules adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health, a student will be exempted from this policy's requirements for:

1. Religious or medical grounds if the student's parents/guardians present to the Superintendent a completed copy of the Illinois Certificate of Religious Exemption to Required Immunizations and/or Examinations Form signed by student's physician.

2. Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician provides written verification;

3. Eye examination requirement if the student's parents/guardians show an undue burden or lack or access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist; or

Homeless Child

Any homeless child shall be immediately admitted, even if the child or child's parent/guardian is unable to produce immunization and health records normally required for enrollment.

Special Education

Any student enrolling for the first time in an Illinois public, private, or parochial school is required to have an eye examination by a physical licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a licensed optometrist. The exam must have been completed within the past year.

This is to notify parents of children who attend any special education program. The Department of Public Health requires that individuals be screened both for vision and hearing annually. Students wearing glasses or contacts are not mandated to be screened, as they have been seen professionally. "Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye

and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months".

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS, PERTUSSIS

1. Has received three or more doses of DTP / DTaP/or Tdap, TD with the doses received no less than four weeks apart and the final or ending dose being a booster. The booster must have been received no less than six months after the last dose and on, or after, the 4th birthday.

2. According to the School Code of Illinois, Section 665.250 in the Child Health Examination Code, students entering 6th through 9th grade are required to receive one Tdap dose regardless of the interval since the last DTP / DTap or Td dose. Please make sure that when the physician's office fills in the immunization record that the appropriate Tdap on the immunization form is checked.

POLIO

1. Has received 3 or more doses of Polio with the last dose qualifying as a booster and received on or after the 4th birthday.

RUBELLA

1. Has received Rubella vaccine, 1st dose must have been received on or after the 1st birthday and second dose no less than four weeks (28 days) later.

2. Laboratory evidence of Rubella immunity. History of disease is not acceptable proof of immunity to Rubella.

MEASLES

1. Has received two doses of measles vaccine, the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday and the second dose no less than four weeks (28 days) later.

2. Laboratory evidence of measles immunity or certified physician verification of measles disease by date of illness. Cases diagnosed after 07/01/2002 must include lab evidence.

MUMPS

1. Has received two doses of Mumps vaccine, the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday and the second dose no less than four weeks (28 days) later.

2. Laboratory evidence of Mumps immunity or certified physician verification of Mumps disease by date of illness.

HEPATITIS B

1. Has received three doses of Hepatitis B administered at proper intervals.

2. Laboratory evidence of prior or current infection.

VARICELLA

1. Has received two doses of Varicella vaccine, the first dose received on or after the 1st birthday and the second dose no less than four weeks (28 days) later.

2. Statement from physician or healthcare provider verifying disease history or laboratory evidence of Varicella immunity.

MENINGOCOCCAL CONJUGATE VACCINE

1. Applies to Students entering 12th grade. Beginning 2016-2017 school year. Two doses of Meningococcal vaccine at entry of 12th grade.

2. The first dose received on or after the 10th birthday; second dose at least eight weeks after the 1st dose. Only one dose is required if the first dose was received at 16 years of age or older. No proof of immunity allowed.

SCHOOL DENTAL EXAMINATIONS

All Illinois children in grade nine (freshman) are required to have an oral health examination. Examinations must be performed by a licensed dentist, and he/she must sign the Proof of School Dental Examination form. Each child is required to present proof of examination by a dentist prior to May 15 of the school year.

School dental examinations must have been completed within the 18 months prior to the May 15 deadline. Each school must give notice of the dental examination requirement to the parents or guardians of the children at least 60 days prior

to May 15 of each school year. The Proof of School Dental Examination form and the Dental Examination Waiver form are uniform for statewide use. These forms are available on the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education websites.

If a child in Grades 2 or 6 fails to present proof by May 15, the school may hold the child's report card until one of the following can be documented:

- The child presents a Proof of School Dental Examination form.
- The child presents a Dental Examination Waiver form.
    - The child is enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and is not covered by private or public dental insurance (Medicaid/All Kids).
    - The child is enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and is ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids).
    - The child is enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids, but the family is unable to find a dentist or dental clinic in the community able to see the child who will accept Medicaid/All Kids.
    - The child does not have any type of dental insurance and there are no low-cost dental clinics in the community that will see the child.
- The child presents an exemption based on religious grounds (follow Illinois State Board of Education Administrative Rules).
- The child presents proof that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.
    - These children must present proof of a completed dental examination before attending school in the subsequent year.

STUDENT MEDICATION

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form."

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine *delivery system* and/or an asthma inhaler or medication prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin if authorized by the student's diabetes care plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students with epilepsy may possess and self-administer supplies, equipment and medication, if authorized by the student's seizure action plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students may self-administer (but not possess on their person) other medications required under a qualified plan, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

The school district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine *delivery system*, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine *delivery system*, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

Administration of Medical Cannabis

In accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program, qualifying students are allowed to utilize medical cannabis infused products while at school and school events. Please contact the building principal for additional information. Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver pursuant to this procedure is prohibited. The District may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

Undesignated Medications

The school may maintain the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use: (1) Asthma medication; (2) Epinephrine *delivery system*; (3) Opioid antagonists; and (4) Glucagon. No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

Emergency Aid to Students

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

CARE OF STUDENTS WITH DIABETES

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the school nurse. Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

- Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
- Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
- Grant consent for and authorize designated School District representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

For further information, please contact Mrs. Trisha Modeen, Certified School Nurse, 815-431-1323 EXT. 2461.

STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

State law requires our school district to annually inform parents of students with life-threatening allergies or life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal statutes, state statutes, federal regulations and state rules.

If your student has a life-threatening allergy or life-threatening chronic illness, please notify Mrs. Page Leonard, School Psychologist and 504 Plan Coordinator.

Federal law protects students from discrimination due to a disability that substantially limits a major life activity. If your student has a qualifying disability, an individualized Section 504 Plan will be developed and implemented to provide the needed supports so that your student can access his or her education as effectively as students without disabilities.

Not all students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses may be eligible under Section 504. Our school district also may be able to appropriately meet a student's needs through other means.

PREVENTION OF ANAPHYLAXIS

While it is not possible for the School or District to completely eliminate the risks of an anaphylactic emergency, the District maintains a comprehensive policy on anaphylaxis prevention, response, and management in order to reduce these risks and provide accommodations and proper treatment for anaphylactic reactions. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students who desire more information or who want a copy of the District's policy may contact the Building Principal.

ACCOMMODATING BREASTFEEDING STUDENTS (updated 1/1/25)

Students who choose to breastfeed an infant after returning to school are provided reasonable accommodations. A student who is a nursing mother may take reasonable breaks during the school day to express breast milk or breastfeed her infant. Reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

1. Access to a private and secure room, other than a bathroom, to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant.
2. Permission to bring onto school campus a breast pump or other equipment used to express breast milk.
3. Access to a power source for a breast pump or any other equipment used to express breast milk.
4. Access to a place to store expressed breast milk safely.
5. Reasonable breaks to accommodate the student's need to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant child or attend to health needs associated with breastfeeding (including eating, drinking, or using the restroom).
6. The opportunity to make up work missed due to the student's use of reasonable accommodations for breastfeeding.

Complaints regarding violations of this procedure should be made to the District's Complaint Manager or Non-Discrimination Coordinator.

POLICY ON THE EDUCATION OF PERSONS INFECTED WITH THE AIDS VIRUS AND AIDS REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. Any report that a student of the district has AIDS Related Complex (ARC) or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), or has tested positive to the presence of HTLV III antibodies shall be made or forwarded in confidence to the Superintendent.

2. The identity of a student who has, or is believed to have ARC, AIDS, or a positive antibody blood test shall not be revealed by any District employee or official to anyone including other District employees except as is authorized in writing by the Superintendent.

REVIEW PROCEDURES

Decisions regarding the type of educational setting for HTLV III infected children should be based on the behavior, neurological development, and physical condition of the child and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting. These decisions are best made using the team approach which may include the child's physician, a physician retained by the District, the child's parents or legal guardians, and school personnel. In each case, risks and benefits to both the child and others in the setting should be weighed.

1. If the Superintendent has reasonable grounds to believe that a student in the District has ARC or AIDS, or has tested positive to the presence of HTLV III antibodies, the Superintendent shall immediately take the following action.

b. Contact the parent or guardian of the student and require that a letter from the student's physician be submitted indicating whether or not the student is able to continue in his current educational program without endangering himself or others. The opinion of the student's physician will be considered but will not be controlling.

c. Convene a meeting of a Review Committee which shall consist of the Superintendent, the student's physician, the school Principal, the school nurse, a physician retained by the District, and such other persons if any, as the Superintendent may designate.

d. The Review Committee shall maintain a protocol file for case management purposes, said file shall not become a part of the student's permanent record, except upon review and decision of the Superintendent, after consultation with legal counsel. The file shall contain a list identifying any and all individuals who have been made aware of the identity of a student who has, or who is believed to have ARC, AIDS, or a positive antibody blood test.

2. The Review Committee shall investigate the student's case and shall make an initial determination whether or not the student should be permitted to continue in his current educational program. This determination shall be based on the following considerations.

a. the student's physical condition

b. the student's ability to control bodily secretions

c. the student's behavior

3. If the Committee finds, at any point, that the health and safety of the child or others would be endangered by the student's continued presence in his current educational program, the Superintendent may direct a temporary exclusion or an interim alternative placement pending the completion of these procedures.

4. If the Committee determines that a change in the student's current educational placement is warranted, case study evaluation of the student shall be commenced and an individualized education program developed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education. Participation in the case study evaluation shall be had on a "need to know" basis.

5. If the Review Committee determines that no change is warranted in the student's educational program, the Superintendent shall so advise the student's parent or guardian. The Review Committee may designate a person to monitor the student's condition and behavior and to inform the student's parent or guardian in the event there is no

outbreak of infectious disease in the District. The Review Committee may re-evaluate the student's case at any time, but not less than once every 6 months.

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR

An automated external defibrillator, or AED, is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the potentially life threatening cardiac arrhythmias in a patient, and is able to treat them through defibrillation, the application of electrical therapy which allows the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm.

AED's located at Ottawa Township High School have the ability to autonomously analyze the condition of an unresponsive victim's condition and direct the rescuer on what should be done through voice and visual prompts.

