

# *WILDCAT PRIDE*

**Respect**

**Citizenship**



**Responsibility**

**Knowledge**

*"Follow The Pride"*  
*2025 - 2026*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom \_\_\_\_\_

Locker Number \_\_\_\_\_

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Northwestern community strives to create an educational culture fostering excellence for all students. The Middle School is dedicated to providing students the opportunity to become lifelong learners and reach their highest potential while developing respect, responsibility, and good citizenship.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS**

The Northwestern Board of Education believes that students should be guaranteed certain basic rights including the right to freedom from discrimination.

### **STUDENT PICTURES**

Student pictures may appear in district publications such as newsletters, web pages, and yearbooks, as well as other media such as newspapers and TV. If you do not want your child's picture to be published, you must notify the school in writing.

### **ONLINE ACCOUNTS**

In support of your child's education, district personnel will create (or oversee the creation of) student accounts to access various educational online services.

### **PETS/SERVICE ANIMALS IN SCHOOL**

For safety reasons, animals are not permitted in school without prior permission from the school principal and classroom teacher. Parents must make arrangements to bring the animal to the building office in the morning and pick the animal up prior to the end of the day. No animals are permitted to be transported via district transportation. Service animals are permitted in accordance with School Board Policy #718 and other applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

### **EMERGENCY FORMS**

Emergency forms must be on file in the office and updated regularly. Parents are sent a copy for verification each year. It is the responsibility of student & parent to keep this form updated. Change of address and/or phone number should be reported to the office. The form must list at least 2 people who can be contacted during the daytime in an emergency.

**Please Note:** If no emergency information is available or we are unable to reach a contact person, school personnel will make a determination concerning proper care of the student. This may include transporting a student to the hospital in the case of a medical emergency.

### **DELIVERING MESSAGES TO STUDENTS**

Classes will not be disrupted to deliver messages. They will only be delivered between classes. Messages should be called in by 1pm. Messages after that time will be delivered at dismissal time & delivery will **not** be guaranteed.

### **BUS CONDUCT**

The safe transportation of our students is our number one goal. **Students must follow these rules while riding the bus:**

- \* treat the driver & fellow students with respect.
- \* refrain from any & all disturbances that may distract the driver including throwing objects.
- \* keep hands & feet inside the bus.
- \* Students will sit facing forward with feet out of the aisle.
- \* NO FOOD/DRINK is permitted on the bus

Loud talking, music, laughing, moving seats and "horseplay" divert the driver's attention and make safe driving difficult.

### **BUS CONDUCT DISCIPLINE PROGRESSION**

- First bus incident report of year: The Principal will give a warning to the student & notify the parents.
- Second bus incident report of year: The Principal will give detention or ISS to the student. Principal & bus driver will call the parents.
- Third bus incident report of year: The Principal will inform the parents and the student that the student will lose bus riding privileges for 5 consecutive days.
- Fourth bus incident report of year: The Principal will inform the parents and the student that the student will lose bus riding privileges for 10 consecutive days.
- Fifth bus incident report of year: The Principal will inform the parents and the student that the student will lose bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### **BUS PASSES**

Bus passes will NOT be issued under normal circumstances. Students will only be permitted to ride the bus/busses they are assigned to. Bus passes will only be issued in emergency situations.

### **ACTIVITY BUS/Tutoring Bus**

The activity bus/tutoring bus is provided as a courtesy to students participating in extra-curricular events and is considered a privilege. The same rules apply as when riding a regular bus. Only students serving a full 2.5 hour detention may obtain a bus pass from the teacher in charge and may ride the activity bus. Those serving shorter detentions must find their own transportation. Students who abuse this privilege or who forge a pass will not be permitted to ride the activity bus for 90 days. Students MUST sign up daily to ride, signups are during lunch time.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is important in successful schoolwork. The only legal reasons for being absent from school are:

- Personal illness
- Educational trip
- Impassable roads
- Educational tour
- Religious holidays
- Death in the immediate family

#### **Excuses:**

All absences will require a written excuse giving student name, calendar date/s of the absence, reason for absence & parent signature. Excuses can be turned into the office or homeroom teacher.

**All excuses; Parent, Medical: Dr./Dentist excuses must be submitted within 5 days of the absence or it will be ruled unexcused. Medical excuses must list a reason for the absence and specific dates & times for which the excuses is valid.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Students who are absent are not permitted to attend after school activities on the date of the absence. A student who is absent on the last school day of the week may not attend any weekend activities. Student athletes who miss a half day or more of the school day are not permitted to participate in an athletic competition on the date of the absence. If the student provides a written excuse from the doctor's office excusing them for the entire absence they will be permitted to participate. Students with chronic absenteeism (absent 10% of days enrolled) may not be permitted to attend field trips or extra-curricular activities.

### **SCHOOL ARRIVAL TIME**

7:28 a.m.-8:48 a.m. / LATE  
8:49 a.m.-11:46 p.m. / ½ DAY ABSENCE  
Arrival after 11:47 a.m. / FULL DAY ABSENCE

### **SCHOOL DEPARTURE TIME**

7:27 a.m.-9:59 a.m. / FULL DAY ABSENCE  
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. / ½ DAY ABSENCE  
Depart after 1:01 p.m. / EARLY DEPARTURE

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY (No. 204)**

School board policy states that a student may miss up to 10 days of school with an excuse from their parent/guardian. Absences of more than 10 days will be referred to as "habitually truant". Days missed due to doctor's appointments will not be counted toward the ten days if a written excuse from the doctor is presented upon return to school. A warning letter will be sent prior to accumulation of 7 days and a truancy elimination plan created. After 10 days, a letter will be sent stating that the district shall require a written doctor's excuse for each additional day of absence for the remainder of the school year. Further absences will result in a citation be filed and also require OCY be notified.

### **DISMISSAL FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Every effort should be made to schedule appointments after school when possible. Permission for early dismissal from school must be obtained in the Middle School office before the beginning of first period. Requests must include the reason for dismissal, time, date, place, and a phone number where the appointment can be verified. The excused time will only be for the time of the appointment.

### **EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL**

If an absence is due to travel, or some similar reason, a parent must complete an education travel form prior to the absence. The maximum number of days permitted is five (5) days during any school year. Forms are available on the district's webpage or in the office.

### **TRUANCY**

Three (3) unexcused absences will generate a three day letter being sent home. After three (3) unexcused absences, a School Attendance Improvement Conference between the parent and the principal will be scheduled. A Truancy Elimination Plan will be created at that time. The sixth (6) unexcused absence will cause citations to be filed with District Justice.

**Please note: A truancy citation will result in loss of privilege to attend activities, fun nights, and dances as well as the end of the year field trip.**

### **CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

All Pennsylvania public schools are obligated to provide attendance data for the Future Ready PA Index, a comprehensive, public-facing school progress report that increases transparency around school and student group performance. Rates of chronic absenteeism will be reported on the Future Ready PA Index, and will be calculated at the building level.

**Chronic absenteeism will be calculated based on the number of students who have missed more than 10 percent of school days across the academic year.** Throughout the school year information will be provided regarding chronic absenteeism and efforts will be made to address chronic absenteeism. Our efforts will constitute a proactive approach and include attendance improvement plans and truancy elimination plans. Ultimately, proceedings involving a truancy citation and an OCY referral will be pursued for habitually truant students.

