

# **Columbus Middle School**



Engaging All Learners to Achieve Success!

## **Student Handbook**

### **2017-2018**

# COLUMBUS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Main Switchboard 402-563-7060 ~ School Fax 402-563-7068

## Administration

Ms. Amy Haynes, Principal

Mr. Jordon Anderson, Assistant Principal/Activities Director

Ms. Adriana Carnes, Dean of Students/Activities Director

Mr. Jason Schapmann, Dean of Students

## 2017-2018 Calendar for Columbus Middle School

### September 2017

9/1 First Student Day  
1st Quarter Begins  
9/4 Labor Day/NO SCHOOL  
9/6 2:35 Dismissal  
9/13 2:35 Dismissal  
9/20 2:35 Dismissal  
9/27 2:35 Dismissal

### October 2017

10/4 2:35 Dismissal  
10/11 P/T Conferences  
10/12 P/T Conferences/NO SCHOOL  
10/13 NO SCHOOL  
10/18 2:35 Dismissal  
10/25 2:35 Dismissal

### November 2017

11/2 NOON Dismissal  
11/2 1st Quarter Ends  
11/3 NO SCHOOL  
11/6 2nd Quarter Begins  
11/8 2:35 Dismissal  
11/15 2:35 Dismissal  
11/23 Thanksgiving Break/NO SCHOOL  
11/24 Thanksgiving Break/NO SCHOOL  
11/29 2:35 Dismissal

### December 2017

12/6 2:35 Dismissal  
12/13 2:35 Dismissal  
12/2 2:35 Dismissal  
12/25-12/29 Holiday Break/NO SCHOOL

### January 2018

1/1 Holiday Break/NO SCHOOL  
1/3 2:35 Dismissal  
1/10 2:35 Dismissal  
1/12 NOON Dismissal  
1/12 2nd Quarter Ends  
1/15-1/16 NO SCHOOL  
1/17 3rd Quarter Begins  
1/24 2:35 Dismissal  
1/31 2:35 Dismissal

### February 2018

2/8 2:35 Dismissal  
2/14 2:35 Dismissal  
2/21 P/T Conferences  
2/22 P/T Conferences/NO SCHOOL  
2/23 NO SCHOOL  
2/28 2:35 Dismissal

### March 2018

3/8 Spring Break/NO SCHOOL  
3/9 Spring Break/NO SCHOOL  
3/14 2:35 Dismissal  
3/21 2:35 Dismissal  
3/23 NOON Dismissal  
3/23 3rd Quarter Ends  
3/26 4th Quarter Begins  
3/29 NO SCHOOL  
3/30 Holiday Break/NO SCHOOL

### April 2018

4/4 2:35 Dismissal  
4/11 2:35 Dismissal  
4/18 2:35 Dismissal  
4/25 2:35 Dismissal

### May 2018

5/2 2:35 Dismissal  
5/7 NO SCHOOL  
5/9 2:35 Dismissal  
5/16 2:35 Dismissal  
5/23 2:35 Dismissal  
5/28 Holiday Break/NO SCHOOL

### June 2018

6/1 NOON Dismissal  
6/1 4th Quarter Ends

# Bell Schedules

## CMS 5th Grade Schedule

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:13</b>	<b>7(lunch)</b>	<b>12:13-12:43</b>
<b>1-2</b>	<b>8:13-9:53</b>	<b>8-9</b>	<b>12:43-1:53</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>9:53-10:28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1:53-2:27</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>10:28-11:03</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2:27-3:03</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>11:03-11:38</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>3:05-3:30</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>11:38-12:13</b>		

## CMS 5th Grade Wednesday Schedule

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:11</b>	<b>7(lunch)</b>	<b>11:41-12:11</b>
<b>1-2</b>	<b>8:11-9:41</b>	<b>8-9</b>	<b>12:11-1:11</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>9:41-10:11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1:11-1:41</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>10:11-10:41</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1:41-2:11</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>10:41-11:11</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>2:13-2:35</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>11:11-11:41</b>		

## **CMS 6th Grade Schedule**

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11:38-12:13</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>8:13-8:48</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12:13-12:48</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>8:48-9:23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12:48-1:23</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>9:23-10:33</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>1:23-3:03</b>
<b>5(lunch)</b>	<b>10:33-11:03</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>3:05-3:30</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>11:03-11:38</b>		

## **CMS 6th Grade Wednesday Schedule**

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11:11-11:41</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>8:11-8:41</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11:41-12:11</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>8:41-9:11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12:11-12:41</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>9:11-10:11</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>12:41-2:11</b>
<b>5(lunch)</b>	<b>10:11-10:41</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>2:13-2:35</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>10:41-11:11</b>		

## CMS 7th Grade Schedule

<b>1st</b>	<b>8:00-8:40</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>7M 11:05-11:25</b> <b>7S 11:15-11:35</b>
<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:43-8:56</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>12:13-12:53</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>8:56-9:36</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>12:56-1:36</b>
<b>3rd</b>	<b>9:39-10:19</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>1:39-2:19</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>10:22-11:02</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>2:22-3:02</b>
<b>5th-6th</b>	<b>11:05-12:10</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>3:05-3:30</b>

\* 7M and 7S will switch the lunch schedule at semester.

## CMS 7th Grade Wednesday Schedule

<b>1st</b>	<b>8:00-8:35</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>7M 10:43-11:03</b> <b>7S 10:48-11:08</b>
<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:38-8:49</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>11:41-12:16</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>8:49-9:24</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>12:19-12:54</b>
<b>3rd</b>	<b>9:27-10:02</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>12:57-1:32</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>10:05-10:40</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>1:35-2:10</b>
<b>5th-6th</b>	<b>10:43-11:38</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>2:13-2:35</b>

\* 7M and 7S will switch the lunch schedule at semester.

# CMS 8th Grade Regular Schedule

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:13</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>8M 11:40-12:00</b> <b>8S 11:50-12:10</b>
<b>1st</b>	<b>8:13-8:53</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>12:13-12:53</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>8:56-9:36</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>12:56-1:36</b>
<b>3rd</b>	<b>9:39-10:19</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>1:39-2:19</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>10:22-11:02</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>2:22-3:02</b>
<b>5th-6th</b>	<b>11:05-12:10</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>3:05-3:30</b>

\* 8M and 8S will switch the lunch schedule at semester.

# CMS 8th Grade Wednesday Schedule

<b>ADV</b>	<b>8:00-8:11</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>8M 11:13-11:33</b> <b>8S 11:18-11:38</b>
<b>1st</b>	<b>8:11-8:46</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>11:41-12:16</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>8:49-9:24</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>12:19-12:54</b>
<b>3rd</b>	<b>9:27-10:02</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>12:57-1:32</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>10:05-10:40</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>1:35-2:10</b>
<b>5th-6th</b>	<b>10:43-11:38</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>2:13-2:35</b>

## CMS GRADING SCALE

<b>A+ = 99-100%</b>	<b>A = 95- 98%</b>	<b>A- = 93- 94%</b>
<b>B+ = 91-92%</b>	<b>B = 88-90%</b>	<b>B- = 86-87%</b>
<b>C+ = 84-85%</b>	<b>C = 80-83%</b>	<b>C- = 78-79</b>
<b>D+ = 76-77%</b>	<b>D = 72-75%</b>	<b>D- = 70-71%</b>
<b>F = 0-69%</b>		



## STUDENT HANDBOOK 2017-2018

Your student handbook has been written to assist you in becoming a productive member of Columbus Middle School. In preparing for various roles at Columbus Middle School, you must be conscious of your rights and be committed to your duties. Protect these rights by being a responsible citizen in your school community.

Your teachers, counselors, and principals are available to assist you in understanding the important things written in this handbook. Ask them questions if you do not understand the meaning of anything in this handbook.

### Disclaimer Notice

This handbook does not form a contract and the school reserves the right to interpret and modify the rules listed within this book.

## Mission Statement of Columbus Public Schools

*“Engaging all learners to achieve success”*

## Vision of the Columbus Middle School

*“Columbus Middle School is a caring, collaborative community of learners in which all members can succeed. Student-centered learning and continuous academic improvement are our focus”*

### To the Parent/Guardian

Columbus Public School’s Policy 1005.02 R1 requires that a copy of the Student Handbook be made available to each parent/guardian. This handbook has been prepared to explain and clarify the procedures, policies and regulations of Columbus Middle School. This Student Handbook complies with the law that was passed by the Nebraska Legislature, LB503 (1976), which requires every school district to summarize general rules and regulations regarding student conduct. This law further requires such rules and regulations to be available in writing to all students and their parents/guardians. The school district urges students and their parents/guardians to read this handbook carefully. Parents are invited to contact the school office during normal business hours to inquire about access to instructional materials and/or attend and monitor instructional activities. You are urged to contact any middle school administrator if you have any questions regarding the contents of this Student Handbook.

### Notification of Nondiscrimination

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Columbus Public School District #1 are hereby notified that this institution does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the Columbus Public School District #1 compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to contact the Superintendent of Schools, Columbus, NE 68601, telephone number 402/563-7000. The Superintendent has been designated to Columbus Public School District #1 to coordinate the institution’s efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504. Any person may also contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, US Department of Education, regarding the institution’s compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504.

### Notification of Sexual Discrimination

It is the policy of the Columbus Public School District to comply in spirit as well as in fact to the regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in federally-assisted education programs. Specifically, Title IX states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. . .”

Any student who has a grievance should complete a grievance form and forward it to the Superintendent. Forms are available in all school offices.

### Notification of American Disabilities Act

If you have any special needs requests that will assist you in participating in programs, services, or activities of the Columbus Public Schools, please contact the Superintendent of Schools.

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State law establishes the “**Student Rights and Responsibilities**” identified below. State rights and responsibilities are automatically school district policy as well as building level policy. Therefore, we must be sure that students and parents have been given the opportunity to read them. **SIGNATURE SHEETS**, which will be sent home during the first full week of school, should be signed by parents and students and returned according to the deadline printed on the sheet. In order to assure students understand what the “**Student Rights, Rules and Responsibilities**” information means, school personnel will also be reviewing it with students during the first week of the school year.

## **SECTION I**

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – UNDER NE STATUTES**

#### **I-A Responsibilities and Right to an Education**

A student’s right to an education in Nebraska is granted because of provisions in the state’s constitution. There are two very important things a student must faithfully do to protect this constitutional right. These two things are: attend school regularly and participate in the learning process. **There are many other things responsible students do while they are students, but nothing is more important than doing the school work assigned by their teachers and being in school regularly.**

The policy of the Columbus Public Schools regarding the right to an education states: The State of Nebraska, as provided for in Article VII, section I, of the Nebraska Constitution, established public schools to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students between the ages of five and twenty-one. All residents of the Columbus Public Schools from five through twenty-one are entitled to attend public school without tuition. All students are entitled to equal opportunities. Along with one’s rights to equality of educational opportunity, each student has a commensurate responsibility to act in such a way as not to interfere with the rights of others to the same opportunity.

Essential to the fostering and maintaining of educational opportunity is reasonable and necessary order in the schools. A student may forfeit his/her right to educational opportunities when his/her conduct is such that it substantially disrupts the educational process and deprives others of their rights. The most important thing a student must do to protect his/her right to an education are stated as responsibilities. They are as follows:

#### **I-B Attendance Responsibility**

All students enrolled in any of the Columbus Public Schools, regardless of how old they are, must attend school regularly and be in all the classes to which they are assigned, unless properly excused by an official of the school. Only authorized officials can excuse a student from school. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents(s)/guardian(s) to inform the school of the reason for any absence and to comply with the specified attendance procedure of the particular school in which the student is enrolled. Any student who fails to attend school regularly and/or be in his/her classes on time shall be disciplined. Parents/Guardians of students under eighteen years of age may be held legally negligent if their son/daughter fails to meet this attendance responsibility, according to Nebraska Statute §79-201-211.

According to Columbus Board Policy 503 and Nebraska Statute §79-209, the school has the right to compel student attendance. Furthermore, the school is required to notify the parent when their child has missed five days per academic quarter. Excused and unexcused absences to school will accumulate towards these 5 days per academic quarter (see Attendance Expectations/ Procedures in Administrative Discipline Section). If any student has accumulated a total of five unapproved absences per quarter, or a percentage equivalency of five absences, the school shall render all services in its power to compel the student’s attendance. If a student is absent more than 20 days per year, or the percentage equivalency, the attendance officer shall file a report with the County Attorney of the county in which the person resides. **See IV in Student Attendance Expectations.**

#### **I-C Academic Responsibility**

Students are obligated to complete all schoolwork assigned to them by their teachers. Students are also responsible for bringing materials, such as pencil, paper, and textbooks, to class regularly. Any students who fail to show a sincere and regular effort to complete their assigned work may be disciplined for being academically irresponsible.

#### **I-D Health Examination and Immunizations**

State law requires that each student entering school must be protected against measles, mumps, rubella, polio myelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus by immunization. This law further requires that prior to the entrance of a student into the beginner grade and the seventh grade, or in the case of a transfer student from an out-of-state school to any other grade, that he/she be examined by a qualified physician. Any student who fails to comply with these health responsibilities shall be excluded from school until such time as he/she is in compliance with these responsibilities. For the current school year, a student must have the following immunizations: Three doses of DPT vaccine, three doses of polio vaccine, two doses of the MMR vaccine, two doses of Varicella or MMRV given. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. If the child has had varicella disease, they do not need any varicella shots. Three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine (for students entering for the first time or grades K/1st).

### **I-E Student Records**

School Board Policy 507 and its accompanying rules govern the maintenance of student records. These records are maintained to assist the instructional, guidance, and educational progress of the student and for legitimate research to better the educational programs of the school district. The means and methods specified by Policy 507 to collect and maintain these important records comply with regulations promulgated in PL 93-380, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and various Nebraska Revised Statutes and rules of the State Board of Education. Board Policy 507 assures the confidentiality of student records. Under this policy, students, former students, and parents/legal guardians are assured access to student records; the right to challenge information contained in the student record believed to be “inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate” and the right to a hearing should a conflict result. The student record for each student may include, but is not limited to, such information as identifying information, attendance records, grade levels completed, aptitude test scores and records of achievement, health records, and family background data. Parents, legal guardians, or eligible students may request to review a student’s student record. The only other persons who have access to the information in the student record are school personnel who have a legitimate educational interest, persons complying with a judicial order, and persons representing federal, state, or accrediting agencies. Parents, legal guardians, or eligible students may request in writing that information contained in a student’s student record be released for their purposes. They may also request copies of information classified as a subsidiary student record prior to its required destruction within three years after the student leaves school. The administrator determines content of a student’s record.

Schools may make public certain non-confidential “directory information” in association with recognition for such things as academic excellence, extra-curricular honors and awards, or participation in officially recognized school-sponsored activities. “Directory information” may include such things as name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of school attendance, and specific information relating to recognition (such as weight, height of athletic team members). Any parent, legal guardian, or student of legal age who does not wish the school to release such “directory information” must notify the principal of the school the student presently attends by September 15. Student records other than directory information will only be released upon receipt of a written parental permission for students younger than eighteen years of age. Records of students eighteen years and older will be released only with the student’s own written permission. Release forms are available in the Guidance Office. These statements on student records have been presented in this folder to emphasize that information about students is kept confidential and to encourage the free flow of information between parent(s)/guardian(s), student, and school. Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) who have any additional concerns regarding their rights under Policy 507 and various federal and state laws are encouraged to contact the building principal of their school. A copy of Policy 507 and its accompanying rules may be obtained for the cost of reproduction from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) may file with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare complaints concerning alleged failures of the school district to comply with federal legislation dealing with student records. Throughout the year students may be photographed for various reasons. Parents who wish their child not participate in said photographs may request such in writing.

### **I-F Freedom from Sexual Discrimination**

It is the policy of the Columbus Public School District to comply in spirit as well in fact to the regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. Specifically, Title IX states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” Any student who has a grievance should complete a grievance form and forward it to the Superintendent. Forms are available in all school offices.

### **I-G Responsibility and Right to Freedom of Assembly**

The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools recognizes that Freedom of Assembly is a right protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. The exercise of this right must be conducted in a responsible manner so as not to interfere with the educational activities of the school district.[CPS Board Policy 504.07 and 506.02R1]

### **I-H Search and Seizure**

Students possess the right of privacy of person as well as freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution. This individual right, however, is balanced by the school’s responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all its students. According to School Policy 504.08, school employees may conduct searches when they have reason to suspect that the health, safety, and welfare of students may be in danger. Any school employee making a search or a seizure will follow these guidelines:

- 1) General searches of school property (including personal items such as lockers, book bags, purses, coats, etc., found on school property) will be conducted at any time when there is reasonable cause for school employees to believe that something that violates a law or school rule is on school property. This search of school property may be made without the student being present.
- 2) Illegal items (firearms, weapons, drugs) or other possessions reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety, security of others, or which might possibly interfere with school purposes will be seized by school employees.
- 3) Items which are used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be removed from a student’s person.