The following procedure should be followed if an unresponsive victim is discovered:

1. Call 911 from any school or cellular phone.
2. Send another person to notify the main office or supervising staff member of emergency.
3. Assess the scene for safety. Rescuers are volunteers and are not expected to place themselves at risk in order to provide aid to others. The scene or environment around the victim must be made safe prior to attempts to assist.
4. If a CPR and/or AED-trained individual is available, CPR and AED procedures should be initiated until emergency medical personnel arrive. Others should assist this person by retrieving the nearest AED, waiting for and directing emergency medical personnel to the scene, etc.

Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) are located throughout the school at the following locations:

Main Building	200 floor	East hallway outside room 205 (nurse)
Kingman Gym	400 floor	Southwest corner of gym
Love Gym	400 floor	Northwest corner of gym
West Gym	000 floor	Southwest corner of gym
Trainers' Room	Inside room, located in boys' athletic locker hall	
Softball Press Booth	Inside press booth	
Shannon Building	800 floor	Wall of elevator landing
Manual Arts Bldg.	400 floor	Center between Café and new addition
Manual Arts Bldg.	500 floor	Outside room 510
Voc-Tech Building	Inside main entrance	
Transition House	Interior of house	
Tennis Courts	Inside storage shed	

Extra-Curricular Activities

The following information applies, where applicable, to all school-sponsored athletic and extracurricular activities that are not part of an academic class nor otherwise carry credit for a grade. A complete list of OTHS athletic teams, student activities, and clubs is available in room 201, 203 and 501.

Requirements for Participation in Athletic Activities

A student must meet all academic eligibility requirements and have the following fully executed documents on file in the school office before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity:

1. A current certificate of physical fitness issued within the last 13 months by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the Illinois High School Association's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form."
2. A permission slip to participate in the specific athletic activity signed by the student's parent/guardian.
3. Proof the student is covered by medical insurance.
4. A signed agreement by the student not to ingest or otherwise use any drugs on the IHSA's most current banned substance list (without a written prescription and medical documentation provided by a licensed physician who performed an evaluation for a legitimate medical condition) and a signed agreement by the student and the student's parent/guardian agreeing to IHSA's Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Program.
5. A signed agreement by the student and the student's parent/guardian authorizing compliance with the School District's Extracurricular Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy.
6. Signed documentation agreeing to comply with the School District's policies and procedures on student athletic concussions and head injuries.

***Numbers 2-5 above are included in the online extracurricular registration process. Parents/guardians will receive additional information prior to the start of fall sports and may request additional information from the athletic office, 815-431-2401.

Academic Eligibility

A student will maintain academic eligibility by passing 25 credit hours (five academic classes that may include physical education) of classroom coursework per week. The student must also have passed and received credit toward graduation for 25 credit hours of classroom work during the previous semester and previous week as governed by the Illinois High School Association.

Participation Fees

OTHS charges a participation fee for those students wishing to participate in athletics and some activities. Payment of the fee is required prior to the student participating in any interscholastic contest. Fees are non-refundable. Fees will be capped at $200.00 per family. Individuals who may qualify to have fees waived may pick up the form in the Main Office and submit it to the Principal for approval. Fee waivers are subject to federal guidelines. Those who qualify for a fee waiver will have participation fees waived. Those who qualify for a fee reduction will pay 50% of the fees listed below. Fees must be paid in full, or a payment plan arranged with the OTHS Business Office (815-433-1323, ext. 2478), before a student will be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activity.

$75.00 Annual Participation Fee

Pomerettes, Cheerleading

$50.00 Annual Participation Fee

IHSA Band, IHSA Choir (solo, ensemble, group)

$100.00 Fall Participation Fee

Football

$75.00 Fall Participation Fee

Golf, Cross Country, Volleyball, Girls Swimming, Girls Tennis, Boys Soccer

$75.00 Winter Participation Fee

Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Wrestling, Bowling, Boys Swimming

$50.00 Winter Participation Fee

Chess Team, Scholastic Bowl, Speech Team

$75.00 Spring Participation Fee

Boys Track, Girls Track, Baseball, Softball, Boys Tennis, Girls Soccer

Student-Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries

Student athletes must comply with Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies and bylaws of the Illinois High School Association[1] before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation, the School District's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.

Travel

All students must travel to extracurricular and athletic activities and return home from such activities with his or her team by use of school approved transportation. A written waiver of this rule may be issued by the teacher, sponsor or coach in charge of the extracurricular or athletic activity upon advance written request of a student's parent/guardian and provided the parent/guardian appears and accepts custody of the student. Oral requests will not be honored and oral permissions are not valid.

Absence from School on Day of Extracurricular or Athletic Activity

School attendance is mandatory in order to be eligible to practice or play in competition on any specific day. If a student is absent, in order to be eligible that evening, the athlete must be in attendance at school for at least four class periods. If an athlete has a pre-approved or other type of excused absence, s/he could be eligible to participate with the approval of

the athletic director.

Student Rights Information - Title IX

No person at Ottawa Township High School shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity of Ottawa High School or IHSA.

MODIFICATION OF ATHLETIC OR TEAM UNIFORM

Students may modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of the student's religion or the student's cultural values or modesty preferences.

Drug and Alcohol Testing Program

The Board of Education believes that the use of alcohol or drugs by students who participate in extra-curricular activities presents a particular hazard to the health, safety and welfare of the students themselves, as well as those who compete with the student athlete or participant in other extra-curricular activities. The Board encourages students to participate in extra-curricular activities, but the opportunity to participate in any of these elective activities is not an absolute right. Rather, it is a privilege offered to eligible students on an equal opportunity basis. To be eligible to try out for, or to participate in, any school sponsored extra-curricular activity students must agree to submit to testing for the use of drugs and alcohol if selected in accordance with this policy. Failure to sign the School District's Consent to Participate in Extracurricular Drug and Alcohol Testing Program form will result in non-participation. The parent drug testing permission form will be considered valid over the student's entire high school career. This policy shall apply to all school sponsored extra-curricular activities for which no academic credit is awarded.

A. It is the intention of the Board of Education that this policy protects the health, welfare and safety of students engaged in extra-curricular activities and to establish minimal standards of eligibility for such activities. Its purpose is to better assure a student's health, and physical and mental fitness to participate in extra-curricular activities and not to provide a means by which the District may punish a student other than barring such student from participation in extra-curricular activities. Therefore, the positive results of any drug or alcohol test administered pursuant to this policy will be used for determining eligibility to try out for and participate in extra-curricular activities and for no other disciplinary purpose.

B. Students who wish to try out for and/or participate in school sponsored extra-curricular activities shall be randomly tested for drugs and/or alcohol in accordance with this policy. The student identification number of such students shall be sent to the testing lab. **Once a week during the school year the school district shall direct the testing lab to randomly select, by student identification number, up to 10% of the students participating in extra-curricular activities for testing. The testing lab shall then notify the School District of which identification n**umbers have been selected. Those selected shall be notified by the School District and tested that same day, if possible. The student to be tested shall complete a specimen control form which shall bear an assigned number (different from the student identification number) without the knowledge of the School District. On that form the student must identify prescription medications which he/she is currently taking pursuant to a doctor's authorization. This information shall be sealed in an envelope and delivered to the testing lab. The student shall then provide a urine sample. The student shall be monitored by an adult monitor from the testing lab. The monitor shall remain directly outside the bathroom and shall note any unusual circumstances, behavior, or appearance of the student or specimen. After the sample is produced, the monitor shall check it for temperature and tampering and then transfer it to a vial. If a student refuses to be tested or is unable to produce a sample, that student shall be deemed to have tested positive, and shall be subject to the disciplinary measures mandated by this policy.

C. The samples shall be sent to an independent laboratory which shall test for alcohol and/or drugs and/or **substances intended to mask such substances**. The identity of a particular student shall not determine which drugs shall be tested for. The tests conducted shall look only for drugs and/or alcohol and not for whether a student is, for example, epileptic, pregnant or diabetic.

D. If a sample tests positive, a second confirming test of the same sample shall be administered as soon as possible to confirm the result. If the second test is negative, no further action shall be taken. If the second test is positive, the medical review officer shall attempt to talk with the student as soon as possible.

E. Students who test positive will not be allowed to participate until they have retested, with negative results. Additional consequences may be issued. Please refer to the Extra-Curricular Drug and Alcohol Policy below for steps to be taken by the school after a confirmed positive test is reported by the lab.

F. Any evidence that comes available showing the student has attempted to hide or mask the presence of a barred substance through the ingestion of a masking agent/substance or other action meant to falsify or alter results will result in the same action as a positive test.

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular and athletic participants, starting the first day of activity with an OTHS team/extracurricular activity or the first day of school, whichever is earlier, and extending through the student's graduation date or last date of activity, whichever is later.

This Code does not contain a complete list of inappropriate behaviors. Violations will be treated cumulatively, with disciplinary penalties increasing with subsequent violations. A student may be excluded from extracurricular or athletic activities while the school is conducting an investigation into the student's conduct.

The student shall not:

1. Violate the school rules and School District policies on student discipline including policies and procedures on student behavior;
2. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute a beverage containing alcohol (except for religious purposes);
3. Ingest or otherwise use possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute tobacco or nicotine in any form (including but not limited to cigarettes, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes/vapes/Juuls);
4. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute or any illegal substance (including mood-altering and performance enhancing drugs or chemicals), medications without a prescription, any product composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form, or paraphernalia associated with the above;
5. Use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any object that is or could be considered a weapon or any item that is a look alike weapon. This prohibition does not prohibit legal use of weapons in cooking and in athletics, such as archery, martial arts practice, target shooting, hunting, and skeet;
6. Attend a party or other gathering and/or ride in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors;
7. Act in an unsportsmanlike manner;
8. Violate any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and reckless driving;
9. Haze or bully other students (see below for additional information);
10. Violate the written rules for the extracurricular or athletic activity;
11. Behave in a manner that disrupts or adversely affects the group or school;
12. Be insubordinate or disrespectful toward the activity's sponsors or team's coaching staff;
13. Act in a disrespect manner toward teammates/activity-mates, opponents, opposing sponsors or coaches, officials, or spectators;
14. Display inappropriate content on social media or personal websites, and/or use electronic devices for conduct unbecoming of a representative of OTHS; or
15. Falsify any information contained on any permit or permission form required by the extracurricular or athletic activity.

Hazing is any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to belong to a team or group, regardless of his or her willingness to participate. Bullying includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Violations of the Code of Conduct

Consequences issued under this policy will be issued sequentially throughout a student's career at OTHS and will not start over at the start of a new school year or after transferring back to OTHS after attending another school.