### **LATE TO SCHOOL**

Students must report to school on time or have an acceptable excuse. Excused lates are only valid for doctor and dentist's appointments, court appointments, or illness of the student. Missing the bus, oversleeping, watching younger siblings, etc. are not legal excuses according to the PA School Code and are unexcused.

Unexcused tardiness will be handled as follows:

- \* 5 unexcused lates = 2 lunch det (2 pts)
- \* 10 unexcused lates = 1 hr. det (2 pts)
- \* 15 unexcused lates = 2.5 hr. det (6 pts)
- \* 20 unexcused lates = 1/2 day ISS (8 pts)
- \* 25 unexcused lates = 1 day ISS (8 pts)
- \* more than 20 unexcused lates will result in a referral to the Student Assistance Team, and/or the District Justice's Office. **Students who are habitually tardy may not be permitted to attend field trips and/or school activities.**

### **LATE TO CLASS**

Students who are late to class/study hall must have an admit with time and signature in their agenda. If no signed pass is presented to the teacher the student will be given an unexcused tardy. If a student is tardy more than three times without an acceptable reason, the classroom teacher may assign a detention. Persistent and/or excessive tardiness will result in further disciplinary action.

### **AGENDAS**

Agendas are to be maintained in good condition. The cover, pages and handbook are not to be removed. Agendas cannot display materials that are inappropriate for school. The agenda will serve as a hall pass/nurse's pass, provide communication and be used to record grades. The Agenda must be carried at all times. Students are not permitted to give their agenda to another student to use. One agenda will be issued to each student free of charge. It must remain intact throughout the year. Students/parents will be responsible for the cost of a replacement copy.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

**"Following the Pride"** includes acting with academic integrity in all aspects of all classes. The opposite of academic *integrity* is academic *dishonesty*.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Copying another student's class or homework is academic dishonesty. Both the student copying the work and the student giving the work to be copied will receive the same consequences: a zero for the assignment and a 2.5 hour detention. Academic dishonesty includes **plagiarism, cheating, and copying.**

**Plagiarism** is when a student submits work that is not his/her own. Plagiarism includes:

1. submitting material from a source (website, book, parent, peer) that is not cited in the bibliography
2. submitting material that closely resembles the wording of the source and therefore is not the student's own work (even if the source is cited in the bibliography). This may include "the use of material generated wholly or in part through the use of artificial intelligence".
3. using artificial intelligence as the only way to complete an assignment without teacher approval

The consequences for plagiarism are a zero on the assignment or redoing the assignment on a different topic, a 2.5 hr. detention, and parental notification.

### **Academic Dishonesty on Tests and Quizzes:**

Using resources that are not permitted (a book or other printed material, a cheat sheet, another student's paper, etc.) giving or receiving help from another student during a test, and giving other students questions or answers to a test they have not yet taken are considered academic dishonesty. The consequences for cheating on tests and quizzes are a zero on the assignment and a 2.5 hr. detention.

<u>Grading Scale</u>			
A+	100 - 99	A	98-92
A-	91-90	B+	89-88
B	87-82	B-	81-80
C+	79-78	C	77-72
C-	71-70	D+	69-68
D	67-62	D-	61-60
F	0-59		

### FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

The goal of **Formative Assessment** is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by the teacher to improve their instruction and by students to improve their learning. Examples of Formative Assessments include, but are not limited to: bell ringers/exit tickets, homework, classwork and class discussion/participation.

The goal of **Summative Assessment** is to measure student achievement in meeting the course objectives after a sequence of instruction. Summative assessments will account for 60-70 percent of a student's quarterly grade. Examples of Summative Assessments include, but are not limited to: unit tests, quizzes, projects, tests, and major papers.

A variety and appropriate amount of both types of assessments will be used throughout each quarter. This practice will aid in rendering the best possible student outcomes/success for each quarter.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due at the beginning of each class on the date due. Students will receive a deduction of points for the assignment if it is late. It is the responsibility of the student to bring homework and other materials to class daily. Students who miss class are responsible for the work missed.

### MAKEUP OF ASSIGNMENTS

Parents and students can keep informed as to daily/weekly activities and assignments through the use of the Middle School Web Page. If a student will be absent more than 2 days parents should contact the Guidance Office at ext. 5255. Students will be given 5 days to make up work once they return to school. The teacher will consider additional time for absences of a longer nature.

### RESPECT

Being Proud to be a Wildcat is our #1 goal. Wildcat Pride includes: Respect, Citizenship, Responsibility, and knowledge. Of these components, Respect is the number one rule of

the Middle School. Respect is the cornerstone of all our interactions and behaviors. We recognize the dignity and worth of another, and strive never to put down another by our conduct or attitudes. Respect will be shown to all staff, students, and visitors. This includes, but is not limited to bus drivers, janitors, cafeteria workers, office staff, aides, and faculty. Disrespect includes, but is not limited to, talking back or in a disrespectful manner, swearing, refusing to cooperate or follow rules, or throwing objects. To be successful we challenge all our students to "Follow The Pride" at all times!

### CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR

Individuals must behave in a manner that is a credit to themselves, their peers, parents, and our school. It is the job of all staff to monitor and report inappropriate behavior. The rules listed also apply to school related functions.

The definition of misconduct is any physical, spoken or written act of abuse, violence, harassment, intimidation, extortion, the use of vulgarity, cursing, racial remark, or any remark of a personally destructive nature toward any person, and any restriction or prevention of free movement of a person. This policy applies whether the act is deliberate, intentional or unintentional.

### STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO....

1. Use head/ear phones, MP3 players, cell phones, or other electronic devices in the school unless approved by the principal. Headphones/ MP3 type devices may be used on the bus. If brought to school they must be left in the student's locker until the end of the day. If brought to school, it is **not** the responsibility of the school if these items are lost or stolen. Devices that are not placed in lockers will be confiscated and parents will be required to pick up these items.
2. Carry book bags in classes, halls or cafeteria. Book bags may be carried to and from school but must be kept in the student's locker during the school day. **Gym bags** may be used to carry items to and from gym classes.
3. Use, distribute or possess illegal substances such as: tobacco, drugs, or alcohol products on school property (including buses) any time.
4. Gesture, use or write inappropriate language, and/or vulgar, demeaning, or racial remarks.
5. Forge a parent, teacher/staff or other student's name to any document. Students caught forging another's signature will face

possible suspension and be ineligible to participate in after school activities for one month.

6. Litter, destroy or deface school property.

7. Cause or participate in running, fights, pushing/shoving, throwing or other disturbances in class, halls, on busses or in the cafeteria. A minimum of a 2.5 hour detention will be assigned.

8. Participate in Unlawful Acts of Intimidation - the intent to make other people fear for their safety.

9. Possess or display any offensive materials on clothing, locker doors, inside lockers, or on their agenda or books.

10. Engage in public displays of affection beyond holding hands.

11. Possess anything that might be considered a weapon or look alike (see Weapons Policy 218.1).

12. Leave the building without permission from the principal, teacher or office.

13. Harass, bully, tease or threaten students or staff either physically, verbally, in writing, or through electronic communications.

14. Make another student or staff member in the school feel unsafe.

15. Call another student or staff member a name that will decrease their self-esteem or make them uncomfortable

16. Skip school or classes. Skipping is defined as time during the day when not supervised by an adult.

17. Possess or use lighters, toys, or laser devices for a purpose other than classroom presentations.

18. Engage in behavior that disrupts the educational setting or cause another to have difficulty in concentrating in the classroom.