4) A student's person may be searched by school employees when there is reasonable cause to believe that the student has on his/her person illegal items or other items that may interfere with school purposes.

Lockers and desks are the property of the school district and are made available to students for their convenience. Lockers are randomly searched. Each student is responsible for the content or security of his/her locker. Each student is assigned a locker with an individualized lock combination. Students are advised not to disclose the combination to other students. Some students will be assigned to share a

locker with another student. The student(s) solely assigned to the locker are responsible for the locker and will be held accountable for all items in the assigned locker. The school assumes no responsibility for items placed in a shared locker or shared combination. For the security of our students, staff and school grounds, Columbus Middle School is equipped with numerous security cameras. Students are not permitted to share lockers with students they are not assigned to do so with. Violation of this policy may result in a revocation of locker privileges and a school consequence. Columbus Middle School has a responsibility for providing a secure educational environment for students and staff. In cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, we work together to maintain a safe and drug-free environment, which includes using appropriate and necessary means to search lockers and the grounds for illegal substances. Beginning in January of 2006, canine drug units will be used to search the building and grounds at Columbus Middle School (Policy 504.15). The canine drug units are trained and handled by law enforcement officers. Such searches will be unannounced during the school day, and will last approximately 50 minutes as a deterrent for bringing illegal substances to school. Established "intruder drill" procedures would be implemented to facilitate the search and to ensure students and staff are out of the hallways and into their classrooms.

### **I-I Videotaping of Students**

The Columbus Public School Board has approved the use of video equipment to monitor students and staff at Columbus Middle School. Select areas of the Columbus Middle School and surrounding property are monitored by video equipment. Students may be video taped while in any area of the building or on school grounds with the exception of the locker rooms and bathrooms. The information gathered through video taping may be used as part of disciplinary proceedings against a student and/or may be added to a student's disciplinary file if deemed appropriate by the Columbus Middle School Administration.

### **I-J Responsibility and Right of Freedom of Expression**

The right to freely express oneself is justifiably tempered with responsibilities to ensure that the expression made does not interfere with the rights of others. The official school policy and the responsibilities students have when expressing themselves are contained in this handbook to promote reasonable communication. This reflects one of the purposes of the Columbus Public Schools. [CPS Board Policy 504.07] That purpose is to encourage the use of good language skills while providing educational experiences for students. The official school policy in regard to Freedom of Expression states: The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools recognizes the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America as being an essential part of the learning process. The Board of Education further recognizes that students need guidance in exercising the right of Freedom of Expression so that they do not interfere with the rights of others. The following statements are made to guide students in exercising their constitutional right of Freedom of Expression.

### **I-K Oral Expression**

Schools must encourage inquiry and expression of ideas. Such expression should include the personal opinion of students relevant to subject matter being taught, to school activities and policies, to school administration, and to matters of broad social concern and interest. In so expressing themselves, students have the responsibility to refrain from the use of slanderous remarks, obscene language, and language derogatory of race, creed, sexual orientation and national origin or handicapping condition, and to conduct themselves in such a way as to allow all persons the opportunity to express themselves freely if they so desire. [CPS Board Policy 504.07]

### **I-L Symbolic Expression and Related Activities**

Symbolic expression is defined as that type of expression, exclusive of verbal and written expression, which conveys the personal ideas, feelings, attitudes, and opinions of an individual. Length of hair, choice of clothing, buttons, badges, and armbands are some examples of symbolic expression. Each student has the right to express himself/herself by way of symbols subject only to the restrictions that such expression does not result in overt exhibitionism, disruption of the educational process, be obscene, disrespectful, or obviously annoying to others. [CPS Board Policy 504.07]

### **I-M Rights of Handicapped Students**

It is the policy of the Columbus Public Schools to not discriminate against any student who is a resident of the district on the basis of handicap in admission or access to its programs and activities. Any student who may believe the school district is not complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should inform the Superintendent of Schools of his/her complaint.

### **I-N Homeless Student Policy**

It is the policy of Columbus Public Schools to make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth of school age within the district, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers to their receiving an education, which may exist in district policies or practices.

## **I-O Special Education Services**

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the District's special education policy, the Parental Rights in Special Education brochure, or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (special education regulations and complaint procedures) or Rule 55 (special education appeal procedures) may contact the Director of Student Services. A notice of parental rights, Rules 51 and 55 and more information about special education are also available at the Nebraska Department of Education's website:<https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/regulations.html>.

## **SECTION II DISCIPLINE – UNDER NE STATUTES**

### **II-A Disciplinary Actions by Staff**

**Guidance:** a conversation between the student and school personnel. The purpose of this form of counseling is not to lecture the student, but to inform him/her that his/her behavior needs to change so that he/she does not violate the rights of others or to help the student improve his/her learning capabilities.

**Conference:** a meeting of student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and school personnel to discuss the student's behavior or learning process. The school intends to seek the assistance of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) in helping the student to become a better student.

**Detention:** requiring that a student remain after or before school for a period of time. It is intended that students serving detention will be doing school-related work. Teacher Detention assigned by and monitored by classroom teacher for class related issues. Office Detentions are assigned by administration for Office Referral.

### **II-B Disciplinary Actions by Administrators**

**1. Rearrangement of Schedule:** assigning a student to a new schedule of classes and/or in-school suspension when the behavior of the student is such that the student cannot conduct himself/herself in an acceptable manner.

**2. Restriction of Extracurricular Activities:** Is informing a student that he/she cannot participate in certain activities because of his/her past or present behavior. Such actions as this are intended to improve student behavior at home and school.

**3. Private Dining/ Lunchroom suspension:** Students are placed in the suspension room or in a designated room rather than the cafeteria. The purpose is to remove the student from their peers during their social lunch for behavior or academic problems. Students are expected to work as well as eat during this time.

**4. School probation:** action taken by the principal and/or assistant principal(s) to assist a student in resolving his/her behavioral problems. Such action is in the form of certain stipulated conditions agreed to by the school, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s).

**5. Requirement that a student receive counseling/educational evaluation:** an action that may require a student to visit a guidance counselor, medical counselor, or psychological counselor, to assist the student in resolving his/her problem at parental expense.

**6. In-School-Suspension (ISS):** Students are placed in the suspension room rather than their regularly scheduled class(es). Students are supervised and expected to carry on their studies as well as abide by the rules set down for ISS. Assigning students to ISS is at the discretion of the administration. Students who experience a high frequency of In-School-Suspensions will be suspended out of school at the discretion of the administration up to and including a period of 5-days.

**\* In-School Suspension hours will be from 8:00 to 3:45. Students who have been placed in ISS must report to the office immediately upon arrival to school. (ISS students are not allowed to sit in the a.m. waiting area.) At 8:00 a.m., a supervisor will escort these students to the ISS room. If requested, students will be served breakfast at this time. Since part of the ISS consequences is elimination within a regular school day, students will be provided a sack lunch from the cafeteria. Students will remain in ISS until dismissal, which has been changed to 3:45. Students will not be allowed in the p.m. waiting area until this time.**

**7. Thursday Night School:** Students are placed in up to a 3-hour detention. The purpose is to enable students to fulfill disciplinary consequences. Thursday Night School will be from 3:30 to 6:30.

### **8. Suspensions and Emergency Exclusion:**

(a) Short term: exclusion of a student from attendance to school for a period not to exceed five school days.

(b) Long term: exclusion of a student from attendance to school for a period exceeding five school days but less than twenty school days.

**\*Any student who is suspended from school will not be allowed to attend or participate in school activities until he/she is reinstated to school. This includes athletic events, plays, concerts, dances, and other special events held at school. In addition, students are not allowed on school property.**

**9. Expulsion:** exclusion from attendance to school in accordance with §79-283.

**10. Exclusion:** immediate withdrawal of a student from school for:

- (a) Presenting a clear threat to the physical safety of himself/herself or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.
- (b) A dangerous communicable disease as cited in §79-4,177.

**11. Mandatory Reassignment:** Students may be reassigned to an alternative educational setting, and in-building alternative setting, or complete instructional packets.

**12. Legal Action in court of law:** Any disciplinary action taken against a student will comply with existing state and school board policies and shall afford the student due process.

## **II-C Right to Due Process and Student Suspension**

Board Policy 504.01 states: The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools views the establishment of rules and responsibilities governing student behavior as a necessary element of the educational process. The rules and responsibilities governing student behavior established pursuant to this policy and other School Board Policies affecting student personnel shall be approved by the district's established procedure prior to their use. All rules and responsibilities established by the school district and any other rules established by individual buildings governing student behavior at school shall be publicized.

The Board recognizes that each classroom teacher needs to establish certain rules governing the educational process of which they are in charge. Any rules established by individual teachers are to be reflective of school policies and rules. Such rules are exempt from Board approval and need only to be made known in each individual class they are in charge of. Any behavior on the part of the student that violates school policies, rules, or regulations may be subject to disciplinary action. Any disciplinary action shall be administered within the fundamental framework of due process. The fundamental framework of due process varies according to the frequency and severity of the situation.

**Short-Term Suspension (1-5 days):** The essential ingredients of due process afforded the student in a short-term suspension (1-5 days) and set forth in School Board Policy 505.02 are as follows:

- 1) Notice of the charge against the student
- 2) An explanation of the charge against him/her
- 3) An opportunity for the student's explanation of the incident(s), issue(s), and/or event(s)
- 4) Written notification within 24 hours, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, to the parents or guardians of the student stating: a) the reason(s) for the short-term suspension. b) dates of the short-term suspension.
- 5) The decision of the administrator shall be final.

**Long-Term Suspension (6-19 days):** (This procedure covers Long-Term Suspensions, Expulsion, and Exclusion.) The essential ingredients of due process afforded the student in Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion and Exclusion and are covered in detail in School Policy 505.02 are as follows with written notification to parent(s) or guardian(s) indicating:

- 1) the rule(s) or standard(s) of conduct allegedly violated;
- 2) the penalty recommended by the school official in charge ;
- 3) a statement indicating the student has the right to a hearing on the specified charges upon request;
- 4) a description of the hearing process and appeal hearing;
- 5) a form for parents/guardians to fill out in order for parents to request a hearing (to be signed and returned to the Superintendent of Schools).

Nothing in the above procedure precludes the student, student's parent(s)/guardian(s), or representative from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing. In the event the school does not receive a request for a hearing within five school days following the receipt of the written notice, the punishment shall go into effect. A hearing can still be requested prior to thirty calendar days after the actual receipt of written notice; however, the punishment imposed may continue in effect pending final determination. The appeal procedure shall be as set forth in School Policy 505.02.

### **Suspension based on excessive disciplinary referrals**

Students who amass 10 or more disciplinary office referrals during a school calendar year may be suspended from school by the administration.

## **SECTION III CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE**

This classroom discipline policy is primarily aimed at maintaining an orderly environment for the students and staff of Columbus Middle School. Classroom teachers are responsible for classroom discipline with the assistance of student assistance team facilitators,

administrators, guidance counselors, school psychologists, and outside agencies when necessary. To maintain a quality-learning environment, students are expected to abide by the five (5) Response to Behavior goals.

**Response to Behavior (RTB)**

In general, this discipline policy is designed so the degree of home-school supervision and resource support are directly related to student performance choices. This discipline policy is also constructed so student freedom and choices are solidly linked to their performance choices. When a student chooses to perform according to classroom goals, parent-staff supervision and resource support are minimized. Under these conditions, the freedom and choices of a student at school are maximized. However, when a student chooses not to perform according to standards, parent and school staff resource support will continue to increase until he/she reforms his/her performance. In this case, the freedom and choices of a student will continue to decrease until he/she chooses to perform adequately.

This classroom discipline policy is primarily aimed at maintaining a quality learning environment. Classroom discipline is conducted by classroom teachers with assistance of the Student Assistance Team (SAT), core team teacher(s), administrators, guidance counselors, school psychologists, and outside agencies when necessary. To maintain a quality learning environment, students are expected to perform the following goals:

1. Arrive to class prepared and on-time
2. Use work time appropriately
3. Complete assigned tasks on-time with proficiency
4. Demonstrate respect for people and property
5. Respond appropriately to staff directives

It is expected that all students at Columbus Middle School will behave according to the five “Student Performance Goals”. If a student chooses to perform according to these goals, he/she will retain the freedom to interact with teachers and students with minimal supervision. However, if a student chooses not to perform according to these basic expectations, he/she can be assured that teachers, parent(s)/guardian(s), and administration will systematically increase home-school support until student performance is improved or an appropriate educational environment has been identified. Under these conditions, a student will experience a methodical removal of freedoms until satisfactory performance is achieved. Student consequences for unacceptable behavior choices can be summarized in table form and described in narrative format as follows:

**Columbus Middle School  
Student Consequence Chart**

Level	Intervention/Consequence
I. Classroom Team (classroom teacher, parent, and student)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Problem solving documented by teacher and sent home to parents.</li> <li>2. Problem solving documented by teacher and sent home to parents.</li> <li>3. Problem solving documented by teacher, communication with parents, and possible development of plan.</li> </ol>
II. Core Team (classroom teacher, parent, student, Core Team teacher(s) and Administrator/ Guidance Counselor, when requested)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, and <u>one</u> 30-minute detention with teacher.</li> <li>2. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, and <u>two</u> 30-minute detentions with teacher.</li> <li>3. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, <u>three</u> 30-minute detentions with teacher, mandatory parent contact with development of plan.</li> </ol>
III. Multidisciplinary Team (classroom teacher, parent, student, Core Team teacher(s), Administrator, and other support when needed)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, and <u>three</u> (3) hours of Saturday School or Early Release School as determined by the team/administration.</li> <li>2. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, and <u>four</u> (4) hours of Saturday School or Early Release School as determined by the team/administration.</li> <li>3. Lesson with a teacher during valued time or consequences stated in IEP/RTB plan, problem solving documented by student and sent home to parents, <u>four</u> (4) hours of Saturday School or Early Release School as determined by the team/administration AND <u>one</u> (1) day of ISS.</li> </ol>
IV. Administrative Team (classroom teacher, parent, student, Core Team teacher(s), Administrator, and other support, when needed)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lesson with teacher during valued time, plus additional consequences as determined by the team/administration. * Consequences include but are not limited to the following: detention, lunch restriction, ISS, community/school service time, Saturday School, Early Release School, required attendance during zero period, community-based intervention, differentiated schedule, parent accompaniment to school, OSS, placement in isolation room in the IMC, or alternative placement.</li> </ol>

Please Note

1. The team and the administration reserve the right to adjust the consequences stated above to meet the educational and behavioral needs of the learner. Consequences listed at Level IV may be used at any level if deemed appropriate.
2. Problem solving lessons will be conducted within one day of being issued and will be used as a time for the classroom teacher and student to problem solve.
3. Students that fail to attend a problem-solving lesson or refuse to complete a problem solving form will experience a consequence that will be determined by the teacher and the administration.
4. Students receiving three lessons at Levels II, III, and IV in a particular setting will result in a mandatory meeting with designated staff, parent, and student. If a parent/guardian is unable to meet at the scheduled time, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to reschedule the meeting within five school days. Failure to meet will result in the student being suspended until a meeting is conducted.
5. Students suspended must complete assigned tasks before returning to their regular schedule. Failure to do so may result in additional suspension time or assignment of that student to work with a teacher after school for the purpose of completing incomplete work.
6. Substitute teachers will not assign problem-solving lessons unless trained to do so. The substitute teacher will instead refer students to the office.
7. During the closing weeks of school, teachers will reserve the right to issue either a problem solving or utilize an Office Referral.
8. Students receiving a problem-solving lesson in an unstructured setting (including, but not limited to, hallways, before/after school waiting areas, and CPS activities) will be referred to the office.
9. All office referrals will advance students on the RTB chart.
10. Students who do not receive any problem solving lessons for a designated amount of time will be eligible for RTB rewards.
11. Students will have the opportunity to earn clemency and be absolved of previously earned RTB by demonstrating the ability to follow the five performance goals for 9, 12, and 16 week periods.

## **SECTION IV SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

The following rules have been established under direction of the Board of Education discipline policies for use in school and at all school-sponsored events. Compliance with the following standards of conduct is mandatory. A referral is defined as a summons or directive to the office due to an administrative rule violation usually resulting in disciplinary action by an administrator. Repeated instances of receiving office referrals may result in ISS, OSS, Expulsion and/or alternative placement.