A student found in violation of the Code of Conduct during a season in which s/he participates will serve the suspension during that season. Suspensions may carry over into the following season if there are insufficient contests remaining in the current season to fulfill the term of the suspension. Remaining a member of the team through the end of the season is a requirement of having completed a suspension from extracurricular activity.

Violations that occur outside of a student's participation in a sport/activity will result in the suspension being served at the beginning of the next season in which s/he participates.

Code of Conduct Violation Consequences

I. Consequences for violations other than drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, paraphernalia, or any other illegal substance will be based on the nature of the offense and the number of offenses committed, and may include suspension from all extracurricular or athletic activities for one of the time periods described below:
   1. A specified period of time or percentage of performances, activities, or competitions.
   2. The remainder of the season or for the next season.
   3. The remainder of the school year.
   4. The remainder of the student's school career.

II. Consequences for violations involving use, possession, buying, selling, and/or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, paraphernalia, or any other illegal substance, on or off school property, will be based on the following:

First Offense

At the first substantiated offense the student will be suspended from competition for the next fourteen (14) calendar days or 20% of the remaining competition schedule, whichever is greater.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

Second Offense

At the second substantiated offense the student will be suspended from participation in the athletic program for thirty (30) calendar days or 40% of the remaining competition schedule, whichever is greater.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

Additional Offenses

Starting with the third substantiated offense, and continuing throughout the remainder of the student's high school career, the student will be suspended from participation in the athletic program for one calendar year from the date of the infraction.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

III. Consequences for violations involving association with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, paraphernalia, or any other illegal substance, on or off school property, (being in a car, at a party, or any other gathering or place, where minors are in possession or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, paraphernalia, or any other illegal substance) will be based on the following:

First Offense

At the first substantiated offense the student will participate in a meeting with the Athletic Director and another OTHS administrator.

The participant may be required to attend counseling.

Second Offense

At the second substantiated offense the student will participate in a meeting with the Athletic Director and another OTHS administrator and also be suspended from competition for the next week or 10% of the remaining competition, whichever is greater.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

Third Offense
At the third substantiated offense the student will be suspended from participation in the athletic program for one month.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

Additional Offenses
Starting with the fourth substantiated offense the student will be suspended from participation in the athletic program for one calendar year from the date of the infraction.

The participant may be required to attend counseling sessions in addition to suspension from competition.

Due Process

Students who are accused of violating the Code of Conduct are entitled to the following due process:

1. The student should be advised of the disciplinary infraction with which he or she is being accused of.
2. The student shall be entitled to a hearing before an appropriate administrator.
3. The student will be able to respond to any charges leveled against him or her.
4. The student may provide any additional information he or she wishes for the administrator to consider.
5. The administrator, with the help of other staff members if needed, may interview material witnesses or others with evidence concerning the case.
6. If the administrator finds, after reviewing the evidence, that the violation occurred, he or she will impose consequences as outlined above.

Attendance & Discipline

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, DEANS OF STUDENTS AND RESOURCE OFFICERS

The Assistant Principal, Deans of Students and School Resource Officers have the primary responsibility of maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment at Ottawa Township High School. The Assistant Principal and Deans of Students are located in room 201. The School Resource Officers are located in room 400 and can be contacted through the Student services office, room 201. If you have any questions or concerns, the School Resource Officers may also be contacted through e-mail at the following address: sro@ottawahigh.com

SAFE SCHOOL ZONE

In order to maintain a safe learning environment, Ottawa Township High School has been declared a Safe School Zone. The penalties for drug and weapons offenses and street gang activity increase and, in some cases double, within the Safe School Zone.

ATTENDANCE

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

For students who are required to attend school there are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include:

- Illness (including up to 5 days per school year for mental or behavioral health of the student),
- Observance of a religious holiday or event,
- Death in the immediate family,
- Family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the school board,
- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety,
- Attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS, or

- Other reason as approved by the building principal.
- Students eligible to vote are also excused for up to two hours to vote in a primary, special, or general election.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment.

A student shall also be permitted one school day-long excused absence per school year for the student to engage in a civic event. "Civic event" means an event sponsored by a non-profit organization or governmental entity that is open to the public. "Civic event" includes, but is not limited to, an artistic or cultural performance or educational gathering that supports the mission of the sponsoring non-profit organization.

A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Students who are excused from school will be given the number of school days equal to the number of days absent to make up missed homework and classwork assignments.

All other absences are considered unexcused. Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Transportation Issues (missing bus, car trouble, ride not showing up, etc.)
- Oversleeping
- Being needed at home to care for other family members,
- Appointments or lessons with Top Driver or other non-OTHS driver education providers,
- Going to the Department of Motor Vehicles/Secretary of State Office for Driver's License or State ID,
- Cosmetic appointments (hair, nails, etc.)

Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal or designee.

The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

A parent/guardian is required to notify the school of any absence from school by their child. Parents may notify the school by calling the Attendance Line or by submitting an Absence Request via Skyward. When reporting an absence, parents must explain the reason for the absence. Failure to report an absence within two school days of the absence shall result in an unexcused absence.

The number for the 24-hour Attendance Line is 815-433-1326. Please leave a voicemail if there is no answer.

An Absence Request may be submitted in Skyward by:

1. Log into Skyward
2. Go to the Attendance Screen via the tab on the left of the screen
3. Click Absence Requests near the top of the screen
4. Click Add Request in the pop up box
5. Complete start and end date and time information, state the reason for the absence in the comments box
6. Click Save in the bottom right corner

INFORMING PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF AN ABSENCE

If a student is absent and the parent/guardian does not inform the school steps will be taken to identify the reason for the absence:

1. The day of the absence the parent/guardian will receive an automated text message informing them of their child's absence and requesting that they call the school's attendance office to verify the absence and supply the reason for the absence.
2. The day of or day after the absence a school official will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone to verify the absence and find out the reason for the absence (if the parent/guardian has not contacted the school).
3. Two days after the absence a school official will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone to verify the absence and find out the reason for the absence (if the parent/guardian has not contacted the school).
4. Three days after the absence a school official will meet with the student regarding the absence to discuss the reason for the absence and whether it is to be excused.

MAKE-UP WORK FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

Assignments given prior to the absence are due the same day the student returns to school. Upon return from absence, students will have no less than the number of days absent to complete work assigned during the absence. Students who miss a quiz or test due to an absence must make arrangements with their teacher to take the quiz or test upon return to school.

See Final Exam Policy for information on absences during final exams.

DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING STUDENT ABSENCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO TRUANT OR CHRONICALLY TRUANT STUDENTS

State law requires every school district to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. This review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center.

Furthermore, State law provides that school districts are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families such as those available through the State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions.

The School and District use the following diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences: Interviews with the student, his or her parent/guardian and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problems.

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include parent conferences, student counseling, and information about existing community services.

TRUANCY, CHRONIC TRUANCY, AND CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy, chronic truancy, and chronic absenteeism are therefore serious issues and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school and district.

Students who miss more than 1% but less than 5% of school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are truant. Students who miss 5% or more of school days without valid cause are chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue. 08/2026

Students who are absent 10% or more with or without valid cause are chronic absentees.

Any student who meets the criteria for and is identified as a Chronic Truant or Chronic Absentee will be required to present an excuse from school signed by a physician (MD, DO, psychiatrist, or psychologist), physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) for the absence to be excused. Failure to produce documentation will result in the absence being categorized as unexcused and associated discipline will be assigned. **Any student whose absences categorize the student as a Chronic Truant (9 unexcused absences) or Chronic Absentee (18 excused and/or unexcused absences) will be placed on social probation for the remainder of the school year.**

If attendance problems persist after support services and other resources (see "Attendance Resources and Supports" section) are made available, the school and district will take further action, including:

- Referral to the truancy officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.

A student who misses 15 consecutive days of school without valid cause and who cannot be located or, after exhausting all available support services, cannot be compelled to return to school is subject to administrative withdrawal from school.

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.08/2026

Students who have been administratively withdrawn may reenroll at OTHS up to a date at which they are unable to meet graduation requirements before their 21st birthday (end of the semester of their 22nd birthday for IEP students). These students are eligible for all academic programming and supports offered by the school.

ATTENDANCE RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Parents who need assistance getting their child to school, or to school on time are encouraged to call their student's counselor (See listing under "School Offices"). The counseling office has collected and has for distribution resources for student and family counseling available in Ottawa and surrounding communities.

Additional supports are available through the Student Services Office, room 201. Additionally, the Regional Office of Education employs a Truancy Officer, who may be contacted at 815-434-0780.

A number of Support PEPs (Pirate Empowerment Periods/homerooms), two of which provide support specifically to students with attendance issues, have been implemented to support these students. Additionally, the OTHS SAIL Program (Students Achieving In Life - self-contained small setting classrooms) have been restructured and expanded to provide more intensive support for students with a record of behavioral, attendance, and/or academic concerns. Also, in extreme cases, families may work with the ROE Truancy Officer toward enrollment in the ROE TAEOP Program (Truants Alternative and Optional Educational Program).

The Regional Office of Education Work Study Program is available to students, age 17 or older, who are chronically truant or withdraw from (drop out of) school. The program allows students who meet qualifications to continue earning credits toward and eventually earn an Ottawa Township High School diploma.

ATTENDANCE ENTRIES IN SKYWARD

School staff enter absences in Skyward using a system of Absence Types and Absence Reasons.

Absence Types:

- A – Web Absence – The student has been marked absent by the teacher, but the reason is yet to be determined.
- E – Excused Absence – The student's absence has been verified as excused by school staff.
- U – Unexcused Absence – The student's absence has been verified as unexcused by school staff.
- T – Web Tardy – The student arrived late to class without a pass excusing their late arrival.
- S – School-Related – The student was not in class due to a school-related reason. "S" absences do not count toward a student's absences for the school year.
- R – Remote Learning – The student is remote learning due to their specific circumstances.

Absence Reasons:

- EA - Excused Absence – Generalized excused absence has been verified as excused by school staff.
- AW – AWOL – Generalized unexcused absence has been verified as excused by school staff.
- SE – School Excused – Participation in a school-sponsored activity.
- SS – Student Services – Meeting with school staff (counselor, social worker, IEP, etc.)
- MH – Mental Health – Using one of five mental health days awarded by the State.
- ME – Medical Excused – Excused by a physician (MD, DO, psychiatrist, or psychologist), physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN).