20. Carry anything to drink except water. The water must be in a transparent container with a lid.

21. Remain in the building after the school day without supervision by a school employee OR without permission from the office.

22. Sell any items in school or on school property unless approved by the principal.

23. Give their computer/Internet login and/or password to another person. Sharing of e-mail accounts is also a violation of the Internet Contract. Consequences include detention as well as loss of computer use and Internet privileges.

24. Engage in inappropriate touching of another person or their clothing, this includes but is not limited to grabbing or pulling down another person's clothes.

25. Intentionally damage Chromebooks by dropping or removing keys; or cause damage to it through carelessness.

26. Absolutely **NO** over the counter medication of any kind including inhalers are permitted in school without the school **medication release** form filled out by parent/guardian and doctor, per district policy. These medications **MUST** be given by the school nurse **ONLY**.

#### **PRIDE Advisory Period RULES**

Failure to comply with the request of the adults in charge will result in detention.

- Students must report on time, sit in assigned seats and use the entire time on assignments, studying or reading.
- Talking is not permitted without permission from the person in charge.
- Cards, games, cell phones, and other electronic devices are not permitted and will be confiscated. Failure to surrender these items will result in a suspension.
- No food or drink, other than water, will be permitted in the room.
- Students who do not have study materials may be given work by the teacher/monitor. Failure to comply with the assignment will be reported to the office.
- Restroom passes shall be granted to those students who have their agenda.
- A pass must be secured anytime you leave the room. Your agenda must have the time and the signature of the teacher/monitor. Passes to see another

teacher should be obtained before reporting to an alternate location.

### **DRESS CODE POLICY**

The following are **not** acceptable:

1. Wearing apparel that promotes, advertises or displays material related to tobacco, drugs, alcohol and/or violence, or is sexually suggestive in nature, or is racially offensive, contains profanity or vulgarity is not permitted.
2. Head coverings are not permitted in school buildings. Head coverings are described as anything worn on or around the head. Hats, scarves, hoods, and bandannas serve as examples of head coverings.
3. Shorts, skirts or dresses may not be more than **7 inches** above the knee all the way around. The school office will determine if the length of a garment is not acceptable.
4. Clothing whose shoulder width is less than 2 inches is not acceptable. Any clothing that is revealing, shows cleavage, or allows undergarments to show is not permitted.
5. Additional items that may not be worn include nontraditional or spiked dog collars, chains (including wallet or belt chains), spiked armbands and bracelets. These items are not appropriate in the school environment since they are capable of inflicting injury. The decision will be at the discretion of the building principal.
6. Students are to wear pants or jeans that are in good condition, without holes or rips that allow undergarments or bare skin more than **7 inches** above the knee to be seen. The waistband of all pants and/or jeans being worn is to be located above the hips. Pants are not to appear to be falling down. Gloves, jackets, coats, are not acceptable during the school day.
7. In addition to the specific limitations described above, clothing or make up that is potentially disruptive or depicts groups which advocate destructive and demoralizing values, inappropriate dress, and/or presents a health or safety hazard as determined by the building principal is not permitted.
8. Slippers are not permitted in school. Heely's®, skateboards, mini-bikes, or motorcycles are not permitted for use in school or on school property.

Students who are in violation of these rules will be told to change or cover up their clothing. **First time offenders will receive a warning notice and 1 disciplinary point.** Students who refuse to change or cover clothing will receive an immediate consequence. Additional offenses will result in a minimum consequence of a 2.5 hour detention and 6 disciplinary points. The severity of the consequence will increase and discipline points will be added for students who refuse to comply with the rules.

### **CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR**

In addition to all Conduct and Behavior rules listed above, students are also responsible to:

- \* deposit all lunch litter in trashcans
- \* leave trays in designated area
- \* clean the entire area around them
- \* refrain from loud/disruptive noise
- \* Chromebooks are **NOT** permitted in the cafeteria

Students will be asked to choose a table and will be assigned there unless given permission to change. Students are to remain seated unless getting food. Students will be dismissed by tables to get food and leave the cafeteria. Permission must be given from a cafeteria monitor to leave the cafeteria at any time. Refusal to cooperate in the cafeteria will have serious consequences. Students will be respectful of others whose health may be in jeopardy due to allergies. Students whose lunches may contain food to which others are allergic are asked to move to a table approved by the person in charge.

Lunch Detentions will be assigned by cafeteria monitors for failure to comply with any of the rules listed above. Points will be added to the students record for each infraction. Infractions over 2 days will result in multiple points added to the student's discipline record.

### **DETENTIONS/SUSPENSIONS**

#### **TEACHER/STAFF (1- 4 pts)**

A detention may be assigned for any infraction of school rules or school policy. If assigned a detention, the student will be expected to report to the designated room and remain there until excused. Detentions can only be rescheduled by the person assigning the detention. One (1) point will be added for each rescheduled detention.

#### **PRINCIPAL'S DETENTION (PAD): (6 pts)**

A PAD is a 2.5 hour detention assigned only by a building administrator. If it is not served a Refocus/ISS will be assigned.

**REFOCUS/IN SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS:**

**(8-10 pts)** In school suspension / refocus are held during the school day and can be for either a half day or full day. Students should be aware that repeated disciplinary problems do accumulate. Punishment may be increased as it is deemed necessary for repeat offenses.

**OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS (10 pts)**

Out of school suspension may be assigned for violation of policy or repeated infractions. Students will be permitted to make up their work during their suspension. Work is due the day the student returns to class or it will be marked as a late assignment.

**LOCKS & LOCKERS**

For the safety of all students and staff, Middle School students must have a school district lock on their locker at all times. All lockers and locks are owned and controlled by the Northwestern School District and assigned by building staff to students for their convenience to use during the school year. Lockers and locks are issued to the students at the beginning of the year at no cost. Students are not permitted to change lockers or use a different locker without permission from the office. Students are not permitted to use private locks unless stated in their IEP.

Students are not to expect privacy from school searches of lockers as outlined in the Right To Search section. Students are responsible for the lock and locker assigned to them. **Students are cautioned not to share their combination with others, have it written where others can see it, or leave their lock set to open.** Students in possession of, or sharing the combination of another student's lock combination, will face a minimum 2.5 hr detention.

**Students are responsible for all items in their locker. Therefore, students are cautioned not to store or hold items that do not belong to them.**

Lost or stolen locks will cost the student \$5.00. There will be a \$1 fee for locks that must be exchanged due to carelessness on the part of the student.

Lockers are to be kept clean, both inside and out. Damage caused by tape, markers, pen, pencil etc., will be charged to the student responsible. Any locker problem should be reported to the office immediately. Students who remove or mess with another student's lock will be punished.

Students are cautioned not to keep money or other valuables in their lockers. The School District will not be held responsible for any lost or stolen items from these lockers. Money and other valuables should be turned in to the office for safekeeping.

**RIGHT TO SEARCH**

At no time does the Northwestern School District relinquish control of hallway lockers, locker room lockers, or any other part of the school building or property. The board authorizes the principal or designee to conduct random general searches of lockers and other school property when the district has compelling interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety, or welfare of the school population. School officials have the right to inspect a student's locker at any time, based on reasonable suspicion, for the purpose of determining whether the locker is being used improperly for the storage of contraband, a substance or object the possession of which is illegal, or any material that poses a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of the school population.