All students are expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to perform civic, academic, and behavioral expectations with proficiency. The following sections outline performance expectations and correction measures. Sections III and IV, referred to as Administrative Discipline, relates to student civic and attendance expectations. Section V, referred to as Classroom Discipline, relates to student academic and behavior expectations.

### **Administrative Discipline – Civic Expectations**

All students are expected to perform according to civic expectations. These expectations were established as an instructional tool so students function effectively within the school community.

#### **Civic Expectation #1 - Contribute constructively to community**

- Wear clothing that does not offend or disrupt others in the school community at school or school sponsored events.
- Act in a manner that does not offend or disrupt others in the school community.
- Refrain from possessing or using objects that may be disruptive or offensive to the school community.
- Touch and speak in ways that protect the integrity of others.
- Complete your own work and accept responsibility for that work.
- Report accurate and truthful information to members of the school community.

#### Supporting Guidelines

##### **IV-A Dress Code for Students**

Students may wear any clothing that does not interfere with the purpose of school or break one of our school rules. Clothing which creates a distraction to staff or students or disrupts the learning process in any manner will not be allowed. Students will be checked during their first class. Any piece of clothing or any other item brought to school by a student should not contain any reference to violence, gang affiliation, profanity, sexual innuendoes, insulting language or promotes the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs in any manner. Students who wear inappropriate clothing to school will be asked to change their attire for the remainder of the day. If a student chooses to contact a parent/guardian and waits for a change of clothes, the instruction time lost will be made up in detention or in Thursday Night School. Students who repeatedly violate the dress code will be issued disciplinary consequences. Students who violate the dress code will receive a warning for the first offense, a detention for the second offense, and three detentions for the third offense. On the third offense, the student's parents are required to have a meeting with school officials to review the dress code. Repeated offenses after the third violation will result in in-school suspension, additional parent meetings, and the creation of contingency plan if deemed appropriate by the administration. An example of a contingency plan might be if a student repeatedly violates the dress code for



sagging pants, the student’s parents would bring a pair of pants that fit appropriately and leave them at the school. The student would then need to check into the office each day to see if they are in compliance with the dress code. If they are not, they would need to change and would receive a consequence.

Our dress code specifically prohibits the following kinds of clothing for the following reasons:

- Clothing or items that advertise violence in a promotional way. Violence defined as an act that hurts a person’s body, dignity, or thing. Intimidation defined as any mean word, look, or sign.
- Clothing that portrays weapons is not acceptable attire.
- Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double meaning.
- Clothing and accessories identified by outside agencies (police and other law enforcement agencies) as gang-related apparel. (i.e. sagging pants, baggy pants, pants with cuffs that extend to a distance of less than 1/4” inch from the floor when a student is standing straight-legged, long baggy coats, specific colors associated with gangs, clothing which promotes gang activity using slang, symbolism, and cartoon caricatures).
- Clothing which advertises drugs (defined in policy as alcoholic liquor, tobacco products, over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, controlled substances, and substances purported to be drugs), or drug lifestyles or features drug-related logos or drug paraphernalia (i.e. Marlboro or Winston clothing, Budweiser clothing or any clothing advertising breweries, pubs, etc.).
- Clothing which is disruptive to the learning environment because it is too tight or too short, has holes in the hip, thigh, genital or upper chest areas, or unnecessarily shows off one of these areas (i.e. tank tops, shirts unbuttoned to show sports bras or midriff tops underneath), short shorts or skirts, low cut shirt exposing back, see-through, etc.
- Clothing which contains profanity or sexually suggestive language or pictures.



NO  
Stomach showing



NO  
Straps too thin



NO  
Low cut top



NO  
Saggy/Baggy Pants



NO  
Back Showing



NO  
Short Shorts / Skirts



YES  
Higher neck, edges cover top of shoulder  
Straps three fingers wide



\*To be helpful, examples of improper clothing have been given. However, these examples are not to be considered as an all-inclusive list. If parents or guardians are unsure as to whether or not clothing is appropriate, please call the school and ask to talk to an administrator. Please keep this list in mind when buying school clothing. The Columbus Middle School Administration is empowered by the Columbus Public School Board to use their discretion in dress code cases. Columbus Middle School Administrators will make the final determination on whether an article of clothing is appropriate.

Students are not permitted to wear caps, hats, and hoods inside of the building. Coats, jackets, windbreakers, gloves and other clothing items intended to be worn as coats or outerwear also may not be worn inside the building.

#### IV-B Non-Instructional Areas

Students are only to be in non-instructional areas (such as hallways, bathrooms, cafeteria, commons, school grounds) when authorized and when student lanyards and IDs are worn properly. Students are to conduct themselves in a proper and prudent manner, and should always clean up after themselves by disposing litter in trash containers.

#### IV-C Loitering

Students may not remain in school buildings, on school grounds, in faculty parking lots, or at school-sponsored events without the permission of school personnel after school is dismissed or the activity is completed. Students are allowed to come on school grounds at 7:30 a.m., but must report directly to their designated waiting area (8<sup>th</sup> grade – north gym, 7<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade – south gym). Students are not allowed to be in the halls or classroom without a pass from a staff member. Students must leave the building and school grounds when the 3:45 bell rings unless participating in a school sponsored activity or serving a teacher or office detention.

#### **IV-D Snowballs**

Students are not to throw snowballs while on school grounds, or on their way to and from school, or while attending school events.

#### **IV-E Before and After School Waiting Area Procedures**

- \* Students may not be on school grounds prior to 7:00 AM. Report to Cafeteria for a studyhall.
- \* Enter the building as soon as you arrive on school grounds.
- \* Go to the waiting area assigned to your grade and find a seat in the bleachers, filling in the top rows first, and working down. Students are to stay in that seat. Be sure you do not sit on the yellow aisle markers or stairways.
- \* Seat yourself so that all space is usable and others can reach it. Move up and move in if necessary to make space accessible to others.
- \* Respect the personal safety, space, property, well-being and rights of all people in the waiting areas.
- \* Give your best effort to immediately follow all school rules, waiting area procedures, and teacher instructions (requests) from staff members exactly as they are given. If you need clarification, ask a staff member appropriately.
- \* If you need to leave the morning waiting area to do something, to go somewhere, or to see someone, ask a monitor's permission. Only staff members may write passes.
- \* If you are waiting for a ride after school, sit or stand quietly with your friends until your ride arrives. No horseplay (i.e. yelling, chasing each other, kick fighting, wrestling, swearing, throwing of items etc.) is permitted. Your behavior should follow the school rules.
- \* Students are expected to use the crosswalks at all times when arriving or leaving school property. This includes if they are walking, riding bicycles, riding in a car, etc. Violations of traffic laws, such as jaywalking and obstruction of traffic, could result in police citations.
- \* Students must leave school property by 3:45 p.m. (Teacher supervision ends at 3:45 p.m.) Students are allowed to wait for their rides on any side of the building until 3:45 p.m. At 3:45 p.m., students must wait in the after school waiting area or off of school grounds.

#### **IV-F School-Sponsored Activities - Suspensions**

Students who are suspended out of school or suspended from school events will not be allowed to participate in or attend school-sponsored activities until they are reinstated.

#### **IV-G Contraband, Electronic Devices and Cell Phone Policy**

Items that violate state law or school policy or which threaten to disrupt the teaching and learning environment may not be brought to school. This includes a wide variety of items ranging from handheld video games and MP3/iPod players to toys, trading cards and other communication devices. Items of this nature are not allowed at school and will be confiscated. Additional consequences may also be issued.

**IF AN ITEM IS NOT ON THE SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST OR DIRECTLY REQUESTED BY A TEACHER OR STAFF MEMBER, DO NOT BRING IT TO SCHOOL.**

**Students who need to bring their cell phones to school for after school use must leave their cell phones turned off and in their locker during the school day.** Students are not allowed to carry or use cell phones while in the building. The consequences for carrying a cell phone during school hours will be:

First Offense: phone will be confiscated and a parent will be required to pick up the phone.

Second Offense: phone will be confiscated, a consequence will be issued to the student and a parent will be required to pick up the phone. The student will no longer be allowed to have a cell phone at school.

Third Offense: phone will be confiscated and **will be held at the school office for 30 calendar days.** The student will be issued a consequence. The parent will be required to pick up the phone at the end of the 30-day period.

Fourth Offense and subsequent offenses: phone will be confiscated and **will be held at the school office for 30 school days.** The student will be issued a consequence. The parent will be required to pickup the phone at the end of the 30-day period.

Students will be issued more severe consequences for cell phone usage in the building (including talking, text messaging, picture taking, audio/video recording, etc.).

#### **IV-H Identify Self**

Students will identify themselves when asked to do so by school personnel. Any student who fails to identify himself/herself upon request may be disciplined.

#### **IV-I Hall Lockers**

Teachers will assign each student to a hall locker, which can be used to safely store personal possessions, books and materials. Some students will have locker partners while others will locker alone. Some lockers have built-in combination locks while others will be secured with combination padlocks. All locks on hall lockers must be school issued. No locks from home will be permitted. Combinations on built-in locks are rotated each summer and padlocks are assigned to a new teacher each fall for added security. Both kinds of locks provide excellent security provided that (1) students do not tell their combination to anyone else, and (2) students lock the locker after each use. Students should report all lost or stolen padlocks and all broken or malfunctioning built-in locks to the office immediately.

Students whom report lost or stolen padlocks will be assessed a replacement fine of \$6.00 and issued a new lock immediately. Students who report broken or malfunctioning built-in locks will have them repaired or replaced immediately. All padlocks must be turned in at the end of the school year. If the student(s) should damage or fail to return a padlock, a \$6.00 fine will be assessed.

Every effort will be made to assure locker security for all students. Students who are experiencing locker or lock problems should report the problem to the teacher assigning the locker. To help assure security, students should only use the locker assigned to them by their teacher and keep the locker locked when it is not in use. Having a locker is a privilege, not a right. Violations of the locker policy could result in the loss of this privilege. Students who are caught storing items in a locker not assigned to them are breaking School Rule #1 (respect the rights, space, safety, well-being, and property of others) and will be consequences accordingly.

### **DECORATING HALL LOCKERS**

In honor of special occasions, students may decorate hall lockers belonging to other students before or after school only if:

- (1) they have permission to do so and have obtained a pass from the school office (no more than two people may decorate a locker at one time;
- (2) they provide their own materials (i.e. tape {masking tape only}, scissors, paper, etc.);
- (3) the size of the decoration does not exceed the size of the locker;
- (4) the decorations do not disrupt the learning environment, violate school rules, litter the area around the locker; or offend staff or other students;
- (5) they remove the decorations and clean up the locker within 48 hours of putting them up. Students must clearly date the decorations as to when they were put up.
- (6) decorations may NOT include an autograph sheet or glitter.

### **IV-J Telephone Usage**

Telephones in the Columbus Middle School office are business phones and are restricted to such use. Students may only use the school business phones when the call is urgent or an emergency. Quite often, students need to communicate to parents/guardians regarding a teacher request to stay later than the 3:30 dismissal time. If possible, classroom teachers or paraprofessionals will witness the student calling the parent or personally make the call to the parent/guardian to explain the request to stay after school. If this is not possible, students will be issued a "phone permission" pass. Students may use either the office telephone or one of the telephones in teacher offices (as directed by the teacher issuing the pass) to inform parents that they must stay after school for additional help or a teacher or office detention. Students will not be allowed to make personal or non-essential phone calls from school telephones. Phone calls may be made from the office after 4:00.

### **IV-K Deliveries to the Office**

Daily a large number of parents deliver articles, money, messages, etc. to the front office. We ask that you label these items clearly to insure prompt and proper delivery. Because we will not have office aides available each period, we will deliver items and messages to students only as it is feasible for us to do so. If the delivery is urgent, we may have to call a student out of the classroom to pick it up in the office. Gift deliveries which are sent to the student at school (i.e. flowers, balloon bouquets, etc.) will be kept in the main office until the end of the school day. The office will send a message to the student to pick up the item before leaving school.

### **IV-L Candy/Gum**

There will be NO candy, pop, or snack food items allowed anywhere in the middle school unless they are permitted by a staff member who is directly supervising their use (i.e. as a classroom reward). If violating the procedure becomes a chronic problem, the teacher will refer the student to the office. The chewing of gum is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. If the student is allowed to chew gum in school, it needs to be disposed of properly and not disrupt the learning environment.

### **IV-M Behavior Off School Grounds**

Students are not to interfere with the ability of other students to travel to and from school safely and without verbal, physical, or sexual harassment. Students are not to participate in activities that are potentially dangerous to themselves, other students, or the public while on their way to and from school. Off campus incidents will be reported to the police.

Behaviors that occur off of school grounds that directly affect members of the Columbus Middle School Student Body, staff or the instructional program at Columbus Middle School may be reported to the appropriate outside agencies such as law enforcement and Health and Human Services.

### **IV-N Open Containers**

Students are allowed to carry clear plastic bottles filled with water. These bottles must have a sealable cap. Students who abuse the water bottle privilege will not be allowed to carry a water bottle. Students are not to have open containers of any other beverages in the hallways or in their lockers. Plastic bottles with screw top lids are considered open when the seal has been broken. Students should have their name clearly marked on their water bottles and water bottles may not be shared with other students. Unopened cans/bottles of juice may be brought from home for lunch but must be kept in students' lockers until the lunch period and only be consumed in the cafeteria.

#### **IV-O Book Bags/Sling Bags**

Students are allowed to use book bags/sling bags to transfer school related items to and from school. However, book bags/sling bags are not allowed in classrooms. A student may use a bag to transport fitness clothes to and from fitness class.

#### **IV-P Marking on School Property**

Students are not to damage or to write, draw, carve or mark on school property in any way.

#### **IV-Q Skateboards**

Due to the potential danger to skateboarders and to other people who might be on the site, the Board of Education bans the riding of skateboards on school property or property under the control of the School District.

#### **IV-R Bicycles**

Bicycles must be parked in the racks provided. All bicycles should be equipped with locks. The school is not responsible for damage or theft while bicycles are on school property.

#### **IV-S Fees, Charges and Fines**

Pupils may be assessed fines or expected to pay damages when they are responsible for a loss or damage to school property or other people's property. This would include book fines, textbooks, broken windows, damage to laboratory equipment above and beyond expected wear and tear, damage to another student's personal property, etc. The school supplies many items for student use and it is expected that students will not abuse such items. Students are also responsible for materials they check out from the library/media center and may be assessed fines for lost or damaged items.

#### **IV-T Display of Affection**

Students are not to exhibit "displays of affection" which would be considered embarrassing or distracting to others on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. This includes hugging and hand-holding.

#### **IV-U Responsibilities of Students When Expressing Themselves**

When students express themselves at school, at school-sponsored activities, or in public places away from school, they must abide by the following rules:

- 1) The expression shall not contain words or pictures that are considered indecent, lewd, obscene, profane, vulgar, off-color, fighting or gutter words (four letter words), phrases which contain threats, or physical gestures which are offensive or threatening to anyone seeing or hearing the expression; and expressions which undermine or are disrespectful to school personnel.
- 2) The expression of the student shall not contain words, phrases, or gestures that ridicule or belittle.
- 3) The expression of the student shall not encourage other persons to violate school rules.
- 4) The expression of the student shall not be unusually loud, or interfere with, or obstruct any lawful mission, process, function, or purpose of the school.
- 5) The expression of the student shall not be slanderous.
- 6) The expression of the student shall not be libellous.
- 7) The expression of the student about, or directed to any teacher, administrator, or other school employee at anytime in a public place with the six previously stated rules governing student expression. (Example: Any student who shall refer to a teacher in a public place at anytime by a lewd or obscene manner that the teacher and/or others hear/see the insult may be disciplined by school authorities.)

Any student who fails to meet these requirements when expressing himself/herself may be disciplined. [CPS Board Policy 504.07]

#### **IV-V Academic Responsibilities Guidelines**

In an effort to deter students from attending class unprepared or becoming behind in their academic work, the CMS staff uses a variety of teacher interventions to assist students. These interventions include: WIN, student agendas, before and after-school study halls, before-school remedial program, student progress reports, academic behavior cards, academic improvement plans, 504 plans, parent meetings, and student incentives. Additional administrative interventions recently approved by the Board of Education will also be used to ensure students are working up to their potential. We believe we can impact student achievement by implementing these levels of interventions.