Above are the most-often used absence reasons. If you have questions regarding another absence reason please contact the student services office at 815-433-1326.

LATE ARRIVALS TO SCHOOL

Ottawa Township High School has implemented a system to encourage students to arrive at school on time. All students are to enter the main entrance and check in in room 201 any time after 8:00. Students arriving between 8:00 and 8:10 will be marked as tardy. Students arriving after 8:10 be marked absent for partial or full class periods missed. The following will be applied to tardies each semester:

- #1-3: Warning, no consequences are issued.
- #4: An administrator will meet with the student to discuss the behavior and try to avoid further infractions. The parent will receive a phone call to participate if available.
- #5: An administrator will meet with the student and the student will be placed on social probation for 30 days or until s/he has arrived on time 10 consecutive school days. The student is responsible for bringing this to the attention of an administrator if s/he wishes to be removed from probation.
- #6: An administrator will meet with the student to discuss the behavior and try to avoid further infractions. The parent will receive a phone call to participate if available. The student will be placed on social probation

for 30 days or until s/he has arrived on time 10 consecutive school days. The student is responsible for bringing this to the attention of an administrator if s/he wishes to be removed from probation.

- #7-9: An administrator will meet with the student and the student will be placed on social probation for the remainder of the semester or until s/he has arrived on time 10 consecutive school days. The student is responsible for bringing this to the attention of an administrator if s/he wishes to be removed from probation.
- #10 and Beyond: The student has reached a percentage of tardies and/or late arrivals that equates to Chronic Absentee levels. All will be marked unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided and school consequences in addition to continued probation may be issued.

Parents are reminded to check on their student's attendance in the Skyward student management system to monitor all attendance issues.

CLASS AND PEP TARDIES

Any student arriving late to 2nd-7th hours during the first 10 minutes will be marked tardy by the teacher and assigned a detention by the teacher unless arriving with a pass from a teacher or admit slip from 201. Students arriving more than 10 minutes after class has begun without a pass or admit slip will be counted as absent.

COLLEGE DAYS

Junior and senior students may visit colleges, universities, trade schools and other institutions to explore post-high school opportunities. These absences can be excused by a parent, in which case they will be marked as an excused absence. The absence may be changed to school excused if the student returns with an artifact (business card, letterhead, etc.) from the place of the visit with the name of the person s/he met with appearing on the artifact, and signed and dated by that person. Students may have a maximum of three school excused absences for college days during each of the junior and senior years.

SKIP DAYS

Class skip days **will not be authorized** by Ottawa Township High School. Incidents of mass truancy as determined by the administration will result in unexcused absences. Students may be called at home during regular school hours to determine if the student should be placed on excused status.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The goals and objectives of this policy are to provide effective discipline practices that: (1) ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff; (2) maintain a positive, weapons-free, and drug-free learning environment; (3) keep school property and the property of others secure; (4) address the causes of a student's misbehavior and provide opportunities for all individuals involved in an incident to participate in its resolution; and (5) teach students positive behavioral skills to become independent, self-disciplined citizens in the school community and society.

<u>When and Where Conduct Rules Apply</u>

A student is subject to disciplinary action for engaging in prohibited student conduct, as described in the section with that name below, whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;

2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;

3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;

4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including, but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property; or

5. During periods of remote learning.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student's parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

SCHOOL AND STUDENT SEARCHES

In order to maintain order safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

SCHOOL PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS PERSONAL ITEMS LEFT THERE BY STUDENTS

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as, lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

STUDENT SEARCHES

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of the investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

Student Searches using Metal Detectors (Updated 1/1/25)

School authorities may use metal detectors to search/scan a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession randomly or if there is reasonable suspicion to do so per the above. Detection of metal items on the student's person or in their possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) will result in a search of the student's person or personal effects/possessions as alerted to.

SEIZURE OF PROPERTY

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) Notify or attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (including, but not limited to, a social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, or any other mental health professional) is present during the questioning; and (c) If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in promoting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

VIDEO AND AUDIO MONITORING SYSTEMS

A video and/or audio monitoring system may be in use on school busses and a video monitoring system may be in use in public areas of the school building. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the tape may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

DISCIPLINARY INFRACTIONS

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct including, but not limited to, the following topics. Additional information regarding several of the topics below follows this listing.

School buses, or other vehicles used to transport students with a reasonable relationship to the school or school activities, are to be considered an extension of the school. Students will be held to the same standards of acceptable behavior while being transported as they are while at school.

For purposes of these rules, the term "possession" includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student's person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student's clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school's student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes/e-cigarettes/vapes, vape pens, or other vaping-related products. (updated 1/1/25)
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale:
    a. Any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law).
    b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
    c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
    d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law.
    e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.
    f. "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.
    g. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.
    h. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in a tablet or powdered form.
    i. Any substance or masking agent used to falsify a drug or alcohol test.

    Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

4. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring a "weapon" or violating the procedures listed below under the Weapons Prohibition section of this handbook procedure.
5. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.
6. Using an electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others. See "Student Use of Electronic Devices" below for additional information.
7. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.

8. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a staff member's request to stop, present school identification or submit to a search.
9. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
10. Engaging in bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, *or posting or distributing sexually explicit images.*
11. *Engaging in cyber-bullying, which means bullying through the use of technology or electronic communication. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, assuming the identity or impersonation of another person for the purposes of bullying, distribution of electronic communications to more than one person or posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by more than one person for the purposes of bullying, posting or distribution of an unauthorized replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects of bullying. 08/2026*
12. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.
13. Engaging in teen dating violence.
14. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.
15. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
16. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.
17. Being absent without a recognized excuse.
18. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society.
19. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
20. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and hazing.
21. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
22. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
23. Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building principal or his designee.

PREVENTION OF & RESPONSE TO BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important district and school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, pregnancy, parenting status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.

2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes:

1. The creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.
2. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.
3. *The posting or distribution of an unauthorized digital replica by electronic means if the posting or distribution creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying*

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, *posting or distributing sexually explicit images or text,* theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

REPORTING BULLYING

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, nondiscrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with bullying or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call (815-433-1323, ext. 1411), via email (othssafe@ottawahigh.com), or in writing (drop box outside 201 or 206).

PERSONS DESIGNATED AS THOSE WHO MAY RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF BULLYING INCLUDE:

Guidance Counselors: (815)431-2494

Mrs. Swords – kswords@ottawahigh.com

Ms. Dorton – hdorton@ottawahigh.com

Mrs. Pytel – epytel@ottawahigh.com

Mrs. Rios – jrios@ottawahigh.com

Mrs. Yates – lyates@ottawahigh.com

Social Worker: (815)433-1323

Mrs. Hiland – khiland@ottawahigh.com

Administration: (815)433-1326

Mrs. Gass– jgass@ottawahigh.com

Ms. Lance – klance@ottawahigh.com

Mr. DeWalt – jdewalt@ottawahigh.com

Mr. Leslie – jleslie@ottawahigh.com

Psychologist: (815)433-1323 ext. 3331

Mrs. Leonard – pageleonard@ottawahigh.com

Mrs. McAlpine – kmcalpine@ottawahigh.com

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Students and parents/guardians are also encouraged to read the following school district policies: 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited and 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or guardian within 24-hours after the school's administration is made aware of a student's involvement in an alleged bullying incident. The term "bullying incident" includes individual instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be a result of bullying. Notification to a parent or guardian shall include, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

Any student who engages in severe or pervasive behavior such as harassing, intimidating or bullying is subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences consistent with the OTHS Parent-Student Handbook and Board of Education policy. Consequences may range from a warning to expulsion; and may include referral to law enforcement. The OTHS Parent-Student Handbook and Board of Education policies may be referenced at www.ottawahigh.com.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, AND NATIONAL ORIGIN PROHIBITED **(Updated 1/1/25)**

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin negatively affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from such discrimination and harassment is an important District and School goal. The District and School do not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, or national origin in any of its education programs or activities and comply with federal and State non-discrimination laws.

Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Examples of conduct that may constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: disciplining students more harshly and frequently because of their race, color, or national origin; denying students access to high-rigor academic courses, extracurricular activities, or other educational opportunities based on their race, color, or national origin; denying language services or other educational opportunities to English learners; and assigning students special education services based on a student's race, color, or national origin.

Harassment is a form of prohibited discrimination. Examples of conduct that may constitute harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin include: the use of racial, ethnic or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; taunts; name-calling; offensive or derogatory remarks about a person's actual or perceived race, color, or national origin; the display of racially-offensive symbols; racially-motivated physical threats and attacks; or other hateful conduct.

Making a Report or Complaint; Investigation Process

Individuals are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidences of discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Reports will be processed under the District's Uniform Grievance Procedure.

Reports and complaints of discrimination or harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

Federal and State Agencies

If the District fails to take necessary corrective action to stop harassment based on race, color, or national origin, further relief may be available through the Illinois Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR) or the U.S. Dept. of Education's Office for Civil Rights. To contact IDHR, go to: https://dhr.illinois.gov/about-us/contact-idhr.html or call (312) 814-6200 (Chicago) or (217) 785-5100 (Springfield).

Prevention and Response Program

The District maintains a prevention and response program to respond to complaints of discrimination based on race, color, and national origin, including harassment, and retaliation. The program includes procedures for responding to complaints which:

1. Reduce or remove, to the extent practicable, barriers to reporting discrimination, harassment, and retaliation;
2. Permit any person who reports or is the victim of an incident of alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to be accompanied when making a report by a support individual of the person's choice who complies with the District's policies and rules;
3. Permit anonymous reporting, except that an anonymous report may not be the sole basis of any disciplinary action;
4. Offer remedial interventions or take such disciplinary action as may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis;
5. Offer, but do not require or unduly influence, a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation the option to resolve allegations directly with the accused; and
6. Protects a person who reports or is the victim of an incident of harassment or retaliation from suffering adverse consequences as a result of a report of, investigation of, or a response to the incident.

Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion, consistent with the student discipline information in this handbook.

Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited.
Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

STUDENT USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of electronic devices and other technology at school is a privilege, not a right. An electronic device includes, but is not limited to, the following: cell phone, smart phone, earbuds/AirPods/headphones, smart watch, audio or video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), iPod©, iPad©, laptop computer, tablet computer or other similar electronic device. Pocket pagers and other paging devices are not allowed on school property at any time, except with the express permission of District administration. The school and school district are not responsible for the loss, theft or damage to any electronic device brought to school.