These searches may include any and all items stored in lockers or in any other area of school property. In addition, school officials have the right to search students, their direct possessions, and vehicles parked on school property. Searches may include, but are not limited to, the utilization of a certified police drug dog, weapon or bomb detection dog, metal detection devices, or any other devices deemed useful in protecting the health and welfare of the school population. The principal or designee may seize any evidence indicating that a student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule, which may be found as a result of a search of a student's property, clothed body or areas designated for a student use if the search is proper and reasonable. **Students who are holding illegal substances for others will be considered to be "in possession of" and will face consequences as outlined in the Drug & Alcohol/Tobacco section of the handbook.**

**VIOLENT/DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Acts of violence against other people and/or behavior that disrupts the normal routine followed during the school day and/or endangering others cannot and will not be tolerated. Any individual who becomes involved in such behavior will be held accountable for their actions. The following steps will be taken:

1. Individuals will be suspended for three (3) to ten (10) days or until a Board level hearing is held.
2. Without exception, all incidences involving harm to another will be reported to the police for legal action through the court system. A board level hearing could result in the student being assigned to an Alternative Education Program or expulsion.

**TERRORISTIC THREATS/ACTS (Policy #218.2)**

We recognize the danger that threats and acts of violence by students presents to the safety and welfare of our students, staff and community. The Board prohibits any students from communicating the threat of terroristic acts directed at any student, employee, Board Member, community member or school building. The Board understands the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving such a threat or act.

**Terroristic Threat** - shall mean a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another, to cause evacuation of a building, or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard of the risk or inconvenience of such threats.

**Terroristic Act** - shall mean an offense against property or involving danger to another person.

Staff and students shall be responsible for informing the building principal regarding any information or knowledge relevant to a possible or actual threat or act.

When a terroristic threat or act has been committed the building principal will immediately suspend the student and report the incident to the police and the Superintendent.

The Superintendent may recommend expulsion of the student to the Board. If expelled, the Board may require, prior to readmission, competent and credible evidence that the student does not pose a risk of harm to others. If readmitted to school the student shall be subject to random searches and other limitations.

**Responsibility** - A student who participates in any destructive act in school will be disciplined accordingly under the rules of the school's discipline code. In addition, any student who is involved in the planning of the act or is aware of an act of destruction that has or may take place without contacting the administration

immediately will be disciplined accordingly, under the rules of the school's discipline code.

**BULLYING (Policy #249)**

Bullying will not be tolerated. Rules regarding bullying include:

1. We will not bully others
2. We will help students who are bullied
3. We will include students who are left out.
4. If we know that someone is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

**Bullying/Cyberbullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student(s), which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Examples of bullying include physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property; placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm; placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's education opportunities; or perpetuation of conduct by an individual or group, with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or incite a student.

The consequences for bullying behavior can range from a 2.5 hour detention to out of school suspension. Continued infractions will result in formal charges. In addition, students involved in bullying behavior may be required to participate in an educational support group.

**WEAPONS POLICY (#218.1)**

The Northwestern School District, in accordance with the State of PA, prohibits the possession of any weapon on school property. For the purpose of this policy, a weapon shall be defined as, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchuck stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon or look alike weapon and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student, in the student's locker, under the student's control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

The school district shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Discipline short of expulsion may be made only where recommended by the Superintendent, this decision must be made on a case-by-case basis. A student who violates this policy will be prohibited from attending school and school related functions until the administration makes a recommendation relative to a hearing or expulsion.

The Administration will establish the procedures to be followed when an incident occurs. The procedures should be designed to provide for the greatest degree of safety possible for the students, faculty, and staff.

#### **DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY (#227)**

Students who are holding illegal substances for others will be considered to be "in possession of" and will face consequences as outlined in this section.

The Board recognizes that the abuse of controlled substances is a serious problem with legal, physical and social implications for the whole school community. This policy, including administrative regulations and guidelines established by the district, is a coordinated effort to openly and effectively respond to the potential and current use and abuse of controlled substances by district students.

Through the use of a controlled substance awareness curriculum, classroom activities, community support and resources, a strong and consistent administrative and faculty effort, and rehabilitative and disciplinary procedures, the district will strive to educate, prevent, intervene, and provide post-intervention support concerning the use and abuse of controlled substances by district students.

**Controlled substances** shall include all:

1. Controlled substances prohibited by federal and state law.
2. Look-alike drugs.
3. Alcoholic beverages.
4. Anabolic steroids.
5. Drug paraphernalia.
6. Any volatile solvents or inhalants,

Such as but not limited to glue, markers, white-out and aerosol products.

7. Prescription or patent drugs, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy.

**Under the influence** shall include any consumption or ingestion of controlled substances by a student.

**Possession** shall be defined as to possess or hold, without any attempt to distribute, any controlled substance, as defined by this policy.

**Distribution** shall be defined as to deliver, sell, pass, share or give any controlled substance, as defined by this policy, from one person to another or to aid therein.

**Student Assistance Team** shall be defined as a multidisciplinary team composed of school personnel (teachers, staff, administrators, nurses, and counselors) and invited specialists of the community. This team has been trained to understand and work on the issues of adolescent controlled substance use, abuse, and dependency and will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention through the procedures established by the district.

The Board prohibits students from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities. The Board may require participation in drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other programs as a condition of reinstatement into the school's educational, extracurricular or athletic programs resulting from violations of this policy.

#### **Off-Campus Activities**

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would violate the Code of Student Conduct if:

1. There is a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and

- substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, such as an agreement to complete a transaction outside of school that would violate the Code of Student Conduct.
  5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.

**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS/EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

To be eligible for extracurricular activities, a student must be in attendance by 9:00AM on a school day or not depart before 1:00PM on a school day. If the student provides a written excuse from the doctor's office excusing them beyond the times noted above they will be permitted to participate.

Students who participate in a sport, marching band or other extracurricular activities must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Students must be passing a minimum of 4 credits. Grades will be checked weekly. Students who are found to be ineligible cannot participate for one week.
- Students who miss 20 or more days of school within a semester will be ineligible for a period of 45 days of attendance.
- Students must have a current physical exam on record in the nurse's office.
- Returned all school athletic equipment previously used.
- Students who have moved from another district must meet the Athletic Intent requirement as defined by PIAA.

**DRUG & ALCOHOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS (POLICY # 227.2)**

It is the belief of the district that participation in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, is a privilege and not a right. Accordingly, students will be suspended from participating in extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletics upon any proven or self-admitted use of a controlled substance in violation of Board policy. This policy is an extension of, and supplement to the Board's Controlled Substances Policy. The possession, use, solicitation, distribution, offering, being under the influence, transfer or attempt to transfer controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored event, in any

conveyance providing transportation to or from school or school-sponsored events, while traveling to or from school or school-sponsored events, or during activities under school jurisdiction is subject to other and additional disciplinary action under Board policy. For an occurrence not subject to Board policy, no record of the suspension from participation in extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics will appear on the student's permanent transcript or disciplinary record.

**Extracurricular activities** are programs sponsored or approved by the Board that go beyond the scope of the instructional program, are equally available to all students, and require voluntary participation on the part of the student. Extracurricular activities may require the exhibition of certain levels of ability or talent and shall not be used to evaluate students for grades in curricular areas. There will be a one-time per year \$40 activity fee for one or all extracurricular activities.