\*Requirement of an end-of-the-year grade average of 70% or better in core classes to attain promotion to high school (8th grade only)

\*Thursday Night School attendance

\*Summer school for 8th grade students to avoid retaking 8th grade core classes in 9th grade

\*Summer school offerings for 5th, 6th and 7th grade students who end of the school year of 69% or below

\*Before and after school remedial program

\*Grade Level Retention

#### **IV-W Cheating**

Students caught cheating/plagiarizing such as tests, quizzes or performance assessments will be reported to the office. The parents will be notified. The student will be required to redo the work or retake the assignment/assessment under staff supervision. The individual teacher may deduct the appropriate value. Administrative consequences will be assigned based on frequency and severity.

#### **IV-X Copyright and Fair Use Policy**

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. The relevant portion of the copyright statute provides that the "fair use" of a copyrighted work, including reproduction "for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research" is not an infringement of copyright. The law lists the following factors as the ones to be evaluated in determining whether a particular use of a copyrighted work is a permitted "fair use," rather than an infringement of the copyright:

The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

Although all of these factors will be considered, the last factor is the most important in determining whether a particular use is "fair." Students should seek assistance from a staff member if there are any questions regarding what may be copied.

#### **IV-Y Altering School Records, Reports, Grades, Etc.**

Students are forbidden to change and/or falsify school records, reports, grades, etc. Any tampering with such documents shall result in disciplinary actions.

#### **Civic Expectation #2 – Interact effectively with others**

- Respond without complaint to staff member or administrative directives.
- Follow staff member or administrative directives in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate respect for individuals responsible for school safety.
- Respect the right of others to make choices without verbal/physical coercion or intimidation.

Supporting Guidelines

#### **IV-Z Insubordination**

Students are to comply with reasonable directions or requests from teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, secretaries, principals, and other school personnel during any period of time the student is properly under the authority of school personnel. Any student who fails to comply with directions or requests of school personnel will be considered insubordinate. Other acts of insubordination include, but are not limited to, inappropriate responses or use of inappropriate language and/or disrespectful behavior toward a staff member.

**Consequence:** Restriction of privileges, schedule change, activities suspension/expulsion (where appropriate), ISS, OSS, alternative placement and/or expulsion.

#### **IV-AA Theft/Stealing/Damage of Property**

Students are prohibited from borrowing without permission or stealing personal or public (school) property.

Students are not to participate in any activity not properly supervised by school personnel that could possibly damage school or private property. If school or private property is damaged by a student, he/she is financially responsible for all damages and may be disciplined. Students are prohibited from borrowing without permission or stealing private or school property. Students who do either of these things may be disciplined. **Police may be notified if this occurs.**

#### **IV-AB Unauthorized Entry**

When school is in session, students are not to be in the school building before 7:30 AM or after 3:45 PM unless they are scheduled in activities taking place within the building or unless they have written permission from a staff member.

#### **IV-AC Fighting / Assaults**

Students may not engage in verbal altercations or physical fights in school buildings, on school grounds or at school-sponsored events, or when traveling in school vehicles/buses. Students hitting, striking, kicking or in any other way harming another student, or school

personnel, will be suspended and may be recommended for expulsion. Physical fights will be reported to the police. Students may be liable for suspension or expulsion if they bring into the schools any object or substance, which when reasonable standards are applied and circumstances warrant, it is determined that the primary purpose is to cause bodily harm or property damage as set forth in School Board Policy 505.02 and 505.03. Columbus Middle School will comply with Nebraska State Statute relative to assaults by reporting incidents to law enforcement officials.

#### **IV-AD Harassment/Violence/Bullying**

At CMS, we believe that students have the right to and learn better in a safe and orderly environment. Therefore, the Columbus Middle School staff is committed to preventing, intervening in, and stopping any violence in our school. We will insist that every staff member and student act in a way which contributes to a school environment where he or she feels safe, respected, and protected.

- No one is entitled to be violent in any form.
- No form of violence will be tolerated in school, at school activities, on school property, or by anyone at this school.
- Violence is defined as any mean word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, dignity, or things.

Different kinds of violence exist. Within each category below there are items ranging from minor to severe. Not all people would agree on how to rank the items within each group, but we know one thing for sure: if they are ignored, violent acts will become more frequent and more severe over time. Therefore, all of the following acts will be considered violent and the student will receive a consequence.

Examples of bullying include (but not limited to)

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| *name calling                                | *excluding/shunning           |
| *teasing                                     | *ignoring requests            |
| *taunting                                    | *exposing personal secrets    |
| *laughing (at)                               | *starting rumors              |
| *threatening/ordering                        | *stealing                     |
| *defacing locker                             | *deriding                     |
| *violating rights                            | *intimidating                 |
| *exposing personal items                     | *cyber bullying               |
| *inappropriate technology use                | *hitting/kicking gesturing    |
| *facial sneering                             | *spitting/pushing             |
| *shoving/punching                            | *pulling hair                 |
| *body postures                               | *writing/drawing graffiti     |
| *beating slapping                            | *invading someone's space     |
| *jabbing/bumping                             | *reading personal information |
| *tearing clothes                             | *damaging property            |
| *ridiculing                                  | *voyeurizing                  |
| *spoiling homework                           | *exposing pictures/notes      |
| *expressing sexual come-ons                  | *gang-leading/ganging-up      |
| *degrading/mockling                          | *touching (unwelcomed)        |
| *spreading rumors/gossiping                  | *hazing                       |
| *playing "keep-away" with someone's property |                               |

Any student fighting on school grounds or to and from school will be suspended. Any student who is promoting, inciting or instigating a fight will be suspended.

- Inciting meaning - to stir, encourage, or urge on.

#### **IV-AE Procedures for Reporting Violence/Bullying**

Columbus Middle School is a place where all students can enjoy a safe and comfortable environment in which to learn. If students are worried about physical, verbal or sexual harassment from other students or from staff members, their learning will be impacted. In addition, such acts violate the violence policy for our school. Students should report violence/harassment as quickly as possible so that problems can be resolved.

You can report concerns to the following people:

- \* Your teacher
- \* A paraprofessional educator
- \* Your parent(s)
- \* A counselor
- \* The principal, assistant principal or dean of students.

Staff members will try to help you resolve your problems as quickly as possible, but often harassers are very determined people. The violence/harassment may continue, even after the first report. Therefore, you must remember: The key to successful resolution of problems is reporting the problem until it's fixed. If you have reported a problem to one of the persons in the above list but still believe it exists, report it again to a different person on the list.

- \* Students who are found to have violated the bullying policy can receive a consequence depending on the severity and frequency of

the harassment.

\* Students who show physically aggressive behavior may be suspended from school at the discretion of the administration.

\* Students who show a public display of disrespect and/or humiliation toward a staff member can be suspended.

Flowchart to follow when Student makes threats

1. An administrator is informed of the threat (by whomever reports the threat) and investigates the threat.
2. SRO (School Resource Officer) or Police are called to assist with conducting the investigation. SRO/Police may bring other agencies in to investigate (HHS, etc).
3. Student(s) making the threat, victims, and witness are interviewed.
4. The administration will evaluate the severity of the threat by utilizing an established "Threat Assessment Protocol". The threat will then be categorized using the protocol. Based on the level of threat appropriate consequences will be determined.
5. Student making the threat will be consequence if the threat is substantiated and the parent will be contacted.
  - A psychological evaluation may be ordered at the discretion of the administrative team for the student making the threat at the parent's expense.
  - Depending on outcome of the evaluation - a readmission plan may be written by the administrative team from the school to determine if safety is still a concern.

Ultimately it is the schools decision based on the information and investigation whether the student is readmitted or reassigned to an alternative educational placement.

#### **IV-AF Sexual Harassment**

Sexually harassing student(s) or school personnel is prohibited at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored events or on their way to and from school.

##### **Sexual Harassment**

The Columbus Public Schools is committed to maintaining an educational setting that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is an illegal action relevant to Title IX, Title VII, and Nebraska State Statute, Columbus Board Policy 404.06 and Columbus Board Policy 504.17. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated and the Columbus Middle School administration will take immediate and appropriate action upon notification of offense.

At Columbus Middle School, sexual harassment will be defined as any unwelcome advances, a request for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a student toward another student when the conduct has an effect of interfering with academic performance of the student or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive or unsafe learning environment. This procedure and definition of sexual harassment will also include unwanted advances by a student toward an employee. As used in this policy the word "student" shall mean any resident student of the district, any student being served by contract with another educational agency or any other person of school age attending the district for educational reasons. The word "employee" shall mean any person who is employed by the district.

The following procedure shall be followed to report any violation of this policy.

- 1) Student will report the incident to an administrator. The administrator will require the student to submit a written statement (containing location, time, incident details, witnesses and student reaction). The administrator will investigate the incident by speaking to other students or staff who were identified as witnesses to the incident. A written statement will be obtained by these individuals, as well.
- 2) The administrator will then speak with the alleged harasser as part of their due process rights. Information obtained from step 1 above will be kept confidential. This alleged student will be given the opportunity to provide a written statement on his/her behalf, as well as a list of students.
- 3) The administrator will continue to investigate the incident based upon this new information.
- 4) The administrator may share information with other building administrators to determine the outcome of the investigation through a collaborative approach.
- 5) Consequences that may be imposed by the administration: verbal warning with conference regarding inappropriate behavior, parental conference, short-term suspension (1-5 days), long-term suspension (6-19 days) or expulsion from school.
- 6) The same procedures will be used with student harassment of a staff member. Columbus Middle School will not tolerate any

retaliatory behavior against any person(s), the harasser or person(s) encouraged by the harasser who have submitted information to the administration. The consequences will be the same as the above list.

The administration of Columbus Middle School will cooperate fully with the appropriate law enforcement agency if the harassed student/employee would file any charges through the court system. All written statements and documentation will be turned over to any investigative unit, if requested.

The Grievance Office (Title IX) of the Columbus Public Schools is the Superintendent of Schools, Columbus Public School District #1, 2508 27th Street, Columbus; phone: 402/563-7050

### **LB 1199 Sex Offender Law**

LB 1199 amends the student discipline statute to allow for a student to be expelled from school when the student is criminally charged with certain sexual assaults even though the sexual assault occurs off school grounds. Sexual assault means sexual assault in the first or second degree or a sexual assault of a child in the first, second or third degree; as such crimes are defined in the statutes referenced in section 79-267(8).

### **IV-AG Dating Violence**

Columbus Public Schools strives to provide physically safe and emotionally secure environments for all students and staff. Positive behaviors are encouraged in the educational program and are required of all students and staff. Dating violence will not be tolerated.

**Definition:** For purposes of this policy “dating violence” means a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner. “Dating partner” means any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another person primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious, or long term.

**Consequence:** Restriction of privileges, schedule change, activities suspension/expulsion (where appropriate), ISS, OSS, alternative placement and/or expulsion.

Incidents of dating violence involving students at school will be addressed as the administration determines appropriate, within the scope and subject to the limits of the District’s authority.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-2,139 to 79-2,142

### **IV-AH Suspect Wounds**

Students with suspect wounds will be referred to the nurse for medical evaluation. If there is a potential health hazard, parents will be contacted. Students may be referred to an administrator.

## **Civic Expectation #3 – Fulfill legal requirements**

All students are expected to perform according to the stated civic expectations and objectives.

- Act responsibly to maintain the physical safety of self and others.
- Respect the right of individuals or school officials to protect personal or public property from unwanted use or handling.
- Respect the right of the school to govern the use of technology or equipment.
- Only touch fire alarms/security equipment in case of an emergency.
- Respect the responsibility of the school to deny the possession/use of tobacco products, alcohol, or drugs.
- Respect the right of individuals to learn in a safe environment free of harassment/bullying.
- Act and speak responsibly to protect the school community from irreversible harm.
- Protect the school community from real or perceived weapons and/or explosives.
- Compliance with the following standards of conduct is mandatory

### Supporting Guidelines

#### **IV-AI Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

Students have access to computers throughout the building for educational use. Student access to computer labs will be subject to change at the discretion of the administration or staff responsible for the supervision of these areas. Use of the Internet at school is available to research areas directly related to specific classroom assignments. The Internet may NOT be used for e-mail, chat lines/rooms, games, sharing accounts, or accessing any material deemed inappropriate. Unauthorized creation of I-Movies is not permissible. Students are subject to the Nebraska State Statute on “hacking”, in addition to the Columbus Public Schools Board of Education Policies 504.09, 606.05, 606.06, & 606.07.

Specific Internet guidelines are listed below:

The computers, networks, hardware, software, peripherals, and configurations in any Internet school classroom are the property of Columbus Public Schools and are not to be altered, modified, damaged, or degraded in any manner.



- Do not install, upgrade, or modify any software operating system, application, or service.
- Do not view, print, distribute, display, send, or receive images, text, or graphics of obscene materials or material that violates laws relating to child pornography.
- Do not use an Internet workstation to view, print, distribute, display, send, or receive images, text, or graphics that contain hate speech, threatening, or harassing material.
- Do not engage in any activity that is deliberately offensive or creates an intimidating or hostile environment.
- Do not violate copyright or software licensing agreements. You will not download or exchange audio and video files including MP3 files and other similar files.
- Do not gain unauthorized access to any computing, information, or communication devices or resources.
- Do not copy, download, design, or create any software or component intended to damage, alter, or degrade software applications or network architectures.
- Do not use a workstation to conduct a business or participate in online buying or selling.
- Any Violations of these Rules, or the NE State Statute on “hacking” will result in loss of internet access, disciplinary action, AND assessment of monetary damages (when appropriate). This will be considered a violation of the acceptable use agreement.

### **Computer Assisted Instruction and use of Internet Computer Assisted Instruction**

It shall be the policy of the Columbus Public School District’s Board of Education that teachers in the school system may use Internet as part of the instructional program within a class. Students may participate in this instruction without a student Internet account. The teacher will be held responsible that the material on Internet is appropriate to the instructional objectives.

### **IV-AJ Google Docs**

The Columbus Public Schools district utilizes Google Apps for Education for students, teachers, and staff. This section describes the tools and student responsibilities for using these services. As with any educational endeavor, a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience.

The following services are available to each student and hosted by Google as part of Columbus Public Schools’ online presence in Google Apps for Education:

Mail – an individual email account for school use managed by Columbus Public Schools

Calendar – an individual calendar providing the ability to organize schedules, daily activities and assignments

Docs – a word-processing, spreadsheet, drawing, and presentation toolset that is very similar to Microsoft Office

Sites – an individual and collaborative website creation tool

Using these tools, students collaboratively create, edit and share files and websites for school related projects and communicate via email with other students and teachers. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected computer. Examples of student use include showcasing class projects, building an electronic portfolio of school learning experiences and working in small groups on presentations to share with others.

Technology use in the Columbus Public School District is governed by federal laws including:

### **Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)**

COPPA applies to commercial companies and limits their ability to collect personal information from children under 13. By default, advertising is turned off for Columbus Public School’s presence in Google Apps for Education. No personal student information is collected for commercial purposes. This permission form allows the school to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. The school’s use of student information is solely for educational purposes.

--COPPA<http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtml>

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents the rights to review student records. Under FERPA, schools may disclose directory information (refer to Board Policy507.02), but parents may request the school not disclose this information. Parents are provided the opportunity annually to opt out of disclosing their student’s directory information on the District’s Enrollment Form.--FERPA<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa>

### **Guidelines for the responsible use of Google Apps for Education by students:**

1. Official Email Address. All students will be assigned a username@discoverers.org email account. This account will be considered the student’s official CPS email address until such time as the student is no longer enrolled with Columbus Public Schools.
2. Prohibited Conduct. Please refer to student handbook and Acceptable Use Policy.

3. Access Restrictions. Access to and use of student email is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of the Columbus Public Schools District. The District maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of these services including email when there is reason to believe that violation of law or District policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to a building Administrator for further investigation and adjudication.
4. Security. Columbus Public Schools cannot and does not guarantee the security of electronic files located on Google systems. Although Google does have a powerful content filter in place for email, the District cannot assure that users will not be exposed to unsolicited information.
5. Privacy. The general right of privacy will be extended to the extent possible in the electronic environment. Columbus Public Schools and all electronic users should treat electronically stored information in individuals' files as confidential and private. However, users of student email are strictly prohibited from accessing files and information other than their own. The District reserves the right to access these Google systems, including current and archival files of user accounts when there is reasonable suspicion that unacceptable use has occurred.

**By signing off on the student handbook, the parent(s) and student confirm that they have read and understand the following:**

Under FERPA and corresponding Nebraska law, a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties. They understand that the student's education records stored in Google Apps for Education may be accessible to someone other than the student and the Columbus Public School District by virtue of this online environment. By signing off on the student handbook, the parent(s) and student confirm their consent to allow the student's education records to be stored by Google.

The parent(s) understand that by participating in Google Apps for Education, information about the student will be collected and stored electronically. The parent(s) have read the privacy policies associated with the use of Google Apps for Education(<http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/edu/privacy.html>).