Students are allowed access to electronic devices during non-instructional time, which is defined as before and after school, during passing periods, and during the student's lunch period.

Electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during instructional time. Instructional time begins when the bell rings for each class period, including PEP and Study Halls, and ends when the teacher dismisses the class.

Electronic devices may never be used in any manner that disrupts the educational environment, violates student conduct rules, or violates the rights of others. This includes, but is not limited to:

a. Using the device to take photographs, video recordings, or audio recordings of students or staff.

b. Sharing photographs, video recordings, or audio recordings via text message, social media, or other electronic means.

c. Cheating on assignments or assessments.

d. Creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person, commonly known as "sexting."

e. Otherwise violating student conduct rules.

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

Students may use an electronic device during instructional time if:

a. *The device is a student's school-issued laptop, and it is being utilized for class activity.*
b. *Use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan.*
c. *School personnel have determined the wireless communication device is necessary for students who are English learners to access learning materials.*
d. *A licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner determines the possession or use of a wireless communication device is necessary for the management of the student's health care and the student uses the wireless communication device only as prescribed by the licensed physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner.*
e. *It is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.*
f. *Written permission from the assistant principal, associate principal, or principal has been obtained.*

DRESS CODE AND STUDENT APPEARANCE

A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school and school-sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and appearance in accordance with the guidelines below. Students' dress and appearance must be appropriate for the school environment. Students' dress and appearance must not cause a disruption in the school environment or endanger the health or safety of the student, other students, staff, or others. If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, the final decision will be made by the building principal or his designee.

School attire will cover the individual from the top of the shoulders to the mid-thigh area. The length of shirts, shorts, and skirts must be appropriate for the school environment. Shirts with the sleeves and/or sides cut out, revealing the student's sides/midsection, are not appropriate. Shirts without straps may only be worn if a shirt with straps over the shoulders is worn underneath.

Clothing with holes, rips, tears, or that is otherwise poorly fitting and shows undergarments may not be worn at school.

Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.

Student dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or picture alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.

Student dress (including accessories) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.

Head coverings (including, but not limited to hats, bandannas, durags, bonnets, shower caps, and head scarfs that cover the top of the head) may not be worn in the building during the school day without recognized reason due to medical, religious, or cultural necessity or the express permission of the principal or his designee.

Winter coats, parkas, jackets may not be worn in the building during the school day without recognized reason due to medical necessity or the express permission of the principal or his designee.

Sunglasses may not be worn in the building during the school day without recognized reason due to medical necessity or the express permission of the principal or his designee.

Students may not conceal or alter their appearance in any way, including, but not limited to, wearing face paint, excessive makeup, or wearing a mask (other than over the nose and mouth for medical reasons). Students must be easily identifiable at all times.

The school does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists, or religious hairstyles, hair related religious practices, or facial hair worn in accordance with sincerely held religious beliefs, observance, or practice, including but not limited to, uncut hair or sidelocks, or beards, mustaches, or other facial hair. 08/2026

Hair styles, dress, and accessories that may pose a safety hazard to the student wearing them or others are not permitted in the school. These include wallet chains or other chains, studded or spiked belts, collars, wrist/armbands, and straps or strings, etc. that hang off garments and may become entangled or caught on other objects, or potentially used as a weapon.

The school will not prohibit students from wearing or accessorizing the student's graduation attire with items associated with the student's cultural, ethnic, or religious identity or any other protected characteristic or category identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Students whose dress or appearance is deemed inappropriate, causes a disruption to the orderly process of school functions, or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, staff, or others will be directed to make changes in accordance with the information above. Students will not be allowed to leave campus to change their clothes or appearance. Those who refuse or are repeat offenders are subject to disciplinary consequences.

BACKPACKS, BOOKBAGS, LARGE PURSES AND STRING BAGS

Backpacks, bookbags, large purses, and string bags will not be allowed in any classroom throughout the day due to safety considerations. The above may be used to carry school and personal belongings to and from school but must remain in the student's locker throughout the school day unless permission is granted by school administration or the school nurse.

ACCESS TO STUDENT SOCIAL NETWORKING PASSWORDS & WEBSITES

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

SCHOOL BUS AND SCHOOL VEHICLE CONDUCT/RULES

All school rules pertain to students at the bus stop, and those riding the bus or other school transportation, including to and from home, extracurricular events, and school-day trips. Transportation rules include, but are not limited to:

1. Obey directions of the driver.
2. Remain seated and wear seatbelts (when available) while the vehicle is in motion.
3. Yelling, loud noises, profanity and obscene gestures are prohibited.
4. Seating is at the discretion of the driver. Students may be assigned a seat at any time.
5. Food and drinks are prohibited.
6. All objects and body parts must remain inside the bus at all times.
7. Students may only ride the bus that is assigned to them. Students who do not ride the bus must receive permission from school administration to ride with another student.

SEE ALSO – TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/BUSING/BUS SAFETY below

TARGETED SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM **(Updated 1/1/25)**

Threats and acts of targeted school violence harm the District's environment and school community, diminishing students' ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Providing students and staff with access to a safe and secure environment is an important goal of the School and District. While it is not possible to completely eliminate threats, the School and District maintain a Targeted School Violence Prevention Program and a Threat Assessment Team to reduce these risks to its environment.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to report any expressed threats or behaviors that may represent a threat to the community, School, or self. Reports can be made to any school administrator, law enforcement authorities, or the Safe2Help Illinois helpline (www.safe2helpil.com/).

Students and parents are urged to participate in behavioral threat assessment and intervention programs if the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team believes that intervention is necessary to prevent a student from harming themselves or others. However, if for some reason there is a reluctance to participate in the process by the threat maker(s) or parent/guardian(s),

the threat assessment process will continue in order to ensure a safe and caring learning environment for all. For further information, please contact the Building Principal.

HARASSMENT AND TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PROHIBITED

Harassment Prohibited

No person, including a school district employee, agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity[1]; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance; socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The District will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited (Title IX)

Sexual harassment as defined in Title IX (Title IX Sexual Harassment) is prohibited. Any person, including a District employee or agent, or student, engages in Title IX Sexual Harassment when that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A District employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or

2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's educational program or activity; or

3. Sexual assault as defined in or stalking as defined in District policy and federal law.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, touching, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, sexual coercion, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

Teen Dating Violence Prohibited

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, the term teen dating violence occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

Making a Complaint

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidents of sexual harassment, teen dating violence or any other prohibited conduct to the nondiscrimination coordinator, building principal, assistant building principal, dean of students, or a complaint manager. A student may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.

Nondiscrimination Coordinators/Complaint Managers: (815)433-1323

Dr. Cushing – mcushing@ottawahigh.com
Mrs. Taliani – staliani@ottawahigh.com

Investigation Process

Reports and complaints of discrimination or harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion, consistent with the student discipline information in this handbook.

Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

Retaliation Prohibited
Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited.
Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

FIGHTING

Situations that endanger the health and/or safety of others in the school will not be tolerated. Physical confrontation is a dangerous and inappropriate means of conflict resolution. Pushing, shoving, wrestling with, punching, kicking, or hitting others may be perceived as fighting, regardless of intent. It is often difficult for school personnel to determine which student starts a fight. Therefore, any student who engages in behavior perceived as fighting is subject to appropriate disciplinary consequences, including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement.

Self-defense will only be considered if the student has made every reasonable effort to remove him/herself from the situation and escape the altercation. A student who "fights back" without making every effort to avoid conflict will be subject to the same disciplinary consequences as the aggressor.

WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES PROHIBITION

Possession of weapons, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, or dangerous chemicals by students is prohibited. A student found to be in possession of any of these items, or other items that may reasonably be used to cause harm to other students, staff, or other members of the school community at school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school, are subject to disciplinary action, ranging from suspension to expulsion.

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

(1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the Unites States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a "billy club", or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look-alikes" of any firearm as defined above. The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

GANG ACTIVITY

"Gang" is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

BEHAVIORAL AND DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Potential interventions and consequences include, but are not limited to, the following measures. Additional information regarding several of the items below follows this listing.

1. Student conferences with the teacher, guidance counselor and/or school administration
2. Partnering with parents and guardians via phone calls, emails, and/or conferences
3. Before or after-school detention
4. Withholding of privileges (social probation)
5. Extended Day Detention
6. Peer Mediation
7. Suspension of bus riding privileges
8. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rule(s)
9. Loss of parking privileges
10. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property
11. Out-of-School Suspension
12. Behavior Contract – potential for adjustment of schedule with loss of credit
13. Placement at alternative school
14. Notification and involvement of law enforcement
15. Expulsion
16. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

Student discipline will be reflected in the student's temporary record, but will not be a part of the permanent record or appear on a transcript. A student attempting to transfer to another school during the term of a suspension or expulsion will be marked as "not in good standing" on the transfer form. Ottawa Township High School will honor the suspension or expulsion for any reason from any public or private school in this or any other state. The student must complete the entire term of the suspension or expulsion before being admitted in the school district.

TEACHER ASSIGNED AND 201 DETENTIONS

A teacher detention may be assigned, by a teacher, for infractions of classroom and/or school rules. A teacher detention must be served with the teacher assigning the detention.

A 201 detention may be served before or after school. Morning detention begins at 7:30 a.m., Monday through Friday in room 201. Afternoon detention begins five minutes after school is dismissed, Monday through Friday in the cafeteria.

EXTENDED DAY DETENTION - RULES AND REGULATIONS

Extended Day Detention is an alternative to in-school suspension. The purpose is to allow students the opportunity to remain in class, reduce failures, improve school climate, and focus on student maturity and responsibility. All assignments to Extended Day Detention will be made by the Assistant Principal, Associate Principal, or his/her designee.

Extended Day Detention will be held from **3:15-5:00 p.m.** on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the school year (check postings outside room 201 for cancellations based on school scheduling).

Transportation **will not** be available to students after Extended Day Detention.

Students assigned to Extended Day Detention must attend the full session to receive credit. Students who fail to report for, are removed from, or leave before completing the assigned time without prior approval of an Assistant Principal or Associate Principal may receive a consequence ranging from reassignment of Extended Day Detention to Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) and will also be placed on 30 days Social Probation.