**Interscholastic athletics** includes all Board approved activities relating to competitive sport contests, games, events or exhibitions involving individual students or teams of students whenever such events occur between schools within this district with any schools outside this district.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense**

A student who violates this policy will be suspended from any and all participation in extracurricular activities and interscholastic athletics for twenty (20) calendar days on which the team, club or other activity conducts a practice, meeting or other organized activity. If a team participates in an organized practice or contest on a Saturday, such day will constitute one (1) of the twenty (20) days of suspension. The suspension will begin immediately after it is proven or the student admits to the use of a controlled substance. If the student cannot serve the twenty (20) days of suspension in one (1) sport or activity, then the remaining days must be served in the next season of participation, beginning with the first day of the official start of the season or activity.

If the student violates this policy in the off-season, then the 20 days of suspension will commence on the first day of the next season in which s/he participates.

The student must attend 4 weekly drug and alcohol counseling sessions during the period of suspension, must complete any recommended counseling, therapy or treatment, and provide written documentation of the participation in such counseling, therapy or treatment. Students who fail or refuse to attend such

counseling will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics until they attend 4 weekly sessions. Students who fail or refuse to participate in any recommended counseling therapy or treatment will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics until s/he commences counseling, therapy or treatment and continues such participation. The student must also enroll in the controlled substances testing program for the remainder of his/her school career at the district. Students who refuse to participate in such a program following a violation of this policy will not be permitted to further participate in any extracurricular activity or interscholastic athletics.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense

The student will be suspended from any and all participation in any extracurricular activity or interscholastic athletics for a period of one (1) calendar year.

#### Anabolic Steroids

The Board prohibits the use of anabolic steroids by students involved in school- related athletics, except for a valid medical purpose. Body building and muscle enhancement of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid.

Students shall be made aware of the dangers of steroid use; that anabolic steroids are classified as controlled substances; and that their use, unauthorized possession, purchase, or sale could subject students to suspension, expulsion and/or criminal prosecution.

The following minimum penalties are prescribed for any student athlete found in violation of the prohibited use of anabolic steroids:

- For a **1<sup>st</sup>** violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season.
- For a **2<sup>nd</sup>** violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season and for the following season.
- For a **3<sup>rd</sup>** violation, permanent suspension from school athletics.

No student shall be eligible to resume participation in school athletics unless a medical determination has been submitted, verifying that no residual evidence of steroids exists.

#### HAZING (POLICY #247)

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health,

physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization recognized by the Board.

This shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of another.

Mental cruelty shall include any activity that would subject a person to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity even if a student willingly participates.

The Board does not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school sponsored student activity. No student, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, direct, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity. The Board directs that no administrator, coach, sponsor, volunteer or district employee shall permit, condone, or tolerate any form of hazing. The district will investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy. Students who have been subjected to hazing must promptly report such incidents to the building principal.

#### TOBACCO USE (POLICY # 222)

The Board recognizes that tobacco use in school and work environments is not conducive to good health and that tobacco use by students presents a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for both users and nonusers.

For purposes of this policy, **tobacco use** shall be defined as use and/or possession of a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar and pipe; other lighted smoking product; and smokeless tobacco in any form including E-cigarettes.

Recognizing the negative impact on both users and nonusers, the Board prohibits tobacco use and possession by students at any time in a school building and on any property, buses, vans and vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district. The Board

prohibits tobacco use and possession by students at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. The school district may initiate prosecution of a student who possesses or uses tobacco in violation of this policy.

A student convicted of possessing or using tobacco in violation of this policy may be fined up to \$50 plus court costs or admitted to alternative adjudication in lieu of imposition of a fine.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – Product will be confiscated. Student will receive a one-day suspension and be referred to an Erie County Drug and Alcohol Education Program. The student will also receive a citation for violation of law. If convicted of this violation, the student will be subjected to a \$50.00 local education agency fine before an official citation is sent to the District Justice or if sent could have to pay a fine of up to \$50 and court costs. Student will have forty-eight (48) hours to return the signed parent/student referral form to the principal/assistant principal. Failure to return the signed form or to complete the rehabilitation program will result in an additional days of suspension.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – Product will be confiscated. Student will receive a five-day suspension and be referred to an Erie County Drug and Alcohol Education Program. The student will also receive a citation for violation of law. If convicted of this violation, the student could have to pay a fine of up to \$50 and court costs. Student will have forty-eight (48) hours to return signed parent/student referral form to the principal/assistant principal. Failure to return the signed form or to complete the rehabilitation program will result in an additional five-day suspension.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** – Product will be confiscated. Student will receive a ten-day suspension. The student will also receive a citation for violation of law. If convicted of this violation, the student could have to pay a fine of up to \$50 and court costs. In addition, the student will be referred to the Board for a student hearing. The results of that hearing could be, but are not limited to, intense counseling, the alternative education program, or expulsion. Students shall be required to make up all work assigned during suspension.

#### **School Property**

School Property is defined as: all buildings & vehicles owned and/or leased by the school district; the parking lots and area surrounding them; the area to the north of the Middle School to include the Valley School, PennDot

building & Veterans Memorial; the wooded area west of the practice field to Reservoir Road.

#### **Discrimination/Harassment Affecting Students Policy #103**

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religious creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.

The Board also declares it to be the policy of this district to comply with federal law and regulations under Title IX prohibiting sexual harassment, which is a form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex. Such discrimination shall be referred to throughout this policy as Title IX sexual harassment. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX to the district may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The district is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination by providing all students admission, course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited at or, in the course of, district-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy, including acts of retaliation as described in this policy, or knowingly providing false information, may result in disciplinary consequences under applicable Board policy and procedures.

The Board directs that the foregoing statement of Board policy be included in each student and staff handbook, and that this policy and related attachments be posted to the district's website.

The Board requires a notice stating that the district does not discriminate in any manner, including Title IX sexual harassment, in any district education program or activity, to be issued to all students, parents/guardians,

employment applicants, employees and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the district. All discrimination notices and information shall include the title, office address, telephone number and email address of the individual(s) designated as the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator.

**Reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination and Retaliation**

The Board encourages students and third parties who believe they or others have been subject to Title IX sexual harassment, other discrimination or retaliation to promptly report such incidents to the building principal, even if some elements of the related incident took place or originated away from school grounds, school activities or school conveyances. A person who is not an intended victim or target of discrimination but is adversely affected by the offensive conduct may file a report of discrimination.

The student's parents/guardians or any other person with knowledge of conduct that may violate this policy is encouraged to immediately report the matter to the building principal.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student may have been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the building principal, as well as properly making any mandatory law enforcement or child protective services reports required by law.

If the building principal is the subject of a complaint, the student, third party or a reporting employee shall report the incident directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

The complainant or the individual making the report may use the designated district report form attached to this policy for purposes of reporting an incident or incidents in writing; however, oral reports of an incident or incidents shall be accepted, documented and the procedures of this policy and the relevant attachments followed.

The building principal shall promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator of all reports of discrimination, Title IX sexual harassment or retaliation. The Title IX Coordinator shall promptly contact the complainant regarding the report to gather additional information as necessary, and to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator shall consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall conduct an assessment to determine whether the reported circumstances are most appropriately addressed through the Discrimination Complaint Procedures prescribed in Attachment 2 to this policy, or if the reported circumstances meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment and are most appropriately addressed through the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures and Grievance Process for Formal Complaints in Attachment 3, or other Board policies.

**Disciplinary Procedures When Reports Allege Title IX Sexual Harassment**

When a report alleges Title IX sexual harassment, disciplinary sanctions may not be imposed until the completion of the grievance process for formal complaints outlined in Attachment 3. The district shall presume that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination has been made at the completion of the grievance process for formal complaints.