The parent(s) understand that they may ask for their child's account to be removed at any time.

**IV-AK Damage of School or Private Property**

Students are not to participate in any activity not properly supervised by school personnel that could possibly damage or deface school or private property. If a student damages or defaces school or private property, he/she is financially responsible for all damages and will be subject to disciplinary actions including a referral to law enforcement.

**IV-AL Firearms, Weapons, Explosives, and Material that can be Ignited**

The before-mentioned material items are prohibited on school property, or at school-sponsored events, unless authorized by proper school authorities. A student shall not knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon (including a starter gun, paintball gun, airsoft gun, or pellet gun) or bringing or possessing any explosive devise (including fireworks or any item that can be ignited such as matches and lighters). A student in possession of a firearm will be expelled from school for a period of one calendar year, as stated in Nebraska Statute LB 658.

**IV-AM Bomb Threats and or False Alarms**

Students are not to falsely set off fire alarms or falsely report bomb threats. This may include oral statements involving possible physical danger. The false reporting of bomb threats or pulling of fire alarms will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. School time lost due to school closure in case of the need to search the building will be made up by all students, as directed by the Superintendent and/or the Board of Education.

**IV-AN Rumors, Threats and Prohibited Items**

Columbus Middle School takes the possibility of a real crisis very seriously as does the Columbus Police Department. Working closely together these two entities work very hard to ensure, as much as is humanly possible, the safety of all students. School time lost due to school closure will be made up by all students, as directed by the Superintendent and/or the Board of Education.

**IV-AO Spreading Rumors / Text Messaging False Information**

Spreading rumors and text messaging or using social media to spread false information which results in fear and/or disruption of the school day will be subjected to legal prosecution and serious school consequences.

**IV-AP Threatening Statements Concerning Student/Building Safety**

- An administrator is informed of the threat.
- Parents of the student making the threat are called.
- SRO or Police are called to assist with conducting the initial investigation. SRO/Police may bring other agencies in to investigate (HHS, etc.)
- Student is suspended from school under an emergency exclusion as per Nebraska statute. Student may return to school after a

psychologist has evaluated the student to determine the level of threat to the safety of the student and others. This evaluation is at parent cost. A readmission plan may be written if determined by the school administrator prior to returning to school. Ultimately, it is the school's decision based upon the information provided by all parties and the investigation as to whether the student is readmitted. Student may be reassigned to a different placement or program.

- Central office administration will be informed of the situation throughout the process.

#### **IV-AQ Concealed Handgun Law**

It is unlawful for an individual to carry a concealed handgun at school. Section 15 of the law stipulates that handguns may not be carried into school buildings, on school grounds, in school-owned vehicles, and/or at school-sponsored activities or athletic events. The intent of the law (1) assures employees, students and parents that no one will be permitted to carry a handgun at their school not with standing the new law and (2) provides permit holders with the understanding that they are not to carry their handguns to school, as stated in Nebraska Statute LB 454.

#### **IV -AR Activities Forbidden by Laws of the State of Nebraska, the City of Columbus, or the United States of America**

Students, as citizens of the United States and the State of Nebraska, are to obey all laws established by these respective governmental agencies. Students who violate these laws during the school hours, or at school-sponsored events, may be disciplined by the school in addition to any action taken by law enforcement agencies. Any activity(ies) which violate Nebraska Criminal Code known or suspected by administration will be referred to law enforcement authorities.

#### **IV-AS School Board Policy**

##### **IV-ASa Questioning of Students Policy 504**

Generally, students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than parents and school district officials and employees. Requests from law enforcement officers and from persons other than parents, school district officials, and employees to interview students shall be made through the principal's office. Upon receiving a request, it shall be the responsibility of the principal to determine whether the request will be granted. Generally, prior to granting a request, the principal shall attempt to contact the parents to inform them of the request and to ask them to be present.

If a child abuse investigator wishes to interview a student, the principal will defer to the investigator's judgement as to whether the student should be interviewed independently from the student's parents, whether the school is the most appropriate setting for the interview, and who will be present during the interview.

Students will not be taken from school without the consent of the principal and without proper warrant when applicable.

##### **IV-ASb Student Fees Policy**

The Board of Education of Columbus Public Schools adopts the following student fees policy in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act.

The District's general policy is to provide for the free instruction in school in accordance with the Nebraska Constitution and state and federal law. This generally means that the District's policy is to provide free instruction for courses which are required by state law or regulation and to provide the staff, facility, equipment, and materials necessary for such instruction, without charge or fee to the students. The District does provide activities, programs, and services to children who extend beyond the minimum level of constitutionally required free instruction. Students and their parents have historically contributed to the District's efforts to provide such activities, programs, and services. The District's general policy is to continue to encourage and, to the extent permitted by law, to require such student and parent contributions to enhance the educational program provided by the District.

Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the District is required to set forth in a policy its guidelines or policies for specific categories of student fees. The District does so by setting forth the following guidelines and policies. This policy is subject to further interpretation or guidance by administrative or Board regulations which may be adopted from time to time. The Policy includes Appendix "1," which provides further specifics of student fees and materials required of students for the school year. Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to contact their building administration or their teachers or activity coaches and sponsors for further specifics.

- (1) Guidelines for non-specialized attire required for specified courses and activities. Students have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire meeting general District grooming and attire guidelines, as well as grooming and attire guidelines established for the building or programs attended by the students or in which the students participate. Students also have the responsibility to furnish and wear non-specialized attire reasonably related to the programs, courses and activities in which the students participate where the required attire is specified in writing by the administrator or teacher responsible for the program, course or activity. The District will provide or make available to students such safety equipment and attire as may be required by law, specifically including appropriate industrial-quality eye protective devices for courses of instruction in vocational, technical, industrial arts, chemical or chemical-physical classes which involve exposure to hot molten metals or other molten materials, milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid materials, heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or

other materials, gas or electric arc welding or other forms of welding processes, repair or servicing of any vehicle, or caustic or explosive materials, or for laboratory classes involving caustic or explosive materials, hot liquids or solids, injurious radiations, or other similar hazards. Building administrators are directed to assure that such equipment is available in the appropriate classes and areas of the school buildings, teachers are directed to instruct students in the usage of such devices and to assure that students use the devices as required, and students have the responsibility to follow such instructions and use the devices as instructed.

- (2) Personal or consumable items & miscellaneous
  - (a) Extracurricular Activities Students have the responsibility to furnish any personal or consumable items for participation in extracurricular activities.
  - (b) Courses.
  - (c) General Course Materials. Items necessary for students to benefit from courses will be made available by the District for the use of students during the school day. Students may be encouraged, but not required, to bring items needed to benefit from courses including, but not limited to, pencils, paper, pens, erasers, notebooks, trappers, protractors and math calculators. A specific class supply list will be published annually in a Board-approved student handbook or supplement or other notice. The list may include refundable damage or loss deposits required for usage of certain District property.
  - (d) Damaged or Lost Items. Students are responsible for the careful and appropriate use of school property. Students and their parents or guardian will be held responsible for damages to school property where such damage is caused or aided by the student and will also be held responsible for the reasonable replacement cost of school property which is placed in the care of and lost by the student.
  - (e) Materials Required for Classes. Students are permitted to and may be encouraged to supply materials for course projects. Some course projects (such as projects in art and shop classes) may be kept by the student upon completion. In the event the completed project has more than minimal value, the student may be required, as a condition of the student keeping the completed project, to reimburse the District for the reasonable value of the materials used in the project. Standard project materials will be made available by the District. If a student wants to create a project other than the standard course project, or to use materials other than standard project materials, the student will be responsible for furnishing or paying the reasonable cost of any such materials for the project.
  - (f) Music Course Materials. Students will be required to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses. Use of a musical instrument without charge is available under the District's fee waiver policy. The District is not required to provide for the use of a particular type of musical instrument for any student.
  - (g) Parking. Students may be required to pay for parking on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, and may be subject payment of fines or damages for damages caused with or to vehicles or for failure to comply with school parking rules.
- (3) Extracurricular Activities—Specialized equipment or attire. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the District, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the District. The District will generally furnish students with specialized equipment and attire for participation in extracurricular activities. The District is not required to provide for the use of any particular type of equipment or attire. Equipment or attire fitted for the student and which the student generally wears exclusively, such as dance squad, cheerleading, and music/dance activity (e.g. choir or show choir) uniforms and outfits, along with T-shirts for teams or band members, will be required to be provided by the participating student. The cost of maintaining any equipment or attire, including uniforms, which the student purchases or uses exclusively, shall be the responsibility of the participating student. Equipment which is ordinarily exclusively used by an individual student participant throughout the year, such as golf clubs, softball gloves, and the like, are required to be provided by the student participant. Items for the personal medical use or enhancement of the student (braces, mouth pieces, and the like) are the responsibility of the student participant. Students have the responsibility to furnish personal or consumable equipment or attire for participation in extra curricular activities or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire. For musical extracurricular activities, students may be required to provide specialized equipment, such as musical instruments, or specialized attire, or for paying a reasonable usage cost for such equipment or attire.
- (4) Extracurricular Activities—Fees for participation. Any fees for participation in extra-curricular activities for the school year are further specified in Appendix "1." Admission fees are charged for extracurricular activities and events.
- (5) Post-secondary Education Costs Students are responsible for postsecondary education costs. The phrase "postsecondary education costs" means tuition and other fees only associated with obtaining credit from a postsecondary educational institution. For a course in which students receive high school credit and for which the student may also receive postsecondary education credit, the course shall be offered without charge for tuition, transportation, books, or other fees, except tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credits from a postsecondary educational institution.
- (6) Transportation costs. Students are responsible for fees established for transportation services provided by the District as and to the extent permitted by federal and state laws and regulations.
- (7) Copies of student files or records. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall establish a schedule of fees

representing a reasonable cost of reproduction for copies of a student's files or records for the parents or guardians of such student. A parent, guardian or student who requests copies of files or records shall be responsible for the cost of copies reproduced in accordance with such fee schedule. The imposition of a fee shall not be used to prevent parents of students from exercising their right to inspect and review the students' files or records and no fee shall be charged to search for or retrieve any student's files or records. The fee schedule shall permit one copy of the requested records be provided for or on behalf of the student without charge and shall allow duplicate copies to be provided without charge to the extent required by federal or state laws or regulations.

- (8) Participation in before-and-after-school or pre-kindergarten services. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in before-and-after-school or pre-kindergarten services offered by the District, except to the extent such services are required to be provided without cost.
- (9) Participation in summer school or night school. Students are responsible for fees required for participation in summer school or night school. Students are also responsible for correspondence courses.
- (10) Breakfast and lunch programs. Students shall be responsible for items which students purchase from the District's breakfast and lunch programs. The cost of items to be sold to students shall be consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Students are also responsible for the cost of food, beverages, and personal or consumable items which the students purchase from the District or at school, whether from a "school store," a vending machine, a booster club or parent group sale, a book order club, or the like. Students may be required to bring money or food for field trip lunches and similar activities.
- (11) Waiver Policy. The District's policy is to provide fee waivers in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches under United States Department of Agriculture child nutrition programs shall be provided a fee waiver or be provided the necessary materials or equipment without charge for:  
(1) participation in extracurricular activities and (2) use of a musical instrument in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Participation in a free-lunch program or reduced-price lunch program is not required to qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for purposes of this section. Students or their parents must request a fee waiver prior to participating in or attending the activity, and prior to purchase of the materials.
- (12) Distribution of Policy. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee shall publish the District's student fee policy in the Student Handbook or the equivalent (for example, publication may be made in an addendum or a supplement to the student handbook). The Student Handbook or the equivalent shall be provided to every student of the District or to every household in which at least one student resides, at no cost.
- (13) Student Fee Fund. The School Board hereby establishes a Student Fee Fund. The Student Fee Fund shall be a separate school district fund not funded by tax revenue, into which all money collected from students and subject to the Student Fee Fund shall be deposited and from which money shall be expended for the purposes for which it was collected from students. Funds subject to the Student Fee Fund consist of money collected from students for: (1) participation in extracurricular activities, (2) postsecondary education costs, and (3) summer school or night school.

#### **IV-ASc Student Possession of, Sale of, Use of, or Distribution of Drugs**

Columbus Schools have a responsibility for providing a safe and secure educational environment for the students and staff of this community. Misuse of drugs is a danger to the health and well-being of the members of the school community. The school strives to work with parents to create a helpful, caring environment where learning can occur. Although parents have the ultimate, primary responsibility for their children's health, the schools' responsibility is to maintain a drug-free educational environment.

Students violating the District's drug policy will be assigned disciplinary consequences and, if appropriate, activity consequences (as explained in Student Handbooks.) Consequences will begin when the administration has determined that a violation has occurred and due process has taken place. Disciplinary consequences will vary according to the severity of the violation and the number of times a student has committed violations. When appropriate, students who violate the district drug policy will be referred to law enforcement officials as required by the Nebraska Student Discipline Code. (Juvenile Probation: Sections 29-2270 to 29-2273; Compulsory Attendance: Section 79-211; Student Discipline Act: 79-4, 169 to 79-205.02).

#### **IV-ASd Controlled Substances/Alcohol**

Controlled Substance: A drug, substance or immediate precursor in Schedules I to V of section 28-405 of the Nebraska statutes. Controlled substance shall not include distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, tobacco, or any non-narcotic substance if such substance may, under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the law of this state, be lawfully sold over the counter without prescription. Alcoholic Liquor: Alcoholic liquor includes alcohol, spirits, wine, beer, and every liquid or solid, patented or not, containing alcohol, spirits, wine, or beer and capable of being consumed by a human being.

#### **Smoking/Drinking/Drug Policy 504.14**

The Board prohibits the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, and/ or

“look alike” substances that appear to be tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances by students while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district. Look alike substances also include prescription drugs (except for diabetes and asthma), non-prescription medications or vitamins.

The term “under the influence” for school purposes has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law. For school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or drugs on the breath or person of a student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant. In addition, “possession” of alcohol or drugs will be considered to have occurred for purposes of school rules if the student is in such close proximity to alcohol or drugs (for example, a student being in a car where alcohol is present and no adults are present in the car) or to others who are consuming alcohol or drugs (for example, being at student party at which other students are drinking) that school officials may reasonably determine that the student was in “possession” of the items as well).

The Board believes such illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials generally cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors.

Violation of this policy by students will result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Use, purchase or being in possession of cigarettes, ecigarettes, tobacco or tobacco products for those under the age of eighteen, may be reported to the local law enforcement authorities. Possession, use or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol and/or of a controlled substance may also be reported to the local law enforcement authorities.

Students who violate the terms of this policy may be required to satisfactorily complete a substance abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the school board at the parent’s expense. If such student fails to satisfactorily complete such a program, the student may be subject to discipline including suspension or expulsion.

The Board believes the substance abuse prevention program shall include:

- Age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol curriculum for students in grades kindergarten through twelve, which address the legal, social, and health consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol use and which provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use tobacco, drugs or alcohol;
- A statement to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful;
- Standards of conduct for students that clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use, being under the influence of or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as part of any of its activities;
- A clear statement that disciplinary sanctions, up to and including suspension or expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on students who violate the policy and a description of those sanctions;
- A statement that students may be required to successfully complete an appropriate rehabilitation program;
- Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and re-entry programs available to students;
- A requirement that parents and students be given a copy of the standards of conduct and the statement of disciplinary sanctions required; and
- Notification to parents and students that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Consequences:

The administration may impose lesser or greater consequences dependent on the circumstances in accordance with administrative regulations. The following are the consequences that will ordinarily **result**.

Activity Policy:

ALL violations carry over from year to year and are enforced 9-12. Activity consequences for alcohol, drug, and tobacco violations are determined in accordance with the activity discipline policy and regulations established by the administration; the consequences include activity suspensions.

Influence:

1st Offense: 19 days of out-of-school suspension, this could be reduce to 3 days of out-of-school suspension and 3 days of in-school suspension upon the successful completion of a substance abuse evaluation at the parent’s expense.

2nd Offense: Expulsion and mandatory reassignment at the Columbus Public Schools Alternative School or an educational placement deemed appropriate by the administration.

Possession/Distribution:

1st Offense: 19 days of out-of-school suspension. This may be reduced to 5- days of out-of-school suspension and 5 days of in-school suspension upon the successful completion of a substance abuse evaluation.

2nd Offense: Expulsion and mandatory reassignment at the Columbus Public Schools Alternative School or an educational placement deemed appropriate by the administration whichever is longer.