Students are to bring appropriate materials to work on or read during Extended Day Detention. Students assigned to Extended Day Detention are responsible for having materials, textbooks, notes, etc. upon arrival. Students will not be permitted to go to their lockers during Extended Day Detention.

Deadlines for serving Extended Day Detention **will not be extended due to work, extracurricular, or other conflict.**

The school will attempt to contact a parent if a student is removed from Extended Day Detention, but is not responsible for said student.

SOCIAL PROBATION

One behavioral/disciplinary intervention available to OTHS administration is Social Probation, or the removal of privileges.

Level I Probation: Students who are placed on Level I Social Probation will not be allowed to attend any extra-curricular activities including, but not limited to, sporting events, dances (including homecoming and prom), plays and concerts for a period of 30 days from the time of the infraction. Any student who is out-of-school suspended will also be placed on probation for a period of thirty calendar days from the date of the suspension.

Level II Probation: Students who are placed on Level II Social Probation will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities including, but not limited to, sports teams, school clubs, plays and concerts for a period of 30 days from the time of the infraction. Students on Level II Probation are also considered to be on Level I Probation concurrently.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

A student may be issued an out-of-school suspension provided that:

- The student's continued presence at school poses a threat to the safety of other students, staff or members of the school community. Due to the egregious nature of your child's conduct (i.e., physical harm, violence, threat) and/or the history or record of your child's past conduct, school officials have determined that your child is likely to engage in similar conduct in the future,

  OR

  The student's continued presence at school substantially disrupts, impedes or interfere with the operation of the school. Due to the egregious nature of your child's conduct (i.e., physical harm, violence, threat) and/or the history or record of your child's past conduct, school officials have determined that (a) your child is likely to engage in similar conduct in the future, and/or (b) the presence of your child at school will foster a culture that his or her behavior(s) at school is/are acceptable or tolerated.

- The school must document whether other behavioral and disciplinary interventions were attempted or if it was determined other interventions were not appropriate or available.
- When the duration of suspension is 4-10 days, the school must document what support services are to be provided to the student during the suspension or if it was determined that such services were not appropriate or available.

Any student who has been issued and out-of-school suspension is not permitted on school property and cannot participate in any school activities during the period of the suspension. Students who are out-of-school suspended will be placed on level I probation for a period of thirty calendar days from the date of the suspension.

School officials will communicate the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct leading to the suspension and the rationale for the specific duration of the suspension by mail. School officials will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone as soon as possible after the time of the infraction.

Students who have received an out-of-school suspension have the opportunity to make up missed work for equivalent academic credit. Assignments given prior to the suspension are due the same day the student returns to school. Upon return from suspension, students will have no less than the number of days suspended to complete work assigned during the suspension. Students who miss a quiz or test due to a suspension must make arrangements with their teacher to take the quiz or test upon return to school. It is highly recommended that students issued a suspension take an active role in completing schoolwork during the period of suspension. Students who are suspended should email their teachers and check class Teams pages for notes and homework assignments.

Students returning from suspension should report to room 201 before school on the date of their return to meet with an administrator and discuss means of successfully transitioning back to school, prior to attending any classes.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE

A student must be provided with the following due process in connection with any suspension from school:

1. Oral or written notice of the charges and evidence supporting the charges;
2. If the charges are denied, a student must be given an opportunity to explain his version of the events to the suspending school official;
3. The suspension (except from riding a bus for safety reasons) may not exceed 10 days;
4. To have his parents or guardian immediately receive a report of the suspension along with a full statement of the reasons for it and a notice of right to review;

5. If a hearing is requested, the parents or guardian may appear and may discuss the suspension with the board or its hearing officer;
6. Any decision rendered must be based upon the evidence; and
7. With respect to any suspension invoked, the student has a right to be informed of its beginning and ending dates.

The rules regulating the suspension of a student identified as in need of special education are different, and disposition will depend upon the facts presented in each case.

EXPULSION

All expulsions will be in accordance with the Illinois School Code. Only the Board of Education may expel students. Students allowed the opportunity to attend the LaSalle County Regional Safe School while expelled are responsible for paying registration fees to OTHS. Credits earned through homeschooling of a student during the term of an expulsion will not be accepted by Ottawa Township High School.

The school administration may recommend a student for expulsion provided that:

- other appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted or that the school has determined that there were no appropriate and available interventions, **and**
- the student's presence poses a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or the school community, **or**
- the student's presence substantially disrupts, impedes or interferes with the operation of the school.

EXPULSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE

A. If the Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students has reasonable suspicion to believe a pupil is guilty of gross misconduct or disobedience the pupil will be summoned to the office where s/he will have the charges outlined and an opportunity to explain the evidence against him/her. When a pupil's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, an administrator may remove him/her from school.

B. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students may suspend a pupil for up to ten days after having found him/her guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct. Upon suspension, parents or guardians of the pupil will be notified within a timely fashion by phone or mail. Notice to such interested parties shall apprise them of the following:

1. Reason for suspension
2. Opportunity for review by the Board of Education or Hearing Officer upon written request within seven days from receipt.
3. Upon request of the parents or guardian, the Board or its Hearing Officer will conduct a hearing to review a suspension of 10 days or less. Parents or guardians and pupils may be represented by counsel at parental expense and shall be accorded the following opportunities:
    a. Examination of written reports and statements constituting evidence supporting the charges and questioning of witnesses presented by the Board of Education or Hearing Officer.
    b. Presentation of oral and written evidence on behalf of the students. The results of the hearing shall be reported in writing to the parents or guardians of the student after a decision is made by the Board.
4. If the Board of Education finds in its review of the suspension of a student, that the action was unjustified or unreasonable, the following procedures shall be followed:
    a. The student's record shall be expunged of all notations or remarks in regards to the suspension.
    b. The student's absence(s) shall be recorded as "excused".
    c. All educational opportunities and service missed by the student shall be afforded to the degree possible. Tutoring will be provided for the number of days suspended, if requested or deemed necessary.
5. If a hearing is convened to determine whether a pupil will be suspended for more than 10 days or expelled for the remainder of the school term, parents or guardians and the pupil shall be accorded an opportunity to appear before, and be heard by the Board of Education or a Hearing Officer appointed by the Board of Education.
6. The parents or guardians of the student shall be notified thereof by certified or registered mail before the date of said hearing. In addition to a statement of the time and place of the hearing, and a specific statement of the student's alleged act or acts of gross disobedience or misconduct, and recommended effective date of the suspension or expulsion; the notice and request to attend shall state that parties will have the following rights:
    a. To be represented by counsel at parent's cost.

b. To present evidence refuting the charges.

c. To present evidence in mitigation of punishment.

d. To present evidence evincing the pupil's entitlement to special education services upon exclusion.

e. To cross-examine such witnesses as may testify as to the facts in each case. Expulsion shall take place only after the parents have been requested to appear at a meeting of the Board, or with a Hearing Officer appointed by it, to discuss their child's behavior.

7. The hearing, whether conducted before the Board of Education, or before a hearing officer shall be an informal hearing at which the formal rules of evidence shall not apply. The hearing shall not be conducted in public session unless decided otherwise by the Board of Education with the consent of parents or guardians of the affected student. The Board President or designee, or the Hearing Officer, shall conduct the hearing, which shall proceed with a presentation of the district's evidence subject to questioning by the parents or guardians or their representative; followed by a presentation of evidence if any, by the parent, subject to questions by the Board or its representative.

8. The Board of Education shall, from time to time, designate either itself, or a Hearing Officer, to conduct hearings on the issues of either student expulsions or student suspensions or both. Should the Board of Education choose to have any of such issues, or each of them, heard by a Hearing Officer, the Board of Education, shall upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, appoint a Hearing Officer who shall conduct such hearing, until such time as the Board of Education determines otherwise.

9. If the hearing is conducted before a Hearing Officer appointed pursuant to Paragraph G, the Hearing Officer shall, within five days of the conclusion of the hearing tender to the Board of Education his/her written findings of facts and summary of evidence heard at the hearing. The Board shall, no later than at its next regular meeting after the receipt of the Hearing Officer's report, take such action thereon as it deems appropriate.

10. No suspension in excess of ten days, nor any expulsion, shall be affected until the final determination of the Board of Education either at its own hearing, or upon the findings of a Hearing Officer, has been made.

11. If the Board of Education finds in its hearing on the expulsion of a student, or on review of a Hearing Officer's report, that the action was unjustified or unreasonable, the following procedures shall be followed:

    a. The student's record shall be expunged of all notations or remarks in regard to the suspension or expulsion.

    b. The student's absence(s) shall be recorded as "excused".

    c. All educational opportunities and services missed by the student shall be afforded to the degree possible. Tutoring shall be provided for the number of days suspended, if requested, or deemed necessary.

APPROPRIATE AND AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who are issued out-of-school suspensions in excess of 4 days are to be provided support services during the term of their suspension. Potential supports include, but are not limited to, the following measures:

- Counseling or social work support
- Referral to community resources
- Homework collection by counseling office
- Online coursework
- Tutoring to facilitate completion of work assigned during the suspension

ISOLATED TIME OUT, TIME OUT AND PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment means a discipline method in which a person deliberately inflicts pain upon a student in response to the student's unacceptable behavior or inappropriate language,

with an aim to halt the offense, prevent its recurrence, or set an example for others.

STUDENTS "NOT IN GOOD STANDING"

A student will be considered "not in good standing" during the term of a suspension, if s/he has withdrawn from school, been dropped from school, or is not enrolled due to being expelled.

RE-ENGAGEMENT OF RETURNING STUDENTS

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make-up missed work for equivalent academic credit.

Students returning to OTHS following a suspension, expulsion, or alternative school placement will meet with a Dean of Students or Assistant Principal to discuss means of successfully transitioning back to school prior to attending any classes. Students returning from suspension will report to room 201 upon arrival at school and will be seen as soon as possible to complete the re-engagement meeting.

Transportation Services/Busing/Bus Safety

Ottawa Township High School provides transportation to students who reside more than 1.5 miles away from school, as provided for by the School Code of Illinois. Questions about buses and bus routes can best be answered by main office personnel.

Students are only to ride the bus to which they are assigned. Only students assigned to a bus will be allowed to ride OTHS buses unless permission has been granted by the Assistant Principal or Dean of Students. Parents/guardians of non-riders may request permission for their son/daughter to ride a bus, for educational reasons, by sending a note or calling the student services office, room 201. Permission will be granted on a limited basis at the discretion of the administration.