When an emergency removal, as described in Attachment 3, is warranted to address an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of an individual, and it is not feasible to continue educational services remotely or in an alternative setting, the normal procedures for suspension and expulsion shall be conducted to accomplish the removal, including specific provisions to address a student with a disability where applicable.

When an emergency removal is not required, disciplinary sanctions shall be considered in the course of the Title IX grievance process for formal complaints. Following the issuance of the written determination and any applicable appeal, any disciplinary action specified in the written determination or appeal decision shall be implemented in accordance with the normal procedures for suspension, expulsions or other disciplinary actions, including specific provisions to address a student with a disability where applicable.

**Discipline/Placement of Student Convicted or Adjudicated of Sexual Assault**

Upon notification of a conviction or adjudication of a student in this district for sexual assault against another student enrolled in this district, the district shall comply with the disciplinary or placement requirements established by state law and Board policy.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a report and the investigation related to any form of discrimination or retaliation, including Title IX sexual harassment, shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy, the attachments and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

### **Retaliation**

The Board prohibits retaliation by the district or any other person against any person for:

1. Reporting or making a formal complaint of any form of discrimination or retaliation, including Title IX sexual harassment.
2. Testifying, assisting, participating or refusing to participate in a related investigation, process or other proceeding or hearing.
3. Acting in opposition to practices the person reasonably believes to be discriminatory.

The district, its employees and others are prohibited from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against anyone for actions described above. Individuals are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator immediately if retaliation is believed to have occurred.

### **Definitions**

**Complainant** shall mean an individual who is alleged to be the victim.

**Pregnancy** - the use of assisted reproductive technology, the state of being in gestation, childbirth, breastfeeding, the postpartum period after childbirth and medical conditions related to pregnancy.[34]

**Race** included all of the following:[34][35]

1. Ancestry, national origin or ethnic characteristics.
2. Interracial marriage or association.
3. Traits associated with race, which includes but is not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles, such as braids, locks and twists.
4. Hispanic ancestry, national origin or ethnic characteristics.
5. Persons of any other national origin or ancestry as specified by a complainant or in a complaint.

**Religious creed** includes all aspects of religious observance, practice or belief.[36]

**Respondent** shall mean an individual alleged to be the perpetrator of the discriminatory conduct.

### **Discrimination**

**Discrimination** shall mean to treat individuals differently, or to harass or victimize based on a protected classification including race, color, age, religious creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, or handicap/disability.

**Harassment** is a form of discrimination based on the protected classifications listed in this policy consisting of unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance when such conduct is:

1. Sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive; and
2. A reasonable person in the complainant's position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by a school.

### **Definitions Related to Title IX Sexual**

#### **Harassment**

**Formal complaint** shall mean a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging Title IX sexual harassment and requesting that the district investigate the allegation under the grievance process for formal complaints. The authority for the Title IX Coordinator to sign a formal complaint does not make the Title IX Coordinator a party in the grievance process for formal complaints. The phrase "document filed by a complainant" refers to a document or electronic submission that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint.

**Supportive measures** shall mean non-disciplinary, nonpunitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed.

**Supportive measures** shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the educational environment, or to deter sexual harassment.

**Supportive measures** may include, but are not limited to:

1. Counseling.
2. Extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments.
3. Modifications of work or class schedules.
4. Campus escort services.
5. Mutual restrictions on contact between the parties.
6. Changes in work or housing locations.
7. Leaves of absence.
8. Increased security.
9. Monitoring of certain areas of the campus.
10. Assistance from domestic violence or rape crisis programs.
11. Assistance from community health resources including counseling resources.

**Supportive measures** may also include assessments or evaluations to determine eligibility for special education or related services, or the need to review an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Service Agreement based on a student's behavior. This could include, but is not limited to, a manifestation determination or functional behavioral assessment (FBA), in accordance with applicable law, regulations or Board policy. The Title IX Coordinator shall consult with the Director of Special Education in the implementation of supportive measures for students with an IEP or Section 504 Service Agreement.

**Title IX sexual harassment** means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A district employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or district service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, commonly referred to as *quid pro quo sexual harassment*.
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 a district education program or activity.
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.
- a. **Dating violence** means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature

with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship is determined by the following factors:

- i. Length of relationship.
  - ii. Type of relationship.
  - iii. Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
- b. **Domestic violence** includes felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving federal funding, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's act under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
  - c. **Sexual assault** means a sexual offense under state or federal law that is classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
  - d. **Stalking**, under Title IX means stalking on the basis of sex, for example when the stalker desires to date a victim. Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:
    - i. Fear for their safety or the safety of others.
    - ii. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Such conduct must have taken place during a district education program or activity and against a person in the United States to qualify as sexual harassment under Title IX. An **education program or activity** includes the locations, events or circumstances over which the district exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs. Title IX applies to all of a district's education programs or activities, whether such programs or activities occur on-campus or off-campus.

#### **Delegation of Responsibility**

In order to maintain a program of nondiscrimination practices that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, the Board designates the Director of Curriculum and Instruction as the district's

Compliance Officer and the middle school principal as the district's Title IX Coordinator. The Compliance Officer can be contacted at:  
Address: Northwestern School District,  
100 Harthan Way, Albion, PA 16401  
Email: ccostello@nwsd.org  
Phone Number: (814) 756-9400 x4351

The Title IX Coordinator can be contacted at:  
Address: Northwestern School District,  
100 Harthan Way, Albion, PA 16401  
Email: jnagle@nwsd.org  
Phone Number: (814) 756-9400 x5273

The Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator shall fulfill designated responsibilities to ensure adequate nondiscrimination procedures are in place, to recommend new procedures or modification to procedures and to monitor the implementation of the district's nondiscrimination procedures in the following areas, as appropriate:

1. Curriculum and Materials - Review of curriculum guides, textbooks and supplemental materials for discriminatory bias.
2. Training - Provide training for students and staff to prevent, identify and alleviate conduct which may constitute discrimination.
3. Resources - Maintain and provide information to staff on resources available to complainants in addition to the school complaint procedure or Title IX procedures, such as making reports to law enforcement, and available supportive measures such as assistance from domestic violence or rape crisis programs and community health resources including counseling resources.
4. Student Access - Review of programs, activities and practices to ensure that all students have equal access and are not segregated except when permissible by law or regulation.
5. District Support - Assure that like aspects of the school programs and activities receive like support as to staffing and compensation, facilities, equipment, and related areas.
6. Student Evaluation - Review of assessments, procedures, and guidance and counseling materials for stereotyping and discrimination.
7. Reports/Formal Complaints - Monitor and provide technical assistance to individuals involved in managing informal reports and formal complaints.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Title IX Sexual Harassment Training Requirements**

The Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), decision-maker(s), or any individual designated to facilitate an informal resolution process related to Title IX sexual harassment shall receive the following training, as required or appropriate to their specific role:

1. Definition of sexual harassment.
2. Scope of district's education program or activity, as it pertains to what is subject to Title IX regulations.
3. How to conduct an investigation and grievance process for formal complaints, including examination of evidence, drafting written determinations, handling appeals and informal resolution processes, as applicable.
4. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest and bias.
5. Use of relevant technology.
6. Issues of relevance including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
7. Issues of relevance, weight of evidence and application of standard of proof and drafting investigative reports that fairly summarize relevant evidence.
8. How to address complaints when the alleged conduct does not qualify as Title IX sexual harassment but could be addressed under another complaint process or Board policy.