#### **IV-AT Tobacco – Alcohol – Drugs (Policy 504.14 and 504.14R1)**

##### **IV-ATa Use of Tobacco**

Columbus Middle School students are not to possess, use, distribute or sell tobacco on school grounds (under the jurisdiction of Columbus Middle School), so students will also be disciplined for violating district policies on these grounds, in school, or at school-sponsored events.

Definition: Tobacco products include cigarettes, ecigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, dissolvable tobacco, snuff, or any form of tobacco intended to be smoked, chewed, sniffed, inhaled or consumed.

Consequences: Students found guilty of possessing, using, distributing, or selling tobacco will receive school consequences and may be reported to law enforcement.

##### **IV-ATb Alcohol and Drugs**

Columbus Middle School reserves the right to use drug testing equipment with students who may show signs of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol intoxication at school or school sponsored activities. Columbus Middle School has a responsibility for providing a safe and secure educational environment for its students and staff. Misuse of drugs is a danger to the health and well-being of the members of the school community. The school strives to work with parents to create a helpful, caring environment where learning can occur. Although parents have the ultimate, primary responsibility for their children’s health, the school’s responsibility is to maintain a drug-free educational environment. Students violating the district’s drug policy during the school day or at school-sponsored activities will be assigned disciplinary consequences and, if appropriate, activity consequences as explained in the Student Handbook. Consequences will begin when the administration has determined that a violation has occurred and due process has taken place. The school may require that students obtain drug/alcohol tests at parental expense in order to determine if a violation has occurred. Disciplinary consequences will vary according to the severity of the violation and the number of times a student has committed violations. When appropriate, students who violate the district drug policy will be referred to law enforcement officials as required by the Nebraska Discipline Code.

Columbus Middle School prohibits the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use or being under the influence of alcohol, inhalents and / or “look alike” substances that appear to be alcohol or a controlled substance by students while on school grounds during school hours or school-sponsored events.

Consequences: Students under the influence of drugs/alcohol shall receive the following:

1. First violation at any time during the school year shall be 19 days OSS. However, upon the presentation to the school administration of an appointment for an evaluation done by a professional substance abuse counselor with information provided to the school, the administration may reduce this consequence to five days OSS and five days ISS. The evaluation/counseling shall be at parental expense and be completed within the time limits set by the school administration. The substance abuse counselor must be approved by a principal prior to the student seeking services and the student’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and the substance abuse counselor must agree to the exchange of all pertinent information between school officials and the substance abuse counselor. This evaluation must be accompanied by specific recommendations. Should this student, at any time during the remainder of his/her attendance, fail to comply with any of the given recommendations, the original suspension can be imposed.

2. Second or subsequent violations during the school year may result in expulsion and mandatory reassignment at the Alternative School or an educational placement deemed appropriate by the administration. Students possessing, distributing or selling drugs/alcohol shall receive the following:

1. First violation at any time during the school year shall be 19 days OSS. However, upon the presentation to the school administration of an appointment for an evaluation done by a professional substance abuse counselor with information provided to the school, the administration may reduce this consequence to five days OSS and five days ISS.

2. Second or subsequent violations during the school year may result in expulsion and mandatory reassignment at the Alternative School or an educational placement deemed appropriate by the administration.

##### **IV-ATc Prescription Drugs**

Definition: Any drug or chemical that is prescribed for a particular individual by a doctor and intended for use only by the individual named on the prescription bottle. Columbus Middle School reserves the right to exercise control of the misuse, misrepresentation, distribution or selling of prescription drugs. Students are not to misuse, misrepresent, distribute or sell prescription drugs. No prescription

drugs can be administered by anyone other than the nurse or other designated persons. All prescription medicines are to be kept in the nurse's office. Students using prescription drugs shall bring them to school in properly labeled prescription containers and said prescriptions shall be accompanied by written parental verification.

Exception: With written permission that parents accept the responsibility for the student taking his/her own medications, students may carry their own prescriptions and medicate themselves in accordance with Policy 504.14. Prescription drugs for asthma and diabetes are also excluded as per policy.

**A. Students found guilty of misusing, misrepresenting, distributing, or selling prescription drugs shall be given the following consequences:**

1. First violation at any time during the school year: up to 19 days out-of-school suspension.

Exception: First violation of personal misuse at any time during the school year: up to 19 days out-of-school suspension. However, upon the presentation to the school administration of an evaluation done by a substance abuse appropriate/appropriate professional with information provided to the school, the administration shall reduce the out-of-school suspension to an in-school suspension not to exceed five days. The substance abuse counselor must be approved by the building principal prior to the student seeking services and the student's parents and/or guardian and the substance abuse counselor must agree to the exchange of all pertinent information between school officials and the substance abuse counselor. This evaluation must be accompanied by specific recommendations.

Should this student at any time during the remainder of his/her attendance fail to comply with any of the given recommendations, the original suspension can be imposed.

2. Second or subsequent violations at any time during the school year: 19 days out-of-school suspension or expulsion for the remainder of the semester, whichever is longer.

**B. Students found guilty of failure to provide the required written parental verification/permission for their own prescriptions will result in a warning to the student. Subsequent failures will result in disciplinary action.**

**IV-ATd Over the Counter Drugs / Vitamins**

Definition: Any drug or chemical that can be purchased without a prescription and that does not fall under state or federal limitations (i.e. caffeine pills, aspirin, cough syrup, diet pills, substances that can be inhaled, etc.) Columbus Middle School reserves the right to exercise control over the misuse, misrepresentation, distributing or selling over-the-counter drugs. Students are not to misuse, misrepresent, distribute, or sell over-the-counter drugs. Consequences: Students found guilty of misusing, misrepresenting, distributing or selling over-the-counter drugs shall receive the following: 1<sup>st</sup> violation: up to 5 days OSS, 2<sup>nd</sup> violation: up to 19 days OSS, 3<sup>rd</sup> violation: expulsion from school for the remainder of the semester or 19 days OSS, whichever is longer.

**IV-ATe Records of Violations and Consequences**

Anecdotal notes or violations of the district drug policy will be shared between administrators from one year to another and from one attendance center to another and disciplinary action may carry over from one year to another and from one attendance center to another if the consequence was not completed. However, violations of the drug/alcohol policy are not cumulative from one year to another or from one attendance level to another.

**SECTION V  
STUDNET ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS**

**Student Attendance Expectations**

1. Attend school on a regular basis.
2. Pre-arrange absences with school officials.
3. Be on time and present in assigned classes.

To assure that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the school mission, all students are expected to attend school on a consistent basis. This means all students enrolled in any of the Columbus Schools, regardless of how old they are, must attend school regularly and be in all the classes to which they are assigned, unless properly excused by an official of the school. Arrangements should be made to obtain missed assignments from the Homework Hot line or by contacting the school in the case of a major illness.

**School Attendance Expectation #1 – Attend school on a regular basis**

**Supporting Guidelines**

**V-A Attendance – Excused/Unexcused**

Any student who misses more than ten (10) days or the percentage equivalent to ten (10) days in a semester is in violation of Nebraska statute and the Columbus Public Schools Attendance Policy. **Parents, or legal guardians, are EXPECTED to telephone,**



**563-7060, or notify the school by 9:00 am the day or days of student's absence or tardiness unless the absence has been prearranged. Parents or guardians who do not call regarding a student's absence will be called at home or work.** If the school is unable to reach parents or legal guardians or parent provided emergency numbers, we cannot be certain of the safety of the child; therefore, one of the building attendance officers (administrators) will be asked to investigate the absence of the child.

Regular attendance by students is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence.

Student absences approved by the principal shall be considered allowable absences. Approved absences shall count as days in attendance for purposes of addressing excessive absenteeism, except for notification of the county attorney. These absences include, but are not limited to, medically documented illnesses or appointments, pandemic occurrences identified by local clinics, recognized religious observances and school-sponsored or approved activities.

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to notify the middle school attendance office as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The principal may request evidence or written verification of the students reason for absence. [CPS Board Policy 503.03 and Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-209]

#### **V-B Attendance – Activity Participation**

Students who are participating in the activity program are not allowed to practice, perform, or compete on the same day they are absent from school for three blocks or those who arrive after the beginning of the 4th block. In addition, should the student participation be scheduled for Saturday, and the student is absent and unexcused on Friday, he/she may not participate. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the administration, unless due to a prearranged absence.

### **Student Attendance Expectation #2 – Pre-arranged absences**

#### Supporting Guidelines

#### **V-C Pre-arranged Absence Procedures**

Students who will be absent for reasons that can be excused in advance must obtain a Pre-arranged Absence Form (white slip) from the Attendance Office. Classroom teachers will initial these slips and provide make-up work when available. All make-up work is due upon return from the pre-arranged absence. These slips are required one week prior to the absence(s) to not be counted against your attendance. This Pre-arranged Absence Form must be turned into the attendance secretary prior to the absence. The request for the excuse in advance will be a written statement from the parent/guardian. All parent notes must include the parents daytime phone number to verify the absence. This procedure applies to family obligations and pre-arranged appointments with a health care provider.

#### **V-D Sign-Out Procedure**

Students must sign out whenever they leave the building except for activities. Students leaving the building with a pre-arranged absence will be counted unexcused if they fail to sign out in the office. Important: Students must sign in upon their return to school. Students must provide a note from parents, dentist, doctor, etc., before the absence will be counted as excused. School officials reserve the right to call parents if it appears the note procedure is being abused.

Leaving During the School Day - Students leaving the building for any reason during the time school is in session must check out through the Middle School Office. In case of illness, the pupil will be checked by the school nurse or other school official before being excused. Before being released from school, the student's parent or other responsible person will be contacted and advised of the student's need to be dismissed from school. Students who leave school due to illness during the school day are responsible for getting and completing all missed work. Students who have left school during the school day due to illness may not return for any school activities after school hours.

#### CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

- The student must present a parental note to the secretary before school starts in the morning. Phone calls from parents will also be accepted.
- The student must report to the office to check out before leaving the school building. Parents must report to the office to pick up their child.
- The student must report to the office to check in if (s)he returns to school before the end of the day.
- Students with emergency situations should see the Principal to make arrangements.

#### **V-E Make-Up Time - Approved Absence**

Students are responsible for making up all work missed because of excused absences. Students will be allowed two days for every day they were excused to make up missed work. Special arrangements can be made with individual teachers for unusual circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to see instructors for work missed during absences, or assignments may be obtained online on the team pages. Students on suspension are expected to have work completed upon their return to class. Students on suspension who do not have their

work complete will be assigned to in-school suspension until it is completed. If students are absent for more than one day due to illness, parents may request prior to 10 a.m. to pick up assignments after 4:00 p.m., the office is open until 4:30 p.m.

### **Student Attendance Expectation #3–Be on time and present in assigned classes**

Punctuality and attendance to school and classes closely associates itself with promptness to work later in life. Therefore, we expect students to be on time school and classes.

#### **V-F Tardies - Late To School**

School starts promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. will be marked tardy. Students must sign in at the main office when reporting to school and/or are not in their assigned classes after 8:05 am each day. Students arriving to school between 8:00 - 8:05 a.m. will have a consequence from their teacher. Students will be allowed two (2) tardies per year before being assigned time as a consequence for tardiness. Students with more than three tardies per year will serve a 30 minute office detention for each additional tardy. Students accumulating five or more tardies in a year will be issued sixty (60) minutes of detention which may be served at Thursday Night School to make up the class time missed.

Any tardy means the student is missing valuable instructional time, the teacher may require the student to come in after school to discuss what the student missed. On the third tardy and for each additional tardy, the student will be automatically required to serve an office detention or work assignment. Student may also be required to make up lost class time by attending Thursday Night School. Parents will be notified regarding each tardy and any resulting office consequences. Students who arrive at school after the 8:06 a.m. MUST report to the Office. First period teachers will not admit the student after 8:06 to their classrooms without a pass from the office. Tardies after 8:25 will be considered an unexcused absence or cut from class and students will be required to make any time missed.

\* If a student is tardy or late to school a total of 15 times, the parents will again be personally contacted by an administrator to discuss the problem, clarify guidelines for how future tardy arrivals will be handled, take appropriate disciplinary action.

NOTE: Students who are tardy between classes will be disciplined by the teacher in charge of the class. Chronic tardiness to class will be referred to an administrator for appropriate disciplinary action.

#### **V-G Administrative Response to Student Absences**

All students are expected to attend school/class on a consistent basis. Students with Unexcused Absences will make up the time missed from school. When a student is absent from school the following intervention steps will be taken:

Truancy--Whenever a student leaves school without permission, skips class, or is absent from school without parental permission and/or for a reason not excused by the school the student is truant. All cases of truancy will be dealt with by an administrator on an individual basis. Possible consequences include: parent conferences, work detentions, in-school and after-school suspensions, Thursday Night School, involvement of the School Resource Officer for violation of the state's compulsory education law, and expulsion. Students will be held accountable for the time and class work they miss as a result of their truancy. First Offense: Students will make up time for absence and parent will be contacted. Second Offense: Double time for absence and written warning by the police. Subsequent Offenses: Suspension and summons issued by the police.

Investigative home visits by the school nurse, SRO, and/or an administrator could be conducted for any of the following reasons:

1. When the parent or guardian has not communicated to school officials with why a student is not in attendance, and all attempts to reach parents over a period of time have failed.
2. When the student in question has had significant, ongoing attendance problems, and all attempts to reach parents regarding an unreported absence have failed.
3. Said home visit may result in referrals to other agencies.

## **SECTION VI**

### **ACTIVITY STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS**

#### **VI-A School Activities**

Columbus Middle School offers its students a variety of interscholastic and intramural sports and other social activities which allow students to develop skills and interests at the same time that they have time to socialize with friends as well. These activities, which are sometimes different for students at each grade level, are well-monitored by teacher supervisors and/or parent volunteers. Students are encouraged to remember that middle school is a time to adopt an open- minded attitude about socializing with friends and to try new things.

#### **VI-Aa School Activities, Assemblies, and Concerts**

Columbus Middle School sponsors student activity gatherings throughout the year. Students may only attend activities related to their grade level. The activities will be publicized in the newsletter and in the school announcements. In addition, throughout the year the Middle School may sponsor several all-school assemblies. These assemblies, which normally occur during school time, focus on timely

issues or inspirational speakers who can motivate students to set high goals and work toward them.

Finally, throughout the year the Middle School will host a number of music concerts and interscholastic sports competitions. All of our students are invited to attend the concerts and sporting events and support their classmates and friends as they participate in these public performances. Sporting events and concerts are also published in the newsletter and dates are communicated through announcements and signs at school.

### **VI-Ab Sports and Athletics**

Students are encouraged to explore the many opportunities for participation in sports and athletics. However, we must caution you to remember that we believe students must be good students first and good student athletes second.

	Intramurals
Fall	Flag Football, Volleyball
Winter	Basketball, Wrestling
	Interscholastic
Fall	Boys Football - 7th & 8th Girls Volleyball - 7th & 8th
Winter	Boys & Girls Basketball - 7th & 8th Boys & Girls Wrestling - 7th & 8th
Spring	Boys & Girls Track- 7th & 8th

7th & 8th grade students are eligible for interscholastic competition. Interscholastic competition requires that athletes submit a completed physical prior to participation. 6th and 7th grade students are eligible for intramural activities. Sixth graders do not need to complete sports physicals in order to participate. Coaches and teachers will meet and confer regarding the academic performance of individual intramural athletes, and when necessary, a student will be required to “bring up grades” before being allowed additional competition in intramural games. However, intramural athletes will not have to provide coaches with eligibility cards to verify academic standing with the exception of 7th grade Boys Wrestling and 7th grade Boys & Girls Track, where students do participate in interscholastic competition.

Eligibility will be tracked by quarters, all students will be eligible at the beginning of each season and the checks will be conducted every Monday at 8:00 a.m. beginning the second week of practice. The ineligible period will begin Wednesday. If a student is failing any subject on the reporting date, he/she will be suspended from competition and travel on Wednesday. The student will regain eligibility once he/she has brought the failing grades to a passing percentage by completing acceptable work to determine eligibility. The teacher shall have 24 hours to grade/evaluate assignments.

It shall be the coach’s responsibility to counsel all students that do not meet the academic eligibility guidelines for interscholastic activities. Once the student regains his/her eligibility, the coach shall inform the activities director via the proper form.

Sports offerings are contingent on School Board approval, availability of coaches/coordinators, an adequate number of participants, and finances.