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by OTHS administration. Video and audio cameras may be active on busses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

Students are expected to follow all school rules while on the bus. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for violating school rules or for engaging in other gross disobedience or misconduct. The school board may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus.

A student who is suspended from riding the school bus and who does not have alternative transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternative transportation to school.

Bus Safety Rules

In the interest of the students' safety and in compliance with State law, students are also expected to observe the following:

4. Be aware of moving traffic and pay attention to your surroundings
5. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
6. Arrive on time at the bus stop and stay away from the street while waiting for the bus.
7. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter in single file without pushing. Always use the handrail.
8. Take a seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.

9. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver. Tablets, computers, smart phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices must be silenced on the bus unless a student uses headphones.
10. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.
11. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers.
12. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
13. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take at least five giant steps (10 feet) away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
14. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic, even after the driver's signal.
15. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Additional Resources to Follow:

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - School Bus Safety
  https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/buses/getting_to_school/schoolbus2.html
- U.S. Department of Transportation - School Bus Safety Campaign Material
  www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/school-bus-safety/evergreen-campaign-material
- National Safety Council - Tips for a Safe Ride
  www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/back-to-school/bus
- Illinois State Police - School Bus Safety
  https://isp.illinois.gov/StaticFiles/docs/TrafficResources/5-542.pdf
- Ill. State Board of Education - School Bus Safety What Parents Should Know
  www.isbe.net/Documents/bus_safety_parents.pdf
- Ill. State Board of Education - Instructions To School Bus Riders
  www.isbe.net/Documents/bus_ride_instruct.pdf
- Ill. State Board of Education – School Bus Safety Guidance
  www.isbe.net/Documents/Bus-Safety-Guidance-June-2025.pdf

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parent(s) or legal guardians(s) who must provide transportation to and from school, because free transportation is not available for their children, may be eligible to receive money from the state to help offset some of the cost; for example, bus fares, or mileage reimbursement for private automobiles at the Federal mileage reimbursement rate.

If you can answer yes to the following questions, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for providing such transportation.

1) Will the pupil be under the age of 21 at the close of the school year?

2) Is the pupil a full time student in grades kindergarten through 12?

3) Does the pupil either live 1 1/2 miles or more from school or live less than 1 1/2 miles from school but must be transported due to a serious safety hazard approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation? (See following paragraphs.)

4) Does the pupil attend a school within Illinois, which meets Illinois compulsory attendance laws?

5) Did the parent/guardian incur transportation expenses resulting from transporting the pupil to and from school?

6) Did the pupil not have access to transportation to and from school provided entirely at public expense?

7) Did the parent/guardian reside within Illinois during the time period expenses were incurred?

If you answered yes to the above questions, live in Illinois and wish to file a claim, you must go to the school where each of your children is enrolled by June 30, 2012, to complete a claim application. You may provide claim information to

appropriate school personnel at your child's attendance center until June 30, 2012.

In addition, parent(s)/guardian(s) who have pupils living less than 1 1/2 miles from the school attended must verify that a safety hazard due to vehicular traffic exists by completing an Application for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards. Parents can obtain a copy of the Application for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards from the Office of the Regional Superintendent of Schools for the county in which they reside **except** parents residing within the City of Chicago. Chicago residents can receive a copy of the Application of Determination of Serious Safety Hazards from the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, IL 62777. All applications for Determination of Serious Safety Hazards must be received no later than February 1, 2011, at the office from which the application was requested. Example: ISBE (Chicago residents), ROE (Illinois Residents other than those residing in Chicago). The Regional Superintendent of Schools is required to send the Application to the Illinois Department of Transportation within 15 days. The Illinois Department of Transportation reviews and approves or denies the application and returns it to the Regional Superintendent of Schools within 30 days. Upon receipt of the reviewed application, The Regional Superintendent of Schools will mail it to the parent/guardian who requested the safety hazard be verified. **If the safety hazard is approved, the parent/guardian must go to the school the pupil attends and complete the claim form.** Parents who received verification of a safety hazard during and after the 2002-2003 school year, whose children attend the same school and live at the same address do not have to reapply for safety hazard verification.

Once all claim information is submitted at the school, it will be transmitted electronically to the Illinois State Board of Education. If your claim is approved, you should receive a check directly from the state during December for the lesser of the cost of transporting your child/children or the average per pupil reimbursement paid to public schools for transporting regular education pupils. If insufficient funds are appropriated by the General Assembly, all claims will be prorated.

If you have any questions, please call or come to the school as soon as possible.

Esta noticia dipon a los padres en español en la oficina.

Additional Information

STUDENT SERVICES

Ottawa Township High School, through different means, provides each student with opportunities by which he/she can develop his/her individuality in a large school system. OTHS offers a broad range of student services which can be utilized to serve all of the student's needs. These services involve not only administrative and support personnel, but also the classroom and homeroom teachers.

HOMEROOM TEACHER

Perhaps one of the most important people at OTHS, for a student, is his/her homeroom teacher. A confidence and trust develop through the daily meetings with the homeroom teacher and classmates.

PEER MENTORS

The doCHANGE Peer Mentor Program will provide freshmen with a supportive environment that helps ease the adjustment from middle school/junior high to high school, both academically and socially. Sophomore, junior and senior leaders will have the opportunity to hone leadership, teambuilding, and interpersonal skills. The relationships that are built throughout the program will give all students a sense of ownership in OTHS and cultivate a sense of community in our school.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The membership of the Student Council shall be composed of student representatives from each class. It shall consist of no more than 30 members. The faculty sponsor shall be selected by the Principal. The basic purpose of the council shall be to serve as an official agency for the expression of student opinion in the formation of school activities and policies.

LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is located in room 302 and is open daily from 7:45-3:30. Technology and other materials are available to support curriculum and meet recreational reading needs. Services include assistance in choosing and checking out books, research support, a collaborative classroom, and computer literacy support. Students must obtain a pass to use the library during the school day. A pass is not required before or after school. An OTHS ID card must be presented to borrow items from the library. The checkout period is two weeks with an additional two-week renewal available. Any item not returned or damaged will result in a replacement fine. Online databases and resources can be

accessed 24/7 on the media center website at www.ottawahigh.com. Students log in using their student ID and password.

USAGE GUIDLELINES FOR COMPUTER AND INTERNET RESOURCES

The following guidelines must be adhered to by all persons who use the high school computing and Internet resources; whether from systems on campus or dialing in from off campus. The following does not cover every situation which pertains to proper, or improper, use of the computer resources, but do suggest some of the responsibilities which one accepts if he or she chooses to use a high school computing resource of the network access which the high school provides.

1. Electronic communications facilities (such as e-mail, office mail, talk, network news and internet relay chat) are for high school related activities only. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages and/or other materials must not be transmitted over the Internet or any other network on or off campus. Inappropriate messages include but are not limited to the following:

- Messages sent under an assumed name or modified address or with the intent to obscure the origin of the message
- Messages that harass an individual or group because of sex, race, religious beliefs, national origin, physical attributes or sexual preference.

2. Messages, sentiments, and declarations sent as electronic mail or sent as electronic postings must meet the same standard for distribution for display as if they were tangible documents or instruments. One certainly may publish opinions, but their origins must be clearly and accurately identified.

- If one wishes to participate in a news group of a controversial nature, a disclaimer must be included within the text of any document that states the author speaks for him/herself and not as a representative of Ottawa Township High School.

- If acting as the authorized agent of a group recognized by Ottawa Township High School, one must also identify the information as coming from an authorized representative of the group. Attempts to alter the "From" line or other attribution of origin in electronic mail, messages, or postings, constitute transgressions of high school rules.

3. One must not create and send, or forward, electronic chain letters.

4. Creating, altering, or deleting any electronic information contained in, or posted to, any campus computer or affiliated network constitutes forgery, if it would be considered so on a tangible document or instrument.

5. One must not intentionally seek information about, browse, obtain copies of, or modify files, passwords, or tapes belonging to other people, whether at Ottawa Township High School or elsewhere, unless specifically authorized to do so by those individuals. Also, one must not attempt to intercept, capture, alter, or interfere in any way with information on campus or global network paths.

6. One must not, without authorization or entitlement, attempt to decrypt or translate encrypted material, or obtain system privileges. Such attempts constitute serious transgressions.

7. Encounter or observation of a gap in system or network security must be reported to the Systems Operator or the classroom instructor. One must refrain from exploiting any such gaps in security.

8. One must refrain from interference with the supervisory or accounting functions of the systems, or action likely to have such effects.

9. One must be sensitive to the public nature of shared facilities, taking care not to display on screens in such locations images, sounds or messages which could create an atmosphere of discomfort or harassment for others. One must also refrain from transmitting to others in any location inappropriate images, sounds or messages which might reasonably be considered harassing.

10. One must not deliberately attempt to degrade the performance of a computer system on the Internet or to deprive authorized personnel of resources or access to any computer system. Internet services such as Internet Relay Chat (IRC), Multi User Dungeons (MUDs and variants), and Talk consume system resources. Deliberate, excessive use of these services, constitute an attempt to deprive others of resources.

SCHOOL DANCES

The following rules apply to school dances:

1. Tentative dances need to be cleared and scheduled through the Assistant Principals in Room 201. The Assistant Principal will then add the dance date to our facilities calendar in the Main Office.
2. No organizational after-game dances on days when school is not in session or days of half-day institutes.
3. No organizational after-game dances on Saturdays.

4. A list of dance chaperones, minimum of eight, must be turned in to the Assistant Principals in Room 201 by Tuesday noon prior to the dance. If there are not enough chaperones, the dance will be cancelled.
5. OTHS students wanting to bring a non-OTHS guest to the dance must secure permission in the form of a pass prior to the evening of the dance. The permission/pass can be obtained in Room 201. No elementary, middle school, or junior high school students will be allowed to attend OTHS dances. Individuals over the age of 20 will not be allowed to attend OTHS dances.
6. Students or former students who are not in good standing will not be allowed to attend as guests. A former student enrolled in a home school or who has successfully completed a GED program but was not in good standing while in attendance at OTHS will not be allowed to attend school dances.
7. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to hire and compensate a police officer.
8. OTHS students and their guests must have a photo ID to enter the dance.
9. Any student in the homebound instruction program must be accompanied to the dance by a parent/guardian, and that person must remain in the building for the duration of the student's attendance.
10. Parents and/or the Ottawa police may be called to remove students acting in a disorderly manner, are in possession of or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or are otherwise a potential danger to themselves or others.
11. The only spectators that will be allowed at the dances will be parents and the location for their seating will be in the north balcony.
12. School rules are in effect at all extra-curricular activities.
13. All dances will be within the 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. time frame unless special arrangements have been made with the administration. All attendees must arrive at the dance within one hour of the scheduled start time to be admitted unless they have cleared the time with the administration prior to the dance. Any person who leaves the dance may not return. Extra-Curricular activities such as dances are a privilege. Students who are on probation will not be allowed to attend dances.