All training materials shall promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of Title IX sexual harassment without relying on sex stereotypes.

All training materials shall be posted on the district's website.

### **Disciplinary Consequences**

A student who is determined to be responsible for a violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include but is not limited to:

1. Loss of school privileges.
2. Permanent transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
3. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
4. Detention.
5. Suspension.
6. Expulsion.
7. Referral to law enforcement officials.

An employee who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the applicable Board policy, collective bargaining agreement and individual contract, up to and including dismissal and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

#### **Reports of Discrimination**

Any reports of discrimination that are reviewed by the Title IX Coordinator and do not meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment but are based on race, color, age, religious creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability shall follow the Discrimination Complaint Procedures in Attachment 2 to this policy.

#### **Reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment**

Any reports deemed by the Title IX Coordinator to meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall follow the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures and Grievance Process for Formal Complaints in Attachment 3 to the policy.

#### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES (POLICY #237)**

The Board authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee to develop at each building level an administrative regulation for the possession and use of electronic devices by students. The building administrative regulation will be in compliance with state and federal statutes and will also be consistent with learning theory and learning needs of students.

##### **Guidelines**

Violations of this policy by a student shall result in disciplinary action and may result in confiscation of the electronic device.

##### **Electronic Images and Photographs**

The Board prohibits the taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing. Because such violations may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law, the district may report such conduct to state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

Violations of this policy by a student shall result in disciplinary action and will result in confiscation of the electronic device. The item shall be confiscated and held as deemed by the principal.

##### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones are expected to be in the student's locker and on silent mode during the school day, 7:27am-2:20pm. If a student is caught using their cell phone the appropriate

disciplinary action will be taken.

The building administrator may grant approval for possession & use of a cell phone by a student for the following reasons:

1. A student is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance or rescue squad.
2. A student has a need due to the medical condition of an immediate family member.
3. Other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal.

The district shall not be liable for the loss, damage or misuse of any electronic device brought to school by a student.

#### **CHROMEBOOKS**

Chromebooks are required to be fully charged each night so that the student is prepared for class the next day. Students who repeatedly have non-charged (battery dead) Chromebooks are not prepared for class and will be assigned the appropriate discipline action for not being prepared for class.

Chromebooks are the property of Northwestern School District and should be used respectfully and responsibly for educational purposes. A student should immediately report any type of problem and/or damage to their Chromebook to the MS Guidance Office.

Chromebooks are required items and must be handled with care; just as a textbook is the responsibility of a student so is the Chromebook.

Please refer to page 21 of the handbook for a repair and/or replacement cost for any damages.

#### **CRITERIA FOR DANCES**

Dances are for all MS grade levels. The rules below are for all dances. **Students are not permitted to attend dances if they.....**

- are absent the day of the activity, have received 10 days of parent excused absences letter, or a truancy citation filed.
- had Alternative Education placement, removal from the bus or a suspension since the last activity.
- have been previously suspended for any misconduct at school.

**Students must adhere to all school rules during dances.** All rules pertaining to classroom behavior shall be in effect at the dance. Including RESPECT to adults, faculty and other students.

### **CRITERIA FOR TRIPS/ACTIVITIES**

We recognize that a student's behavior is a reflection on the Middle School as well as themselves. Because of this, students will be taken on field trips or activities based on their ability to behave and follow rules. In addition, academics and attendance will be considered as a factor for taking a student out of class. Students must have attended the Middle School for a minimum of 20 days prior to the field trip. Students who have had a citation for truancy or have chronic absenteeism (absent 10% of days enrolled) without medical excuses will not be permitted to attend field trips or activities. Students who have more than 25 pts for the entire year will not be permitted to attend field trips/activities. Points for students who have entered after the beginning of the school year will be prorated.

Students who have any financial or academic obligation will not be permitted to attend field trips/activities. This includes but is not limited to: laptop damage, textbooks, agendas, locks, library books, sports equipment, misc. other balances, etc. Students previously suspended for fighting, tobacco, drug, or alcohol violation, physical assault, or skipping school will not be permitted to attend the end of the year field trip.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM**

The Northwestern Middle School has a well-trained and effective Student Assistance Team consisting of teachers, principal, guidance, mental health, and drug/alcohol counselors. Parents, counselors, the principal, and teachers can make referrals to the team. Self-referrals and referrals by other students can be made in the guidance office. The source of the referral will be kept confidential.

### **CURRICULUM REVIEW**

Parents/Guardians & students have the right to review instructional materials and have access to information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. Please refer to Northwestern School Board Policy #105.1 for the procedures to follow in making such a request.

### **SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES (Ext.5255)**

A full-time school counselor is available for all students. The school counselor provides support to students with immediate needs using solution-focused short-term strategies to implement during the school day. The school counselor connects students and families with other school-based and community resources for on-going support. The main goal of the school counselor is

to help identify barriers to academic success and provide support and resources to students to maximize their academic potential.

The following services are handled through the school counselors office:

- \* homework
- \* report cards
- \* obligations
- \* progress reports
- \* parent conferences
- \* requests for teachers
- \* grades
- \* schedules
- \* working papers
- \* entries/withdrawals

Please do not call the office secretary or building principal for any of the above listed items.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Schedules will NOT be changed unless there is a strong "educational reason".

Schedule changes are provided to support the academic success of our students. Students must complete the Schedule Change Request Form with required signatures from parents/guardians, teachers and the school counselor/principal. Students can secure the Schedule Change Request Form from the school counselor's office. **All schedule changes for the school year MUST be completed by September 5th.**

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

A cumulative "permanent record" is maintained for each student enrolled in the District. It contains personal data such as (name, D.O.B., address, etc.), scholastic records, test scores, school activities and other pertinent data. The district policy concerning student records is on file in the Superintendent's Office. The superintendent of schools is the Supervisor of Records for our school district. If you have questions regarding student records or the right of access to records, they should be addressed to the administration office.

#### **Parents or students may:**

- \* challenge the information in the educational records.
- \* request a hearing before an examiner if the results of the challenge are not satisfactory.
- \* have a copy of the records for a fee.
- \* request the change/removal of data.

### **DISTRICT PHONE NUMBERS**

Northwestern Schl Dist 814-756-9400  
Bus Garage 814-756-3308

#### **Extensions at 814-756-9400**

Middle School Office 5235  
Principal's office 5273  
Guidance Counselor 5245

Guidance Secretary	5255
Nurse's Office	1226
Cafeteria & Transportation	5264
NW Elementary	2264, 2265
Springfield Elementary	3310
Senior High School	1221, 1234
Superintendent's Office	4254
Business/Tax Office	4253
Special Education Office	2268

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE STAFF**

Mr. Nagle	Principal
Mrs. Christensen	Secretary
Mrs. Hannah	School Counselor
Mrs. Duda	Guidance Secretary