### **Intramural Program Guidelines (VOLLEYBALL, WRESTLING, FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL)**

- \* Doing well in school is required in order to have the privilege of playing team sports. A poor academic (grade) record may be justification for removing you from the program either temporarily or permanently. **KEEP YOUR GRADES PASSING.**
- \* Participants must be at practice and/or games on a daily basis and on time. If you are sick or must be gone for a valid reason, bring a signed excuse from your parent in order to be excused. One unexcused absence will result in loss of participation in one game. After two unexcused absences you will be removed from the program. If you are staying after school for a teacher, bring a signed pass from that teacher. Detentions for behavior will count as an unexcused absence. Haircuts are not valid excuses.
- \* Practice begins at 3:40 and will conclude at 5:00 on designated days Monday through Thursday. On Wednesday, practice will begin at 4:00 and end no later than 5:30. Students will not be allowed to go to their school locker after practice. Physical Education lockers will be provided during practice and games. Students will exit the building from the appropriate North doors as assigned by their coach.
- \* This program has a goal of getting as many people involved as possible and teaching skills for participation in all of the sports. Everyone should learn that more can be achieved through cooperation than through competition and that each person has unique characteristics which make him/her a special value.

### **VI-Ac Clearance to Participate & Head Injury Procedure**

With the passage of legislation on the state and federal levels, Columbus Middle School will observe the Nebraska Concussion Awareness Act - Return to Learn protocol on allowing students to participate in activities.

“In order to participate in any athletic event sponsored by CPS, students must have permission and clearance from each of the following five individual entities.

Student Themselves  
Student's Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s)  
Student's Family Physician/Medical Professional  
Student's Activity Sponsor/Coach  
Administration

During activity of athletic participation, if a student is suspected to have suffered a head injury or displays concussion-like symptoms, the student will be removed from any level of participation immediately, until a complete evaluation is performed by a licensed medical professional. Written notice and personal contact with a parent/guardian of such an interruption of participation will follow the injury. The Head Coach is responsible in notification of parent/guardian. Such notice will include specifics regarding the time and location of the injury, the signs/symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and any actions taken with the student.

In the event that such ability to participate is interrupted at any time due to a diagnosed head injury and/or concussion, written clearance from both the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and family physician/medical professional will be required before clearance to participate may be granted again. The responsibility of obtaining written clearance from a licensed medical professional is solely that of the student and his or her family.

#### **VI-Ad CMS Locker Room Policy**

- \* The locker rooms will be open each school day from 8:05 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Students needing to enter the locker room other than for the purpose of changing for physical education class (when there is teacher supervision) must have a pass from a teacher or administrator.
- \* After the locker rooms are locked at 3:45 p.m., the rooms will be reopened by coaches who are sponsoring that sport or recreational activity at that particular time of year. Students who are out for a sport may use the locker room at this time. Students who are not out for a sport are not allowed in the locker room unless they have a pass from a teacher or administrator.
- \* Locker rooms will be locked during practices and games. If students who are participating in intramural activities or interscholastic sports need to re-enter the locker rooms they must obtain permission from one of their coaches.
- \* If parents of students have a concern related to intramural or interscholastic sports, these concerns should be communicated following this chain of command: 1) Coach, 2) Athletic Director, 3) Administration

#### **VI-Ae Interscholastic Sports Rules/Guidelines**

- \* All 7th and 8th grade students who plan to participate in interscholastic athletics must have a physical examination card, signed by a doctor and parent/guardian, on file with the athletic department prior to any practice or try out.
- \* All academic work and school responsibilities--including detentions, after school suspensions, work assignments, etc.-- assigned by CMS staff will take priority over practices.
- \* Any athletic participant absent from school after the third block, will not be allowed to practice/participate that afternoon or evening without special permission from the administration and coach.
- \* If an athlete is under medical advice to not participate, the athlete shall not be allowed to do so regardless of the feelings of the athlete, parents, or coaches.
- \* Only authorized personnel are allowed on buses and school vehicles when making trips with athletic squads.
- \* There will not be any practice or play on Sundays. On Wednesday nights, practice will begin at 4:00, the athlete shall be on his/her way home no later than 6:30.
- \* An athlete is an ambassador of both our school and community. On trips, students' dress and grooming should be clean, neat and appropriate.
- \* Each participant will receive rules appropriate for that sport from their coach and/or Activities Director.

#### **EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT SPECTATORS ATTENDING ATHLETIC AND OTHER SCHOOL FUNCTIONS**

- \* Students must leave the event by exiting through the designated areas. The rule is: Once you leave, you may not re-enter.
- \* Rules found in the "State Law: Student Rules, Student Rights, and Student Responsibilities" section of this handbook also apply to behavior at all school events.

#### **VI-Af "Team Selection" and "Playing Time"**

"Team selection" and "playing time" decisions are the responsibility of the individual coach or sponsor of the activity. Consistent, however, with the purposes of the activities program, the coaches and sponsors shall follow the following established guidelines for team selection and playing time decisions, along with such other guidelines as each individual coach and sponsor may develop which are not inconsistent with these established guidelines:

**School Representative.** Student participants must demonstrate that they can and will represent themselves and their school in a manner which reflects the development of high ideals and appropriate values, which shall include good citizenship in the school and in the community.

**Success.** Student participants must demonstrate that they can make the activity program more successful, both from a standpoint of competitive success and success in promoting a positive school spirit. Characteristics for purposes of these criteria include the student's:

(1) talent or skill, (2) desire to improve the student's own skills or talents as well as those of others in the activity, and (3) attitude of respect towards teammates, the coach, the school, and the community.

#### **VI-Ag Transportation To and From Events**

Under no circumstances should a student involved in school activities be allowed to ride to or from an out-of-town event with anyone but their own parents. Team/group members travel to and from out-of-town events as a unit. Any exception concerning travel should be a rarity. It takes both written and verbal approval from the parent to the sponsor/head coach to grant such a request and should be received at least one day in advance of the event.

#### **VI-Ah Activity Regulations**

Participation in school sponsored activities is a privilege and not a right. Students participating in Columbus Middle School Activities must be "in good standing" with School Regulations and will be held responsible for knowing and abiding by all activity regulations which are listed in the Columbus Middle School Student Handbook.

It shall be the right of Columbus Public Schools to establish rules of conduct for participation in activities. Students who participate in extracurricular activities shall be held to a higher standard of conduct than those who choose not to participate. Furthermore, it shall be the right of Columbus Public Schools to impose sanctions for violations of those standards if the administration determines to its satisfaction that a violation has occurred.

It is the belief of the Columbus Public Schools that it is important to support the total student. Expectations for our youngsters participating in co-curricular activities include not only behavior at school or at school functions or events, but go beyond the school day and into the community. We believe that part of learning is accepting responsibility for one's actions. Thus, the school district is extending its authority to hours and places beyond the regularly perceived boundaries in an effort to show strongly to students and the community our intent to work with and help all youngsters in their decision-making. We believe this stance will further help to develop responsible adult citizens while serving as a deterrent to certain unlawful behaviors.

The following actions shall constitute prohibited conduct for students participating in CMS sponsored activities. The conduct can be on or off school grounds and need not be at an educational function or event.

A student accused of a violation shall have due process consisting of the right to know the nature of the alleged violation, the right to tell his or her version of events, and the right to have others comment on his or her behalf. The decision of the administration shall be final. The following regulations will begin the first day of organized practice by a Columbus Middle School sponsored activity, and the regulations will end on the last day of student attendance with the exception of school sponsored events taking place while school is not in session.

Each violation of the activity regulations (academic, violations, tobacco and drug/alcohol) will be handled separately and penalties will be accumulated by each individual regulation.

Start of Suspension - Suspension from activities/sports will begin the day the student admits to a violation or the day the administration declares the student suspended.

#### **COLUMBUS MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REGULATION**

The following actions shall constitute prohibited conduct for students participating in CMS sponsored activities:

- \* Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to any person.
- \* Fraud/theft/robbery
- \* Vandalism to public or private property on or off school grounds.
- \* Harassment, Stalking, Threatening, Public Indecency
- \* Knowingly possessing, handling or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon by school board policy.

Penalty for violating policy:

- \* First Offense: Penalty for violating this policy will be suspension from any participation in activities for two calendar weeks and at least one event. Students charged with a violation of this policy will be penalized upon investigation by the Columbus Middle School Administration and after a determination that such a violation has in fact occurred and due process has taken place.
- \* The second offense by any of the above mentioned violations shall mean the student will be suspended from activities for 28 calendar days and at least one event.
- \* The third offense by any of the above mentioned violations shall mean the student will be suspended from all school activities for the rest of the school year in question.
- \* In matters involving consequences for infractions in the Columbus Middle School regulations governing student conduct for participation in sponsored school activities, the due process procedures shall be the same.

## **VI-Ai Drug/Alcohol Regulation for Activity Eligibility**

Any student involved in extracurricular school activities is subject to consequence if, following an investigation, the administration determines that:

- A. The student is found to have been involved in either selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using possessing, or the dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant.
- B. The student was present where alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or an inhalant were being used where in the student had access to the items; or,
- C. The student admits to a violation as defined above; or,
- D. The student is cited, charged or convicted with any controlled substances or alcohol related criminal offense.

### **I. First Violation of Drugs/Alcohol**

Students determined to have committed a first violation shall be suspended for one third of the scheduled Columbus Middle School competitions/ performances of that given student's current activities season(s). If a student self reports to a sponsor/coach or administrator within 24 hours of the incident, they shall be suspended for one-fourth of the scheduled Columbus Middle School competitions/ performances of that given student's current activities season(s). The student is also prohibited from participating in pep rallies and community services performances that occur within this time frame, but not from practices and/or classes within the school day.

### **II. Second Violation of Drugs/Alcohol**

Students determined to have committed a second violation at any time during their middle school career *shall be expelled from participation in all activities for one calendar year*. If the student self-reports, the suspension is for nine months.

#### **Re-Instatement after Second Violation of Drug/Alcohol Policy:**

Should it be determined that a student has committed a second violation during their middle school career; he or she may apply for re-instatement in activity participation under the following conditions:

- A. The student will undergo a formal drug/alcohol evaluation at his or her own expense. The results of this evaluation will be shared with the school administration and the recommendation(s) made by the evaluation must be following for re-instatement to stand.
- B. The student will complete a community service project, including approximately 40 hours of service work, as to be agreed upon by the school administration and the student. All expenses incurred for the completion of the community service project are to be the responsibility of the student. The student must complete the community service project prior to being re-instated.

### **III. Third Violation of Drugs/Alcohol**

Students determined to have committed a third drug/alcohol violation at any time during their middle school careers shall be expelled from participation in all activities for the remainder of the middle school careers.

#### **Due Process:**

A student accused of a violation shall have due process consisting of the right to know the nature of the alleged violation, the right to tell his/her version of events, and the right to have others comment on his/her behalf. You have the right to appeal the Activities Coordinator's decision provided the appeal is made to the **Middle School Administration** with 5 days. This decision may be appealed to the superintendent provided the appeal is made within 5 days. The superintendent's decision is final.

**Note:** If a violation occurs toward the end of the season, this consequence will carry over to the next season in which the student participates. The student must *complete the entire season* of the activity in which the activity suspension is served.

Drug/Alcohol Suspension Table		
First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense
<p>*Student is suspended for 1/3 of scheduled competitions and/or performances</p> <p>*Suspension is reduced to 1/4 of scheduled competitions and/or performances if student self-reports</p>	<p>*Student is suspended for activity participation for one calendar year.</p> <p>*Suspension is reduced to nine months if student self-reports</p> <p>*Student may apply for re-instatement, providing evaluation &amp; community service project</p>	<p>*Student is suspended from participation in all activities for the remainder of their high school career</p>

### TOBACCO REGULATION FOR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

Students determined to have possessed, used, distributed or sold tobacco shall receive the following consequences:

#### I. First Violation of Tobacco

A student determined to have committed a first violation at any time during the school year shall be suspended for 1/4th of the season (1/4th of the contests) from participation, competition or play, but not from practice and/or classes within the school day.

#### II. Second Violation

A student determined to have committed a second violation at any time during the school year shall be suspended for 1/2 of the contests, which may carry into the next season.

#### III. Third Violation:

A student determined to have committed a third violation at any time during his/her middle school careers shall be suspended from participation in all activities for one full year.

#### Due Process:

A student accused of a violation shall have due process consisting of the right to know the nature of the alleged violation, the right to tell his/her version of events, and the right to have other's comment on his/her behalf. You have the right to appeal the Activities Coordinator's decision provided the appeal is made to the **Middle School Administration** within 5 days. This decision may be appealed to the superintendent provided the appeal is made within 5 days. The superintendent's decision is final.

## SECTION VII

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### VII-A Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

**All students must enter the school building when they arrive in the morning. Students may not be on school grounds or in the school prior to 7:30 AM.** Students are assigned to specific waiting areas by grade level and are expected to not loiter across the street or in alleyways near the school. The designated waiting areas are:

#### STUDENT WAITING AREAS

**8th Graders - Small Cafeteria 7th Graders - North Gym  
6th Graders - South Gym Bleachers 5th Graders - South Gym Balony**

Students should report directly to the designated waiting areas without stopping at their lockers or loitering in the halls along the way. Once students arrive at school, they are not to leave the school property without permission of school officials. Students will be released from the waiting areas for the beginning of the school day at 7:55 a.m. However, if students have an individual pass to see a teacher, they may feel free to use the pass according to the time marked on the pass. Students participating in the breakfast program may enter the cafeteria beginning at 7:30 a.m. each day that breakfast is served. Once students are finished eating breakfast, they may report directly to the appropriate morning waiting area, or they may continue to visit and wait with their friends in the cafeteria until the 7:55 a.m. bell. When school is dismissed, all students must do one of the following: (1) leave the school building and the grounds without delay, (2) report to an instructor for subject help, (3) report to a supervised after-school activity, (4) report to a room at the request of a teacher and/or administrator. (5) Report to the after school waiting area. If students are not doing one of the things listed above, they are asked to leave the school campus by 3:45 p.m. However, students who must wait for rides will report to the after school waiting area until their ride arrives. They will be dismissed through the office. We encourage all students to make appointments to arrive early or stay late to work with faculty members if they have questions about classes or work to do. However, students working with faculty members must have a pass and must report to the designated supervised area as quickly as possible before and after regular school hours. Any

misbehavior may result in a permanent suspension from the waiting area.

### **VII-B Asthma Protocol**

State Law requires that our school be prepared to implement an emergency treatment plan, called a protocol, anytime a student or staff member experiences a life threatening asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). The protocol requires that 911 be called first. After that call is made, an EpiPen injection will be given and then albuterol is provided through a nebulizer. An EpiPen is a small pre-filled automatic injection device that resembles a highlighter. It is used to deliver Epinephrine, which is a medication that is used to bring quick relief by improving breathing and lung function. Albuterol is another medication that is used to bring breathing relief (commonly found in metered-dose inhalers). The nebulizer is a machine that mixes the albuterol with air to provide a fine mist (aerosol) for breathing in through a mask or mouthpiece. The protocol steps are designed to provide quick, effective care in order to prevent death from occurring due to severe asthma attack or anaphylaxis. Staff members have been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of a life-threatening “breathing” emergency and to properly administer the medications. The protocol is a standing medical order that has been signed by Dr. David Rohwer.

If you know that your student has asthma or a known allergy, it is critically important that you communicate this information to our school staff. You may contact Karla Bartlett, Middle School Nurse. For each student with a known allergic condition or asthma, you must provide the school with (1) written medical documentation, (2) instructions, and (3) medications as directed by a physician. In the event that your student experiences a life threatening asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction, we will defer to the specific documents and medication that you have provided. If you do not have medical documentation and instructions on file with the school for your student, we will defer to the regulatory protocol described above. If, for whatever reason, you do not want your student to receive the life-saving emergency treatment under the protocol, you must file your written objection with the school. If you have any questions or concerns about the protocol or your student’s health issues, please contact Karla Bartlett, Columbus Middle School Nurse.

### **VII-C Automated Phone Calls**

Columbus Public Schools does send a lot of information to parents regarding upcoming events and activities to keep them informed. The federal Telephone Consumer Protection Act, all calls—whether live, automated, or prerecorded voice calls or text messages—made to cell phones using an auto-dialer or other automated dialing technology are prohibited unless the calls are made for emergency purposes or made with the prior express consent of the cell phone subscriber.

In order to conform with new rules within the Federal Consumer Protection Act. The school will need obtain the “prior express consent” of the parent to call the cell phone number. The Federal Communications Commission has stated, “people who knowingly release their phone numbers have given permission to be called at the number which they have given, absent instructions to the contrary.” By signing receipt of this handbook you are giving Columbus Public Schools permission to call all cell phones registered in PowerSchool for school and student purposes.

### **VII-D Care of Building**

Every attempt has been made to provide Columbus Middle School students with an attractive, secure learning environment. The care and protection of our building and its furnishings are essential to its quality appearance.

Posters and locker decorations must be approved by administration before being placed in the building.

It is the responsibility of all of the students to keep the school and its grounds clean and attractive. Students who deliberately create a mess will be held responsible by administrative disciplinary action, restitution for damages and clean-up cost.

### **VII-E Elevator Use**

Students who have been injured or have a handicapping condition to the extent that stair travel must be curtailed will be granted the use of the elevator. A key may be checked out from the school nurse and students will be charged a \$5 fee to replace any lost keys. Elevator keys should be returned as soon as they are no longer needed.

### **MEDICAL EXCUSES FROM P.E. PARTICIPATION FOR HEALTH REASONS**

A student may be excused from P.E. for reasons of health for one class period with permission of a parent and/or nurse. The student may be excused additional days by the school nurse if the situation is well-defined, if there is parental input, and/or if the situation is self-limiting. A doctor’s statement may be required when deemed necessary. A student may be permanently excused from P.E. by a doctor’s statement only!

### **VII-F Grades - Honor Roll**

Honor roll is computed at the end of each semester.

4.0 Honor Roll 4.0 or higher

3.5 Honor Roll 3.5 or better with no grade below “B”



## **VII-G Grading and Grade Reporting Services**

At Columbus Middle School we want students and parents to be informed about student progress and grades so that we can provide a basis for student, parents, and teachers to work together in maintaining a successful situation or bringing about an improved situation for the student.

Students and parents can check grades online or request updates on grades and academic performance any time by contacting individual teachers at 563-7060. Progress reports will be mailed to all students. At their discretion, teachers may also mail progress reports to students whose grades have dropped markedly or improved markedly any time during the quarter.

At the end of each grading period, each teacher reports a grade for each subject or subjects which (s)he teaches. All grades are printed on report cards. At the end of the first nine weeks, the first quarter, report cards are handed to parents at the time of Parent/Teacher conferences. At the end of the first semester and at the end of the third quarter, report cards are mailed. Report cards are mailed to parents after the end of second semester. If a student receives an incomplete, they will have 2 weeks after report cards are mailed to finish the work, so the incomplete will change to a grade.

## **VII-H School Counselor Services**

Guidance personnel are an integral part of the Middle School staff. Through the services of the Guidance Department, it is possible to identify special talents and needs of the individual students. Planning with teachers, students, and their parents will help to eliminate misunderstanding and frustration for many students. Students who need to see their counselor should go to the guidance office to schedule an appointment with the counselor. Parents with questions or concerns are also encouraged to make use of the guidance services. The Guidance office's direct phone number is 563-7060 Ext. #3007.

## **VII-I Head Injuries & Concussions**

Columbus Middle School will follow the Return to Learn protocol for students that have been diagnosed with a head injury and/or a concussion.

## **VII-J Health Services - School Nurse**

The Middle School has a full time nurse assigned to the building. The school nurse is available during regular school hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Students who become ill at school should request a pass from a teacher to see the nurse. **DO NOT SIMPLY REPORT TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE WITHOUT A PASS**; if you do, you will cause an attendance problem because the teacher you should have asked for a pass will report you absent from class. If a student is genuinely ill, the nurse may suggest over-the-counter medication which could alleviate symptoms, she may suggest a brief rest in the office prior to returning to class, and she may suggest and facilitate your going home for the remainder of the day.

In addition, the school nurse is responsible for monitoring the administration of all over-the-counter and prescription medications at school. Parents of students who have health problems or take medications daily must discuss medication procedures with the school nurse and sign a medication release form in order to have medications administered at school (see the section which follows).

Finally, the school nurse monitors immunizations required by state law, physicals required by the school and school sports programs, and health screenings required by the school district. Any questions related to these topics should first be addressed to the school nurse. She can be contacted by phone at 563-7060.

## **VII-K School Website**

To access the Columbus Middle School website, first go to [www.columbuspublicschools.org](http://www.columbuspublicschools.org). From the "Our Schools" drop down menu select "Columbus Middle School". To visit individual teachers pages, click Academics on the left hand side. Then select Team Pages. A new page will appear with the following choices: 6 Maroon, 6 Silver, 7 Maroon, 7 Silver, 8 Maroon and 8 Silver. Select the appropriate team and the weekly assignments for that team's teachers can be viewed.

## **VII-L Social Media**

In an effort to better inform parents and the community, Columbus Public Schools will be using social media to share information. Social media includes but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, blogging and podcasting. When posting information on Social Networks sites (such as Facebook), the district will only post group photos/videos with no names of students be used. If a student's name is used, there will be no photo. Students will not be allowed to post on any Social Media pages from the district. Social Media will be monitored by each building principal and only be used with their approval.

## **VII-M Lanyards, ID Cards & Activity Stickers**

Students are required to wear a Lanyard with a Picture Identification Card. This adds to the safety and security for all students. Picture Identification Cards, which will be made at the Middle School, are mandatory for every student. The Picture Identification Cards will have the individual student's picture, his/her library bar code, and his/her cafeteria bar-code. However, there will be a \$5.00 replacement fee for lost Picture Identification Cards. Students who have lost their Picture ID Cards should get them replaced in the CMS office as soon as possible. Students may not use photocopied ID cards. This ID card can also be turned into an Activity Ticket if

a student purchases a \$25.00 Activity Sticker. Stickers are sold at the Middle School each fall and are good at all high school events for the entire year. The Activity Sticker permits admission to most Columbus High School and Columbus Middle school events. A record of who has purchased Activity Stickers is kept in the Middle School office, and lost stickers can be replaced free of charge.

#### **VII-N Instructional Media Center (IMC)**

Students must have their lanyards, student ID card and agenda with them in order to check out materials and are responsible for all materials checked out to their bar code and not returned. Resources may be checked out for varying amounts of time. Books are checked out for 3 weeks and may be renewed once. Back issues of magazines are checked out for one week. Reference books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc. are due back on the next school day. Neither atlases nor the latest issues of magazines may be checked out. However, back issues of magazines may be checked out for one week. All materials may be renewed upon request if another person has not reserved them. Students may have up to 5 items checked out at the same time if they do not have outstanding book fines. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students must pay the full price for replacement of all lost materials (materials not returned after 30 days). At the end of each quarter, parents or guardians will be notified of any unpaid fines. Students who chronically have overdue books or large library fines will have their checkout privileges blocked. The IMC has a computer lab for students to use. In order to access a computer in the lab, students must obtain a pass from the classroom teacher who gave the assignment. Upon arrival in the IMC, check in with the librarian before using a computer.

Special procedure for Anchor Time: at the beginning of each quarter, students will have 3 IMC passes in the back of their agenda. These passes are to be used at the student's discretion for entry into the IMC or room computer lab during Anchor Time; however, no extra passes will be issued after the 3 passes are used up. Each student must decide how best to use his or her own passes. These passes are non-transferable and will only be good for the quarter in which they are issued.

#### **VII-O Lost and Found**

All lost and found articles should be taken to and claimed in the Main Office. Unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organizations at the end of each quarter.

#### **VII-P Lunch Procedures**

All Middle School students are expected to remain at the school from the time they enter in the morning until dismissal in the afternoon. Free/Reduced forms need to be returned promptly. Students are responsible for any charges accrued before the application is approved. Students may bring sack lunches if they do not wish to eat the school lunch. The Columbus Public Schools requests that, no student bring in commercially prepared food (i.e. McDonalds, Burger King, Subway, Pizza Hut, Taco Johns etc.) Each student is expected to bring only individual-sized portions which (s)he expects to eat. Large containers of chips or boxes containing multiple servings of a food item are not permitted. Students who bring sack lunches may purchase milk if they wish to do so. Students may not bring any candy or pop with them to eat at lunch. Sack lunches should not contain any glass items. All lunches must be eaten in the cafeteria unless special permission or instructions have been given otherwise by a school official. Students must use their intact student ID with bar code as they go through the main line or combo line. Students who do not have their student ID card must report to the end of the serving line. Students may deposit money into their account before school or during lunch periods.

Each student will be issued a student ID at the beginning of the school year. Students who lose or damage their student ID will be required to buy a replacement card for \$5.00. Ala carte items will be sold after the full trays are purchased. Students purchasing these items must wait until the lunch line is served before entering the cafeteria kitchen. Ala Carte items include such things as: water, Gatorade, chips, pretzels, and soft serve ice cream. Ala carte items do cost extra and the student must have a positive student account to purchase items. The cost of the items can be deducted from the student account or the student can pay for the ala carte items in cash.

Be sure you and your student discuss how to handle the purchase of ala carte items parents can monitor their accounts on Powerschool. Finally, there will be no credit given to students during the last two weeks of school because it has become too difficult and time-consuming to collect. Students will need to watch their lunch balances closely during this last period to be sure they have lunch money for each day.

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## **VII-Q Parent/Guardian Involvement and Participation**

- The Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook shall include Policy 1005.02 and provide parents/guardians with the information as to when and how they can access instructional materials.
- The Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook is available online. Upon request, a paper copy of the handbook can be sent home with students. If sent home with students, parents/guardians shall return to the school a signed form indicating that they have received the Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook.
- Parent/guardian permission is required for out of town field trips. Parent/guardian notification is required for in town field trips. See also Policy 607.05.
- The Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook shall include an invitation to parents/guardians to attend and monitor instructional activities.
- Administrators shall notify parents/guardians in advance of special activities, such as assemblies, unless time does not permit.
- If a principal denies a parent's/guardian's request to attend and monitor instructional and/or special activities, the principal shall notify the parent/guardian of his/her rights of appeal as described in this regulation. Also, a full report including, but not limited to, the circumstances and rationale for the denial shall be sent to the Superintendent.
- Administrators shall notify parents/guardians if a substitute teacher will teach their child for four or more weeks.
- Administrators shall have available for parent/guardian access and review the curriculums, instructional materials, and school climate surveys used in their schools.
- Administrators shall provide additional opportunities for parents/guardians to review the materials listed above. Parents/guardians shall be notified in advance of such opportunities. Administrators shall take advantage of these opportunities to inform parents/guardians of how they can be more involved in the schools by contacting school staff and/or the Volunteer Coordinator at the Administration Building.
- Parents/guardians may obtain copies of curriculum for review by checking them out from the Professional Library located at the Administration Building. Parents/Guardians may obtain a personal copy of materials at their own expense.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified in the parent/student handbook, that lessons may be taught by a school counselor in the classroom setting. Lessons shall follow the district's curriculum.
- Parent/guardian permission is required for student participation in topical counseling groups or individual counseling sessions conducted by school counselors unless the student's safety is in question.
- Parent/guardian are encouraged to attend conferences in the fall and spring.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to notify teachers if there are topics of concern to them. Teachers shall notify the parents/guardians in advance if these topics are to be used in planned lessons. The administrator shall be responsible for annually advising staff in August that there are subjects which may be sensitive or of concern to parents/guardians as part of classroom discussion. Such subjects which may arise that are not in the District curriculum may include, but are not limited to: death and dying; religious events and holidays; magic, witches, and sorcery. Teachers are also to be reminded by principals that any classroom discussion of a controversial topic should be in accordance with current Board Policy.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified in advance of Family Life instruction involving human sexuality (grades 5-12). Permission slips will be included with the notification. If the notification is mailed to the home, the school shall require a parental/guardian response only if the parent/guardian does not give permission for the student to participate. If notification is sent home with the students, the school shall require a parent/guardian response indicating whether the student will or will not participate.
- If a parent/guardian has an objection to any instructional material or school experience, the school shall provide the parent/guardian with an appropriate form which may be used to express his or her objection. Forms and appeal procedures may be obtained from building secretaries.
- It shall be the responsibility of the administrator to notify parents/guardians in advance when their children will be taking standardized tests.
- It shall be the responsibility of the administrator to notify parents/guardians in advance of school sponsored surveys beyond the school climate surveys. If the notification is mailed to the home, the school shall require a parent/guardian response only if the parent/guardian does not give permission for the student to participate. If notification is sent home with the students, the school shall require a parent/guardian response indicating whether the student will or will not participate.

•The Board of Education shall hold an annual public hearing on Parent/Guardian Involvement and Participation in accordance with the statute.

#### **VII-R Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences will be held at mid 1st quarter and mid-3rd quarter. There will also be an Open House for parents to meet their child's teachers. Refer to the school calendar for the schedule. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are possible by contacting the school office and making arrangements with the teachers.

#### **VII-S Passes**

Students in the hall during the instructional period must have a their lanyard, student ID and a signed pass from a staff member. Students who fail to comply with this rule will have their pass privileges suspended with the exact time based on frequency and severity of the offense.

#### **VII-T Passes/Nurse**

During the instructional day students are not allowed in the nurse's office unless first receiving a signed pass from a staff member. Students will be allowed to sign out to the nurse's office, at teacher discretion, only for medical, emergency and/or health related needs.

#### **VII-U Physical Examinations**

Nebraska State Law requires that each student entering the 7th grade must be examined by a qualified physician prior to entrance in the school. Physical forms may be obtained from the Middle School Office. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must comply with this law or object to the physical in writing. Students will be excluded from school if they fail to meet this requirement. Refusal forms are available from the school nurse. Transfer students, all grades, from out-of-state are also required to complete the physical examination. Parent(s)/guardian(s) having a question regarding this requirement should contact the school nurse.

#### **VII-V Risk of Social Media Sites**

These sites are public sources of information. Your school administrators, your parents, and law enforcement may see the information contained on these pages. These sites are also accessible to people who you do not know now, but may later want to impress—such as university admissions and scholarship officials and prospective employers. In fact, many large companies now search the Internet as a means of conducting background checks on job applicants. What you say now on any social networking site may affect you years after the fact. What you say now on Social Media Sites may also affect you right now. Pictures or writings that show that you have violated student conduct rules may result in school discipline. Criminal charges may be filed against you based on information posted on such sites.

#### **VII-W School Resource Officer**

Columbus Public Schools will have the services of a School Resource Officer during school hours. Columbus Middle School works closely with the officers of the court and will use the school resource officer in matters relative to federal, state and local violations. The School Resource Officer and Police/Sheriff's officers are allowed to interview students during the school day in the presence of a school official. Probation and parole officers are also in regular contact with school officials.

#### **VII-X Severe Weather and School Cancellations**

The Superintendent may alter district schedules as appropriate to the particular condition. The Superintendent will notify local news media when inclement weather warrants such action. Local radio and television stations will broadcast the information along with the district website and social media site.

#### **VII-Y Smoke-Free Environment**

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. We would appreciate your help in meeting the goal of a smoke and tobacco-free environment for our children.

#### **VII-Z Drug-Free School**

Columbus Middle School implements regulations and practices which will ensure compliance with the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and all regulations and rules promulgated pursuant thereto.

#### **VII-AA Student Agenda Books**

CMS as designed and printed student agenda books with the intent of improving the organizational habits of students and teachers. Students will be expected to carry their agenda books at all times as several uses have been built into the structure of this book. Students will be responsible for replacing lost or damaged agenda books at a cost of \$3.00. Agenda books remain the property of the school until the end of the school year.

#### **VII-AB Student Schedule Changes**

Students needing schedule changes should notify their School Counselor. Final approval of all schedule changes will be made by the Administration.

**VII-AC Insurance**

Students shall have the opportunity to participate in the health and accident insurance plan selected by the school district. The cost of the health and accident insurance program shall be borne by the student. Participation in the insurance health and accident plan is not a contract with the school district, but rather, a contract between the insurance company and the student.

**VII-AD Transportation Services**

The school provides transportation for students on field trips and when participating in school activities. Students are expected to follow the behavioral expectations for riding school buses. While riding school buses or other school vehicles you are expected to follow the same student conduct rules, which apply when you are on school property or attending school activities, functions or events.

**VII-AE Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug - Education and Prevention**

Columbus Middle School promotes comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs.

**VII-AF Teacher Assistance – Before and After School**

Teachers are on duty beginning at 7:45 a.m. each morning, but many of them are actually at school earlier than that. Teachers are willing to help students in the morning as long as they know that the students are coming in for help. Students will need a pass to see a teacher in the morning before school and should request that pass before they leave school on the day before.

All students will be dismissed at 3:30 p.m. unless they are asked to stay later by a teacher and/or administrator because they have not completed work of acceptable quality or turned in work on time or because they have not behaved appropriately in the classroom. During this same after school period, 3:30 - 4:00p.m., all teachers will be available to students for help sessions, make-up work, and special projects.

**VII-AG Visitors Policy**

All visitors, people who are not employees of the Columbus Public Schools or Columbus Middle School students, are to report immediately to the Middle School Office upon entering the building. Any violation of this rule may be considered trespassing and appropriate action maybe taken. Student visitors from other schools are not allowed because they tend to disrupt the teaching and learning environment.