LOST OR STOLEN PROPERTY

Students should report any theft to the teacher in charge of the classroom or area of instruction. The students should complete a written theft form and return it to Room 201. **OTHS is not responsible for lost or stolen property.** Students who have found articles or wishing to claim a lost article should inquire at the Custodian Office, Room M002. Students who have lost articles in the P.E. area should first check with their instructors. All items from the year will be disposed of in June.

STUDENT VISITOR PASS

In most cases, visitor passes will not be approved unless educational value can be established. Once established, students wishing to bring a visitor must have a completed visitor permission form signed by their teachers on file in Rm. 201, twenty-four hours in advance of the visitation day. All visitors must check in Rm. 201 to secure a visitor pass. Visitors must have an identification card.

HOMESCHOOLING

Ottawa Township High School may grant credits earned to students enrolling from a nonpublic school, parochial school, or homeschooling program in accordance with current Board of Education policy.

Facilities and Miscellaneous Information

HEALTH AND LIFE SAFETY

The Board of Education maintains and operates all facilities housing students under its jurisdiction in full and continual compliance with life safety standards. This an ongoing process and probably never ending.

PARKING LOT

Students may park their vehicles in the lot designated Student Parking Lot and located south and east of the school, adjacent to the football field, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. (unless present at a school event or traveling to or from an event with a school-sponsored team or organization).

Vehicles must be parked between the painted lines, and must be driven under the speed limit of 10 miles per hour while

in the lot. Vehicles should be driven safely and must yield to pedestrians. Vehicles parked outside painted lines or designated parking spots may be ticketed or towed at the discretion of the school, at the vehicle owner's expense. Students caught driving recklessly in the parking lot may be subject to loss of parking privileges and disciplinary action.

The parking lots north and west of the Main Building are designated as staff and visitor parking. Student vehicles parked in these lots may be ticketed or towed at the discretion of administration. Students parking in these lots are subject to loss of parking privileges and disciplinary action.

The school is not responsible for student vehicles, any possessions left in them, or anything attached to the vehicles. STUDENTS PARK THEIR VEHICLES ON OR NEAR SCHOOL PROPERTY AT THEIR OWN RISK. Students should be aware their vehicles are not protected in any way while in the parking lot, and items of value should not be left in or near the vehicle while unattended.

Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in cars parked on school grounds. School lots are regularly searched by school safety dogs, administration, and police officers. Students should be aware that items and spaces on school grounds are subject to search and view by others, and that prohibited items discovered during the course of a search may result in discipline, including, but not limited to, expulsion from school.

Video cameras may be active in parking lots and may be used for the purposes of investigation into student misconduct. Discipline for misconduct includes all disciplinary measures in the student discipline code and/or withdrawal of parking privileges.

Students who wish to park in the Student Parking Lot must obtain a permit from the school. The permit must be displayed in the lower right corner of the windshield or rear window. Permits are available, at a cost of $40.00, during registration or in room 203. Replacement cost is $3.00. The permit does not guarantee that a parking spot will be available when the student arrives. Vehicles must be parked only in the lined, legal parking spaces. Students must not park in fire lanes, handicapped spaces (unless appropriate), or in unmarked locations. Students are not to park in the North or West teacher parking lots. Students who park illegally will be subject to disciplinary action. Illegally parked vehicles will be towed at the student's expense. The west driveway to the student parking lot will be closed from 8:00 a.m. until five minutes before the end of the school day.

Speeding, reckless driving, or not following the guidelines of this policy may result in the loss of the parking permit for the remainder of the school year. Students will be issued only one permit per year. If the student changes vehicles, the permit must be removed and returned to Student Services before a new permit will be issued. Any vehicle parked in an Ottawa Township High School lot is subject to search by school authorities and law enforcement personnel working with them. Such search may be conducted without warrant for any reasonable purpose. Search of vehicle includes all compartments and components thereof. Once the search begins, the person in control of the vehicle will not be permitted to remove it from the premises during the reasonable duration of the search. Students are not to loiter in the designated student parking areas.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

School property, i.e., OTHS buildings, athletic fields, parking lots, levee, and adjacent properties shall be utilized only through pre-approval by an authorized OTHS district representative. All other activity shall be considered trespassing.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

Students are asked to not loiter on private property adjacent to the school.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

Ottawa Township High School employs the use of video surveillance equipment on all OTHS property for the safety and security of students, staff, and visitors.

BUILDING ACCESS

The school will be open to students at 7:00 a.m. each day. Students are to enter the building via the Main Entrance or Passageway doors. All students should enter through the Main Entrance between 8:00 and 3:05. Handicap accessibility is available at door A, located at the northwest corner of the Main Building. The Vocational building will be open at 7:00 a.m. Access to and from the Main building to the Vocational building will be through the east end of the 400 floor. Students are prohibited from allowing other students to enter the building through alternative doors or tampering with doors in any way to allow unauthorized access into the building.

BUILDING ELEVATORS

Elevators are available for use by the physically disabled and those who may not be physically able to make their around the building. Students who are injured and wish to use the elevator need to have a doctor's note stating the length of time the pass will be required. Passes will be issued by an Assistant Principal in room 201. Students who damage building

elevators will be held responsible for the full cost of repair.

STAGE

The stage and back stage areas are off limits except to authorized students.

ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

In order to assure student health and safety, animals are not allowed on school property, except in the case of a service animal accompanying a student or other individual with a documented disability. This rule may be temporarily waived by the building principal in the case of an educational opportunity for students, provided that (a) the animal is appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled, and (b) students will not be exposed to a dangerous animal or an unhealthy environment.

ASBESTOS

Ottawa High School, District 140, has submitted its Management Plan prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR 763) for the School Facility or Facilities. Copies of the Management Plan are available in the Building Services Office of the school building. These plans are available for your inspection Monday through Friday; 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and during other times by special arrangement. We request that appointments be made with us to review such plans. To make arrangements, please contact Mr. Scott Clinch at 433-1323 Ext 2453.

STRUCTURAL INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Ottawa Township High School in cooperation with school staff and pest control personnel/specialists will locate, identify, and eliminate all known pests within the school buildings through improved housekeeping, sanitation, waste management, additional barriers, and the modification of habitats. When possible we will rely on nontoxic, biological, cultural, or mechanical pest management methods, or on the use of natural control agents. When necessary we will use chemical pesticides least harmful to humans. Guidelines of the Illinois Department of Public Health will be followed by OTHS personnel and our professional pest elimination provider.

If you would like to receive written notification prior to the application of any pest control materials subject to the notification requirements or to report a pest concern, please contact Mr. Brad Johnson at 433-1323 ext. 2451 or e-mail bjohnson@ottawahigh.com. A request to written notification was also included on your registration information sheet.

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION LAW

State law prohibits a convicted child sex offender from being present on school property when children under the age of 18 are present, except for in the following circumstances as they relate to the individual's child(ren):

1. To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of their child.
2. To participate in a conference in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to their child's special education services.
3. To attend conferences to discuss issues concerning their child such as retention or promotion.

In all other cases, convicted child sex offenders are prohibited from being present on school property unless they obtain written permission from the superintendent or school board.

Anytime that a convicted child sex offender is present on school property – including the three reasons above - he/she is responsible for notifying the principal's office upon arrival on school property and upon departure from school property. It is the responsibility of the convicted child sex offender to remain under the direct supervision of a school official at all times he/she is in the presence or vicinity of children.

A violation of this law is a Class 4 felony.

Information about sex offenders or violent offenders against youth is available to the public on the Illinois State Police (ISP) website. The ISP website contains the following:

Illinois Sex Offender Registry, https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/Disclaimer
Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, https://isp.illinois.gov/MVOAY/Disclaimer
Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Sex Offenders, https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/FAQs

RAILWAY SAFETY

THE FOLLOWING RAILWAY SAFETY MESSAGES ARE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE LAW.

- *CROSS TRACKS ONLY AT DESIGNATED PEDESTRIAN OR ROADWAY CROSSINGS AND OBSERVE AND OBEY ALL WARNING SIGNS AND SIGNALS.*
- *NEVER WALK DOWN A TRAIN TRACK; IT IS ILLEGAL AND DANGEROUS. BY THE TIME A LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER SEES A TRESPASSER OR VEHICLE ON THE TRACKS, IT IS TOO LATE TO STOP EVEN WHEN THE EMERGENCY BRAKES ARE ACTIVATED.*
- *THE ONLY SAFE PLACE TO CROSS IS AT A DESIGNATED PUBLIC CROSSING, EQUIPPED WITH CROSSBUCKS, FLASHING RED LIGHTS, OR GATES. CROSSING ANYWHERE ELSE IS TRESPASSING, WHICH CAN RESULT IN A TICKET AND FINE.*
- *DO NOT CROSS TRACKS IMMEDIATELY AFTER A TRAIN PASSES. ADDITIONAL TRAINS MAY BE APPROACHING WHEN BLOCKED BY THE FIRST. TRAINS CAN TRAVEL AT ANY TIME AND IN EITHER DIRECTION. WAIT UNTIL BOTH DIRECTIONS CAN BE CLEARLY OBSERVED.*
- *FLASHING RED LIGHTS SIGNAL THAT A TRAIN OR RAIL EQUIPMENT IS APPROACHING FROM EITHER DIRECTION, AND A FINE CAN BE CHARGED FOR IGNORING SUCH SIGNALS. NEVER WALK AROUND OR STOP BETWEEN LOWERED GATES AT A CROSSING. DO NOT CROSS THE TRACKS UNTIL THE RED LIGHTS STOP FLASHING AND IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.*
- *RAILS AND RECREATION DO NOT MIX. 08/2026*

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES TO PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

Please check the following: New Rule Proposal _____ Revise existing rule_____ Change wording _____

Please write new rule proposal:

_____

_____

Revise existing rule or change wording: Page: _____

Rule:_____

_____

Rationale:_____

_____

Name of submitter: _____

Please return to Room 201