#### **NORTHWESTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF LISTING**

Mr. Lee Alexander– 7<sup>th</sup> Math  
Mr. Andy Canfield - Librarian  
Mrs. Samantha Davis - Health, Girl's P.E.  
Mrs. Cathy Denham – Social Studies 6  
Mrs. Debbie English – Paraprofessional Aide  
Mrs. Kara Gonzales - Lang. Arts 7  
Mr. Chris Haskins – Enrichment  
Miss Emily Hegedus - 8<sup>th</sup> Math  
Mr. Donald Hough – 8<sup>th</sup> Earth Science  
Mrs. Charlene Iskula – Academic Monitor  
Ms. Joleen Jeffery – Music/Band  
Mrs. Kristy Johnson – Learning Support  
Mr. Brad Johnston – Learning Support  
Mr. Austin Jones - Health, Boy's P.E.  
Mrs. Lori Krahe – Library Aide  
Mrs. Dana Kuhn - Chorus  
Ms. Carla McKenna - Lang. Arts 6  
Ms. Shannon McLeod - Emotional Support  
Ms. Jillian Melchitzky – Music/Band  
Mr. Kevin Mihalak - 7<sup>th</sup> Life Science  
Mr. Clayton Miller - Technology  
Mrs. Amanda Nieder – Social Studies 7  
Mrs. Aylssa Noe – Lang. Arts 8  
Mrs. Melissa Novak – Family & Consumer Sci  
Mr. Jim Howells – Life Skills  
Mrs. James Proctor - Art  
Mrs. Andrea Shilling – Learning Support  
Mrs. Yvonne Simpson – Paraprofessional Aide  
Mr. Pat Swick –Social Studies 8  
Mrs. Casey Timm - 6<sup>th</sup> Science  
Mr. Mark Williams - 6<sup>th</sup> Math  
Mrs. Brandi Wright - Nurse

#### **ALMA MATER**

*Hail, Northwestern, Alma Mater,  
School we love so well.  
Let each loyal son and daughter,  
Loud her praises tell.  
Time and fate will bear us onward, Scatter us afar.  
Let the lessons you have taught us,  
Be our guiding star*

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**NORTHWESTERN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
BELL SCHEDULE**

<b>MORNING BELL</b>	7:20	7:25	
<b>HOMEROOM/PRIDE ADVISORY</b>	7:27	8:12	45 mins
<b>PERIOD 1</b>	8:15	9:19	64 mins
<b>PERIOD 2</b>	9:22	10:26	64 mins
<b>PERIOD 3</b>	10:29	11:33	64 mins
<b>LUNCH</b>	11:37	12:07	30 mins
<b>PERIOD 4</b>	12:10	1:13	63 mins
<b>PERIOD 5</b>	1:16	2:20	64 mins

## Volunteer Clearances

For the safety of the students, in order to volunteer within the school or chaperone class field trips, you must have current clearances as outlined in Policy 916-School Volunteers.

New position (Class B) and board approved (Class C) volunteers must complete the volunteer application and submit all items on the volunteer checklist. These two forms can be found on the district website, [www.nwsd.org](http://www.nwsd.org), Other Information, Form Downloads, Information for School Volunteers. Please note that all clearances must be less than sixty (60) months old at the time of application. Upon approval, the clearances must be renewed every sixty (60) months thereafter.

- **Guest Volunteer (Class A)**-An adult who voluntarily provides a service to the district, without compensation, who: (i) works directly under the supervision and direction of a school administrator, a teacher or other member of the school staff; and (ii) does not have direct contact with the student.
- **Position Volunteer (Class B)**-An adult applying for or holding an unpaid position with a school or a program, activity or service, as a person responsible for the child's welfare or having direct contact with children.
- **Board Approved Volunteer (Class C)**-Any adult who voluntarily provides services to the district, without compensation, and who (i) works under the general direction and supervision of a teacher, coach, student activity sponsor, or administrator employed by the district; and (ii) provides direct services, supervision, or instruction to students engaged in an activity, is reasonably expected to have unsupervised contact with students from time to time, and is responsible for the welfare of students.

### Required Clearances for Position (Class B) and Board Approved (Class C) Volunteers

- Act 34 PA State Police Request for Criminal Record Certification
- Act 151 PA Child Abuse History Certification
- Act 114 Federal Criminal History Certification (FBI)/Affidavit
  - Position (Class B) Volunteer applicants who have been a resident of PA for the past ten (10) years may sign an affidavit and will not be required to provide Act 114 certification
  - Board Approved (Class C) Volunteer applicants or those Position (Class B) Volunteer applicants who have not been a resident of PA for the past ten (10) years must provide the Act 114 certification
- PDE 6004 Arrest/Conviction Report and Certification Form
- TB Test, must be current within one year of application
- Mandated Child Abuse Reporter Training Certificate, must complete within first five years or sixty months of volunteering within the district

It is the volunteer's responsibility to obtain the clearances. The district will process a one-time reimbursement of up to \$25 to cover the cost of obtaining the FBI Federal Criminal History Report once you have volunteered within the district. You must submit your receipt to the building office along with a completed reimbursement request form located on the district website.

### **ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE**

Each school year, the district must notify parents about special education services and programs, services for gifted students, and services for protected handicapped students. For complete information, parents are encouraged to visit our website for full notice at:

<http://www.nwsd.org/student-services> or contact Northwestern School District Special Education Director Kristen Rutkowski at 756-9400 extension 2268.

### **McKinney-Vento Act**

Students or families experiencing difficulty related to their housing situation may qualify for services under the McKinney-Vento Act. This might include being displaced due to fire, poverty, or other situations that would have you or your family doubled up with another family or displaced from your normal home setting. Please contact the McKinney-Vento Coordinator at 756-9400 ext. #2 if you have questions about this program.

### **Epinephrine Auto-Injector**

The Pennsylvania Public School Code, Section 1414.2(g) allows parents/guardian to request an exemption to the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector for their student. In order to request this exemption, contact the school nurse to make an appointment to discuss this decision, review and sign the opt-out form.

## Chromebook Repair Costs:

2025-2026 pricing

The following costs are for accidental or intentional damage to district-owned Chromebooks.

Broken screen replacement -  Chromebook touch model Chromebook Spin touch model *touch screens must be replaced with touch screens	\$35 \$120
Screen bezel (frame that surrounds the screen)	\$12
Keyboard	\$22
Individual Keys * not always possible to replace just a key	\$5
Hinge	\$15
Hinge + Top cover (required when screw holes are ripped out)	\$25
Bottom cover or Top cover	\$15
Replacement Charger	\$20
Replacement Protective Case * required to replace if lost	\$13
Miscellaneous items not listed above	varies
Water or otherwise completely damaged -  Chromebook touch model Chromebook Spin touch model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than actual replacement cost because some parts can be repurposed</li> <li>• student will be issued a replacement computer that likely will not be new</li> </ul>	\$150 \$225

Dear Parent/Guardian and Students:

Each student has been provided with a school agenda. This agenda must be used at all times to record assignments, grades and serve as the student’s hall pass. Since we have been using the agenda we have found it to be an excellent organizational tool. We hope that you will also encourage its use and that you will use it to communicate with your child’s teachers. Students who lose or destroy their agenda will be charged \$7 for a replacement.

The agenda contains the Middle School Handbook. The rules, policies, and procedures that are specific to the Middle School are contained in this section. In addition policies and procedures for all Northwestern students can be found on the district’s homepage at [www.nwsd.org](http://www.nwsd.org). It is important that students and their parent or guardian are aware of the contents of both documents. Please review the rules and policies with your child and discuss their importance. Each child will be held accountable for the information contained in the handbooks.

\*\*\*\*\*

**We have read the Northwestern Middle School Handbook as it appears in the Student Agenda. We are also aware that a District-wide Student Handbook and School Board Policies are on the school district’s web page. We are aware of, and understand the rules, policies, and programs stated in those documents. By signing below we acknowledge that we, as parents/guardians and students, have been made aware of school rules.**

Print Student’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature