

# **Liberty-Benton Middle School**



## **Student Handbook 2018-2019**

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**Principal**  
**Dean of Students**  
**Guidance Counselor**  
**Secretary**  
**Receptionist**  
**Jr. High Athletic Director**

Bruce Otley  
 Heidi Irwin  
 Stacy Pickett  
 Becky Patrick  
 Kelly Boutwell  
 Jeff Lease

**Middle School Office**  
**Transportation**  
**Board of Education**

(419) 422-9166  
 (419) 422-9249  
 (419) 422-852

## **LIBERTY-BENTON LOCAL SCHOOLS VISION STATEMENT**

Liberty-Benton will strive to be the school of choice for excellence in education.

## **LIBERTY-BENTON LOCAL SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

We exist to equip all students for a life of learning and responsible, productive, rewarding citizenship in a caring and progressive environment.

## **LIBERTY-BENTON ENDS POLICY**

The Board of Education has adopted the following Ends Policy regarding what Liberty-Benton students should know and be able to do in addition to the Ohio Standards for Teaching and Learning. Classroom teaching and instructional practice should reflect the Ohio Standards for Teaching and Learning AND the Ends Policy adopted by the Board of Education.

**Ends:** Liberty-Benton School District exists to instruct students in academics, good character, American citizenship, independent living, and critical thinking at a cost that is financially supported by the community taxpayers.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF LIBERTY-BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **I Definition of School**

The school is an institution that brings together students, teachers, parents, administrators, support staff, and community members. Together these partners assume the responsibility of providing the educational opportunities and activities that will shape the students into capable and contributing members of our democratic society.

### **II The School Serves the Community**

The school serves the community by helping students develop the skills necessary to become contributing members of the society. This includes educating students about the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen in a democratic society, respecting authority, understanding traditions, common values, and the diversity of both local and world peoples. Students will also be assisted in developing critical thinking skills, self-discipline, and learning to accept responsibility for their own actions.

### **III The School Serves the Student**

The school provides for each student's personal development in many ways. Students study nature, literature and the arts in order to gain and refine human sensitivities. Student creativity will be fostered and nurtured and they will be shown how to apply this creativity in problem solving. Extra curricular activities are offered in order to provide further experiences where teamwork, courage, persistence, dedication, positive thinking, and an appreciation for rules are learned. These school experiences should aid students in developing a positive attitude and set of values, knowing and accepting themselves, and having the confidence to enter the community and engage in full, satisfying and meaningful lives.

The school recognizes the need to educate students in ways useful to them beyond the school environment and attempts to provide them with a variety of life skills. By showing students how to use logic, reasoning and scientific thought, students can learn how to make good decisions and solve problems. The methods and values of maintaining good mental, physical, and social health are taught in order to encourage a long and healthy life.

In addition to general life skills and personal development, the school seeks to provide students with specific career development opportunities. This is done through vocational training and career exploration. Also, the school is committed to using technology as a teaching and learning resource as well as aiding all students in becoming technologically proficient.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

### **Statement of Policy**

This policy is to comply with Sections 3313.66 and 3313.661 of the Ohio Revised Code as amended by Amended Substitute House Bill 421 passed by the Ohio Legislature and effective September 1, 1976.

#### **A. Freedom of Expression and Assembly**

This includes expression in written, verbal and symbolic forms as long as such expression does not (1) endanger health or safety, (2) damage property, (3) disrupt the activities of others or, (4) is obscene.

#### **B. Student Records Privacy**

Student records shall remain confidential in accordance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 which requires that (1) parents or guardians or students who have attained the age of 18 have the right to review their records and to challenge any items they deem inaccurate, (2) parents, guardians, or students who have attained the age of 18 shall give consent before records are made available to non-school agencies and, (3) such records are made available to parents, guardians or students over 18 no later than 30 days after the request for review has been made, and (4) such review to be made on school property and in the presence of a Principal or Guidance Counselor.

#### **C. Protection from Unreasonable Search and Seizure**

Pursuant to New Jersey vs. TLO (1985), school officials have the legal right to search students, lockers, desks, computers, computer disks, etc. Searches and seizures may be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion by school officials.

## **ACCIDENTS**

Even though reasonable safety precautions are observed at all times, accidents involving students sometimes do occur during school hours. If a minor accident does happen, the teacher who is responsible for supervising this student, and the witnesses involved, report to the office so the building principal is aware of the situation. However, if an accident is deemed serious, the proper steps are immediately taken in accordance with the student's Emergency Medical Card that has been completed by his/her parents at the beginning of the school year.

**ACTIVITY CONFLICTS** For students in multiple school sponsored activities that are scheduled at the same time; the following guideline should be used to determine a student's participation when a conflict in scheduling arises:

A performance (athletic event, contest, play, concert, etc.) has priority over any practice or rehearsal; when two events of equal value conflict, the student may participate in the event of his/her choice without fear of penalty or consequence.

## **ATHLETICS**

Athletics play a primary role in complementing the educational program of the school. Through participation in athletic events, students vividly learn the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, individual responsibility, and dedication. Liberty-Benton Middle School offers a well-rounded athletic program during each season in which every student has an opportunity to participate. Presently, cheerleading, football, volleyball, cross country, basketball, wrestling, and track are the recognized sports.

The athletic council has formulated a policy which relates to all of the programs of the athletic department. The policy is explained to participating athletes and is available for anyone else's consideration.

## **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

The eligibility standards from the Ohio Association of Secondary School Athletics (specifically bylaws 4-4-4 and 4-4-5 (letters A and B below) were updated for 2010-2011. Beginning August 1, 2010, which means that the **bylaws became operationally effective at the end of the first grading period of the 2010-11 school year**, the revisions read as follows:

**A.** A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of five of all subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

**B.** A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of the previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five of those subjects in which the student received grades.

**C.** The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the next grading period.

**D.** A local rule that was established at Liberty-Benton states that any student that receives two failing grades in any grading period will be ineligible for the next grading period.

**E.** Summer school grades earned may not be used to substitute for failing grades from the last grading period of the regular school year.

## **ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS**

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event. However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as non participants are properly safeguarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The school will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone. The School will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a school activity.

## **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

**House Bill 410 requires school attendance to be tracked by hours.**

### **LBMS 2018-2019 Instructional Times**

**Tardy Bell: 7:40 a.m.**

**Dismissal Bell: 2:40 p.m.**

**Instructional Day: 6.5 hours (30 minute student lunch does not count as instructional time)**

**Parents are required under law to notify the school when a student will be absent ahead of time or no later than 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. Call the school at 419-422-9166 to leave a message or speak to the secretary.**

An important obligation of the school is to encourage regular attendance by the students which has a direct correlation to success at school. Poor attendance disrupts the continuity of instruction. Once lost, instruction cannot be recovered. Classroom participation is an important facet of the educational process and cannot be reconstructed outside of the regular school day. Attendance is taken in class each morning and all absences are listed on the attendance sheet. Teachers then check for discrepancies throughout the school day. These discrepancies are then dealt with by Middle School Office personnel. It should be emphasized that if a student becomes ill during the day he/she must report to the principal or secretary so that the parents might be contacted. Specific details of the attendance requirements are listed in the board adopted "Attendance Policy."

When a student returns from an excused absence, all missed work will be allowed to be completed. Any student absent from school is not allowed to participate in any other school function that school day.

### **TARDY**

Students will be considered tardy for missing any time up to 29 minutes from the start of the school day.

Tardiness to school and class could result in:

**Detention on the third and fourth tardy**

**Saturday School on the fifth tardy**

## **PARENT NOTICE OF ABSENCE**

**A letter will be sent home when a student has missed 32.5 hours of instruction (equivalent of 5 absent days).**

**A second letter will be sent home when a student has missed 65 hours of instruction (equivalent of 10 absent days).** A medical note from a licensed physician must be received for each absence beyond 65 hours (10 days) to excuse any further absences.

**These letters are meant to inform the parent of their legal obligation regarding compulsory school attendance under Ohio law.**

### **I. Definition of Terms**

**A. *Excused absences*** include the following:

1. personal illness and/or medical appointments
2. severe illness in the immediate family
3. death of a relative
4. work in the home due to the absence of a parent or guardian
5. religious observances
6. other legitimate reasons which have received prior approval from the building principal—for example, necessary trips with parents

**B. *Unexcused absences*** include the following:

1. car trouble
2. oversleeping
3. missed the bus
4. shopping
5. haircut and beauty shop appointment
6. baby-sitting -- unless an emergency
7. suspension from school
8. truancy
9. **absences due to vacation requests during state mandated testing days (AIR testing)**
10. other absences not listed as excused

**C. *Truancy*** is defined as a student deliberately not attending school because of an inexcusable reason. When a student fails to attend a class or study hall as per his/her assigned schedule, he/she can also be considered truant.

### **Habitual Truancy**

- A. Absent 30 or more consecutive hours without a legitimate excuse
- B. Absent 42 or more hours in one month without a legitimate excuse
- C. Absent 72 or more hours in one year without a legitimate excuse
- D. Absent 38 or more hours in one school month without a legitimate excuse
- E. Absent 65 or more hours in one school year without a legitimate excuse

## **II. Attendance Requirements**

- A. A student having been absent from school for one and one half to three hours will be credited with one half day of absence. (Excused or unexcused dependent on the reason.)
- B. A student having been absent from school for more than three hours will be credited with one day of absence. (Excused or unexcused dependent on the reason.)
- C. Excessive absences could result in loss of academic credit for high school courses and possible retention.
- D. Academic success- There is a direct correlation between good grades and school attendance. Apply yourself, come to school and good things will happen.

## **III. Procedure**

- A. All homeroom attendance records will be kept and maintained in the administrative office.
- B. Teachers and students will follow the attendance procedures outlined in the “Liberty-Benton Middle School Student/Parent Handbook.”
- C. All teachers will keep daily attendance records.
- D. The building principal will issue a warning letter to the student and parent when absences start to become a problem. A medical note from a licensed physician must be received for each absence beyond 65 hours (10 days) to excuse any further absences.

## **TRUANCY PROCEDURES**

A student is considered truant when they incur unexcused absences from school. Truancy is a serious offense and subject to severe penalty. The penalty for truancy is detention, suspension or expulsion.

### **Step I -- First Truancy—First unexcused absence beyond 65 hours (10 days)**

- 1) The parents or guardians will be asked to come to the school for a conference with the Absence Intervention Team. The team will consist of the Principal or his designee, the parent, students, and a teacher. The educational and legal aspects of regular attendance shall be reviewed.
- 2) The student may be referred to a counselor and/or psychologist for a series of counseling sessions.
- 3) An attendance plan will be written and followed by the student. The student may receive a disciplinary outcome (usually a Saturday school) for failure to comply with the attendance plan.

### **Step II -- Second Truancy—Second unexcused absence beyond 65 hours (10 days)**

- 1) The parent and student will be required to attend a pre-court meeting with the court appointed Truancy Officer and the principal or his designee. The student may be assigned a disciplinary outcome.
- 2) The student may be referred to the appropriate person for further counseling.



**Step III -- Third Truancy—Third unexcused absence beyond 65 hours (10 days) or if a child has been absent without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours of 42 or more hours in a month.**

- 1) The Attendance Officer will notify the Juvenile Court, complete the appropriate forms. The parent and student may be required to attend Juvenile Court.
- 3) The student may be referred for further counseling.

**AWARDS**

Students experience success in many positive areas during their years in school. It is only fitting then that they be honored periodically for these accomplishments. In conjunction with this philosophy, students receive awards-- trophies, pins, certificates, and letters -- for their performance in both the academic and extra-curricular realm. An awards assembly is conducted at the end of a school year to honor students who have displayed outstanding accomplishments in the academic areas. After each athletic season, an award's night is held at which student athletes receive appropriate awards. Furthermore, the various co-curricular and extracurricular organizations present awards to deserving members for their performances throughout the school year. Academic drawings and student recognition will also be highlighted throughout the year.

**BOOK BAGS, BACKPACKS, GYM BAGS, ETC.**

Book bags, backpacks, gym bags and other types of bags used to carry books and personal items are to remain in the student's locker during the school day. These items can block walkways in classrooms and are a safety hazard. Students carrying these items to class will be asked to return them to their locker. Repeated attempts to carry these items to class will result in a disciplinary referral to the office for disciplinary action by the administration.

**BUS BEHAVIOR**

All students are provided transportation to and from school by school busses. To insure the proper safety of all students while riding the busses, the following Rules of Conduct have been developed by the Superintendent in cooperation with the school bus drivers:

- 1) Use of profanity is not permitted
- 2) All students shall be seated at all times
- 3) Eating shall not be permitted on any bus at any time
- 4) Large, unusual cargo items may not be carried on the bus. (Students are encouraged to arrange for transportation of said items)
- 5) Arms, legs, hands, heads, etc. shall not protrude from the windows
- 6) Fighting, loud talk, etc. will not be permitted
- 7) Animals, firearms, etc. are not permitted to be transported on the bus at any time
- 8) The driver shall be in charge of students at all times
- 9) Marking, writing, cutting or otherwise defacing the interior of the bus is not permitted
- 10) Students may listen to MP3 players, walkmans, I-Pods etc. on the bus so long as headphones are used. These must be turned off and put in lockers upon entering the school building.
- 11) **Cell phones must be off and may not be used on the bus.**
- 12) Students not complying with the Rules of Conduct are subject to removal from the bus for an appropriate period of time. Students are still required by the law to attend school during periods of suspension from busses. In order to maintain closer supervision of bus behavior, a bus discipline policy will be established with warning and discipline notices being sent home when problems occur.

It is important to note that if a student wishes to get on or off a school bus at a stop other than his/her regular stop, a note from both sets of parents/guardians should be given to the building principal for approval, typically for supervision reasons only. This permission slip is then given to the bus driver upon boarding the bus. If a student wishes to ride another bus, a written request must be given to the superintendent.

### **CAFETERIA**

Liberty-Benton operates a “closed” lunch policy which means students are not to leave the building to eat lunch or have fast food lunch in the school. Each day a nutritious “Grade A” lunch is served by our cafeteria staff. Besides this well-balanced meal, the students may purchase a variety of items on an ala carte basis. The food service personnel are open to suggestions. Improper behavior in the cafeteria will result in disciplinary action according to adopted code of conduct plus possible removal from the cafeteria or even school suspension.

### **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

When the weather or other circumstances dictate that it would be inadvisable to conduct classes, students and their parents are notified via the Instant Connect Alert System, the two local radio stations, WFIN (AM) and WHMQ (FM). Since these stations are notified as soon as the decision is made, calling the school, school personnel, or the superintendent is unnecessary. All attempts are made to notify the public as soon as possible so individual arrangements can be made at home. It should be noted that a school district is allowed three “calamity” days during each school year. After these days are utilized, a school district must take the necessary steps to make-up the additional days missed.

### **CELL PHONES**

Students may bring a cell phone to school but they **must be turned off on the bus. Cell phones must be kept in a locker and turned off during school hours. This includes Z.A.P. Hall, after school tutoring, detention, and Saturday School.**

**First Offense:** The student may retrieve the cell phone from the principal’s office at the end of the day. A detention will be issued.

**Second Offense:** The confiscated cell phone will be returned only after a meeting with the student’s parent or guardian. A Saturday School will be issued.

**Third Offense:** The confiscated cell phone will be returned only to the parent or guardian at the end of the school year. An in school suspension will be issued.

### **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

The law requires school personnel to report all suspected cases of child abuse/neglect to the Hancock County Department of Human Services Children’s Protective Unit. In addition, the county prosecutor and or the Sheriff’s Department could be notified.

### **COMPUTER/ON-LINE SERVICES**

The Liberty-Benton Local School District provides computer and on-line service to students and teachers to promote educational excellence in our schools by facilitating resource sharing and innovation. With access to computers and people all over the world

also comes the availability of material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. The LBLSD has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe that the valuable information available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the District.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources. **If a LBLSD user violates any of these provisions, his or her account may be terminated and future access may be denied. The student code of conduct will be applied to the unauthorized use of computers, the internet, and other electronic devices.**

## **CONFERENCES**

Good parent/teacher communication promotes academic success at school. Parents may be periodically contacted by teachers or may request to meet with the academic teams Monday-Friday for conferencing on an as-needed basis during the duration of the school year. Records of these meetings will be kept with the academic teams.

In the event of serious school matters, the building principal may request that the parents come to school for a conference. These meetings are usually quite productive, and they aid the student and the school in solving the problem that has developed. After the conference is finished, a complete report regarding the conference is filed in the principal's office. This information is consulted if another problem arises in the future. It should be noted that parents should not hesitate to initiate a conference with the building principal if they feel a need exists.

Conferences can also be valuable between a parent and a teacher in solving matters of concern. One day in the fall of the year is scheduled especially for these conferences. Furthermore, teachers are willing to consult the parents anytime the need arises. The inherent advantages of this personal contact should not be underestimated.

## **DANCES**

**Middle School Dances are for Liberty-Benton Middle School students only. All school rules and dress code policies apply at all school dances.** Dresses for formal dances may be strapless or with spaghetti straps, considering most formal wear is designed this way. However, attire should always be within reason for a school dance. Glow sticks are not permitted. **Students with repeated disciplinary actions may be excluded from participation at school dances.**

## **DETENTION POLICY**

One of the goals of any educational institution should be to prepare students to be responsible adults. We at Liberty-Benton Middle School need to emphasize to students the realities of the adult world concerning punctuality, habits and behavior. This educational tool is designed to provide students with consequences for their actions similar to those of the adult world. This policy is designed to strengthen our position on requiring students to be on time to class and student classroom behavior.

Liberty-Benton Middle School uses after school detention as a disciplinary consequence for tardiness and a variety of behavior related school disruptions. Detention time ranges from a minimum of one (1) hour up to a maximum of two (2) hours. Students assigned detention will be given at least a 24 hour notice prior to serving and are expected to work out any transportation problems.

Detention sessions will be held Monday through Friday. Detention will begin promptly at 2:40 pm. Students reporting late to detention sessions will not be given credit nor be allowed to serve their assigned detention and one additional after school detention may be added.

SHOULD STUDENTS FAIL TO SHOW FOR THEIR ASSIGNED DETENTION, STUDENTS MAY BE ASSIGNED TO SATURDAY SCHOOL. SHOULD PATTERNS OF NON-ATTENDANCE TO DETENTION SESSIONS AND/OR SATURDAY SCHOOLS APPEAR, THE STUDENT MAY FACE SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL.

It should also be noted, after school activities have no bearing on the assignment of after school detention. Should a student be involved in a sports related event, and the student has been assigned to serve a detention session, he/she will be expected to serve the detention. **Activities are second nature to the academic responsibilities of the student.**

## **STUDENT RECORDS (Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA))**

The Principal is the Custodian of Records and is responsible for the supervision of student records at the school. Each student's records will be kept in a confidential file located at the student's school office. The information in a student's record file will be available for review only by the parents or legal guardian of a student, adult student (eighteen (18) years of age or older), and those authorized by Federal law and District regulations. A parent or adult student has the right to: A. Inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days after receipt of the request. The school has a form which can be used to submit a request. The Principal will notify the parent or adult student of the time and place where the records can be inspected. B. Request amendments if the parent or adult student believes the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights. The school has a form which may be used to identify which information in the record the parent or adult student believes is inaccurate or misleading and to specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. C. Consent to disclosures of personally-identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to those disclosures allowed by law. The school's administrative guideline 8330 describes those exceptions and is available upon request. D. Challenge District noncompliance with a parent's request to amend the records through a hearing. If the Principal decides not to

amend the record, the parent or adult student will be so notified and provided the opportunity for a hearing. Additional information concerning the hearing will be provided when notified of the opportunity for a hearing. E. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., Washington, D.C. 20202. F. Obtain a copy of the District's policy and administrative guideline on student records (8330). Each year the Superintendent will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information". The Board designates the following as student "directory information": a student's name; grade; teacher; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; photographs; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; or any other information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. The District will make the above information available upon a legitimate request unless a parent, guardian, or adult student notifies the School in writing within five (5) business days from the date of this notification that they will not permit distribution of any or all such information. Liberty-Benton Schools compile and maintain necessary information and records on all students. Parents/Guardians must sign a permission form to release records to another agency. Ohio Revised Code 3313.642 authorizes a public school to withhold a student's grades and credits (high school) for failure to pay assessed fees for materials "used in a course of instruction" other than textbooks, which must be furnished without charge under ORC 3329.06.

### **DISASTER DRILLS**

So that the student body is prepared for an emergency such as a fire, tornado, or other types of emergencies, definite procedures have been given to all teachers so that they are familiar with the procedures to be followed. Furthermore, periodically throughout the school year, practice drills are conducted so the entire school populace is prepared for a real situation.

### **DISCIPLINE**

A school cannot operate effectively and efficiently without reasonable rules and responsible students. It is the optimum situation when students accept this responsibility for conducting themselves according to such adopted standards. The majority of students normally do just that. However, it does become necessary at times for the classroom teacher and/or the building principal to become involved in disciplinary procedures.

The classroom teacher is requested to handle routine problems which arise by a verbal reprimand, parent conference, or a detention period. For recurring problems or serious violation, the principal is informed so that corrective measures can be taken. Some of the actions taken by the principal include: student conference, referral to the counselor, parent conference, detention, suspension from school up to 10 days, or a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion from school. For serious and/or legal

**Discipline continued...**

infractions, the proper authorities are also notified. A Saturday School is another measure that may be employed in these situations. A countywide alternative school program may also be utilized.

It should be stressed that at no time will open confrontations be tolerated from students to any school employee. If a student feels that he/she has been dealt with unjustly, the matter should be dealt with after class, after or before school, or brought to the attention of the principal. A record is kept by the building principal of students who are referred to the office. This record can be consulted with repeated offenders for the proper action. In most cases, it is not necessary to carry the penalties to their limits. The Liberty-Benton Board of Education adopted a revised "Student Code of Conduct" which is listed later in this handbook.

**DUE PROCESS**

Due process of law shall be given to each student in the event of suspension or expulsion in accordance with Sections 3313.66 and 3313.661 of the Ohio Revised Code. When a student is being considered for these disciplinary procedures, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the reason and will give written and oral notice of the intention to suspend the student. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side at the informal hearing before the administrator. After the informal hearing, the administrator will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, he/she and his/her parents will be notified in writing within one (1) day of the reason for and the length of the suspension. You have the right to appeal the decision to the superintendent. Suspensions may be appealed to the Board or its designee (Superintendent) within two (2) calendar days of the date of the written suspension notice. The written appeal must be filed with the Treasurer of the Board or the Superintendent and contain the reason(s) that the suspension is being appealed. The student may be reinstated during the appeal process unless it is determined that the student's attendance would jeopardize the safety of others. Upon review, the Board or its designee may affirm the suspension, reverse the suspension in its entirety, or otherwise reverse, vacate, or modify the suspension. The Superintendent shall reach the decision and inform the parent in writing within two (2) school days of the hearing.

**FEES**

School fees are charged to parents to cover the expense of consumable items used in classes such as workbooks, art supplies, science lab materials etc. Payment is due upon receipt of the fee schedule. Students carrying balances from previous school years will have their grade card withheld. All fees must be paid in full by the end of the school year. The fourth quarter grade card will be withheld until all fees are paid for the current school year. Checks should be made payable to Liberty-Benton Middle School.

## **FREE/REDUCED LUNCHES**

In order to ensure that all students have the opportunity to eat a well-balanced school lunch, free or reduced price lunches are provided to families that qualify. Parents who wish to enroll in this government-supported program should file the required application at the beginning of the school year. Particular details of this program are available from the office. It is important to remember that students are responsible for all purchases made in the cafeteria until the free/reduced lunch application is approved. This must be filed every year and for every student that is applying. Federal guidelines require the school to have an application for each member of a household (i.e. For three children in one household, three applications are required). A copy of this form is also located on-line with our school webpage at [www.liberty-benton.org](http://www.liberty-benton.org)

## **GIFTED EDUCATION**

### **I. Identification**

#### Ohio Revised Code Section 3324.04

(A) A description of the assessment instruments from the list adopted by the Department that the district will use to screen and identify gifted students;

(B) Screening and for administering assessment instruments for identifying gifted students. These procedures shall provide:

- At least two opportunities a year for assessment in the case of students requesting assessment or recommended for assessment by teachers, parents or other students (Whole grade screening with Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT));
- Assurance of inclusion in screening and assessment procedures for minority and disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language;
- Assurance that any student transferring into the district will be assessed within 90 days of the transfer at the request of a parent. You may direct inquires or referrals requests to the Gifted Coordinator at the LB Elementary School Office.
- Teachers, parents and students may request a referral form from the Gifted Coordinator if they seek a re-assessment for identification of gifted.

(C) L-B procedure for notification of parents is a letter home within 30 days about the results of any screening procedure or assessment instrument and the provision of an opportunity for parents to appeal any decision about the results of any screening procedure or assessment, the scheduling of children for assessment, or the placement of a student in any program for receipt of services.

(D) L-B will accept scores on assessment instruments provided by other school districts or trained personnel outside the school district, provided the assessment instruments are on the list approved by the Department of Education under Section 3324.02 of the Revised Code.

**Identification is based on the following criteria for eligibility:**

1. Superior Cognitive ID score = 128 on CogAT; or 130 on Kaufman (KTEA-II); or 129 on Otis Lennon School Ability; or 130 on Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales; or 130 on Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence, 3rd edition
2. Specific Ability score = 95%tile on ITBS in composite subject area \*
3. Creative Thinking = 115% CogAt AND 43 in Scales for Rating Behavior Characteristics (SRBCSS)

\* Students will automatically be re-tested if they score between the 92nd and 94th percentile on any subject subtest the district has administered on a norm-referenced test used for gifted identification.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS (PBIS) AND LIMITED USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

The Board is committed to the District-wide use of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") with students and the establishment of a school environment focused on the care, safety, and welfare of all students and staff members. Student Personnel shall work to prevent the need for the use of restraint and/or seclusion. PBIS shall serve as the foundation for the creation of a learning environment that promotes the use of evidence-based behavioral interventions, thus enhancing academic and social behavioral outcomes for all students. An emphasis shall be placed on promoting positive interventions and solutions to potential conflicts. PBIS emphasizes prevention of student behavior problems through the use of non-aversive techniques, which should greatly reduce, if not eliminate, the need to use restraint and/or seclusion.

Professional staff members and support staff determined appropriate by the Superintendent are permitted to physically restrain and/or seclude a student, but only when there is immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others, there is no other safe and effective intervention possible, and the physical restraint or seclusion is used in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate and protects the safety of all children and adults at school.

All restraint and seclusion shall only be done in accordance with this Policy, which is based on the standards adopted by the State Board of Education regarding the use of student restraint and seclusion.

Training in methods of PBIS and the use of restraint and seclusion will be provided to all professional staff and support staff determined appropriate by the Superintendent. Training will be in accordance with the State's Standards. Only school staff who are trained in permissible seclusion and physical restraint measures shall use such techniques.

Every use of restraint and seclusion shall be documented and reported in accordance with this Policy.



The Board shall annually notify parents of this policy, and publish it on the District's website.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Aversive behavioral interventions means an intervention that is intended to induce pain or discomfort to a student for the purpose of eliminating or reducing maladaptive behaviors, including such interventions as application of noxious, painful, and/or intrusive stimuli, including any form of noxious, painful or intrusive spray, inhalant, or taste.

Chemical restraint means a drug or medication used to control a student's behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is not:

- A. Prescribed by a licensed physician, or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under Ohio law, for the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition; and
- B. Administered as prescribed by the licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional's authority under Ohio law.

De-escalation techniques are strategically employed verbal or non-verbal interventions used to reduce the intensity of threatening behavior before a crisis situation occurs.

Functional behavior assessment ("FBA") is a collaborative problem-solving process that is used to describe the "function" or purpose that is served by a student's behavior. Understanding the "function" that an impeding behavior serves for the student assists directly in designing educational programs and developing behavior plans with a high likelihood of success.

Mechanical restraint means any method of restricting a student's freedom of movement, physical activity, or normal use of the student's body, using an appliance or device manufactured for this purpose. Mechanical restraint does not mean devices used by trained school personnel, or used by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including:

- A. restraints for medical immobilization;
- B. adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; or
- C. vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.

Parent means:

- A. a biological or adoptive parent;

- B. a guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent, or authorized to make decisions for the child (but not the State if the child is a ward of the State);
- C. an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's welfare;
- D. a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-05(E); or
- E. any person identified in a judicial decree or order as the parent of a child or the person with authority to make educational decisions on behalf of the child.

Physical escort means the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, waist, hip, or back for the purpose of inducing a student to move to a safe location.

Physical restraint means the use of physical contact that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his/her arms, legs, body, or head freely. Physical restraint does not include a physical escort, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact for the following or similar purposes to:

- A. break up a fight;
- B. knock a weapon away from a student's possession;
- C. calm or comfort;
- D. assist a student in completing a task/response if the student does not resist the contact; or
- E. prevent an impulsive behavior that threatens the student's immediate safety (e.g., running in front of a car).

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") means a school-wide systematic approach to embed evidence-based practice and data-driven decision making to improve school climate and culture in order to achieve improved academic and social outcomes, and increase learning for all students. PBIS encompasses a range of systemic and individualized positive strategies to reinforce desired behaviors, diminish reoccurrences of challenging behaviors, and teach appropriate behaviors to students.

Positive Behavior Support Plan means the design, implementation, and evaluation of individual or group instructional and environmental modifications, including programs of behavioral instruction, to produce significant improvements in behavior through skill acquisition and the reduction of problematic behavior.

Prone restraint means physical or mechanical restraint while the student is in the face-down position for an extended period of time.

Seclusion means the involuntary isolation of a student in a room, enclosure, or space from which the student is prevented from leaving by physical restraint or by a closed door or other physical barrier. It does not include a timeout.

Student means a child or adult aged three (3) to twenty-one (21) enrolled in the District.

Student Personnel means teachers, principals, counselors, social workers, school resource officers, teacher's aides, psychologists, bus drivers, or other District staff who interact directly with students.

Timeout means a behavioral intervention in which the student, for a limited and specified time, is separated from the class within the classroom or in a non-locked setting for the purpose of self-regulating and controlling his or her own behavior. In a timeout, the student is not physically restrained or prevented from leaving the area by physical barriers.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS**

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports ("PBIS") creates structure in the environment using a non-aversive effective behavioral system to improve academic and behavior outcomes for all students.

The PBIS prevention-oriented framework or approach shall apply to all students and staff, and in all settings.

PBIS shall include:

- A. school staff trained to identify conditions such as where, under what circumstances, with whom, and why specific inappropriate behavior may occur;
- B. preventative assessments that include:
  - review of existing data;
  - interviews with parents, family members, and students; and
  - examination of previous and existing behavioral intervention plans.
- C. development and implementation of preventative behavioral interventions, and the teaching of appropriate behavior, including:
  - 1. modification of environmental factors that escalate inappropriate behavior;
  - 2. supporting the attainment of appropriate behavior; and
  - 3. use of verbal de-escalation to defuse potentially violent dangerous behavior.

### **SECLUSION**

Seclusion may be used only when a student's behavior poses an immediate risk of physical harm to the student or others and no other safe and effective intervention is possible. Seclusion may be used only as a last resort safety intervention that provides the student with an opportunity to regain control of his/her actions. Seclusion must be used in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, for the minimum amount of time necessary for the purpose of protecting the student and/or others from physical harm, and otherwise in compliance with this Policy and the Ohio Department of Education's ("ODE") corresponding policy.

Seclusion shall be implemented only by Student Personnel who have been trained in accordance with this Policy to protect the care, welfare, dignity and safety of the student.

Additional requirements for the use of seclusion:

If Student Personnel use seclusion, they must:

- A. continually observe the student in seclusion for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- B. use verbal strategies and research-based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control as quickly as possible;
- C. remove the student from seclusion when the immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others has dissipated;
- D. assess the student for injury or psychological distress after the use of seclusion, and monitor the student as needed following the incident;
- E. conduct a debriefing including all involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- F. complete all required reports and document their observations of the student.

Requirements for a room or area used for seclusion:

A room or area used for seclusion must provide for adequate space, lighting, ventilation, clear visibility, and the safety of the student.

A room or area used for seclusion must not be locked or otherwise prevent the student from exiting the area should staff become incapacitated or leave the area.

Additional prohibited seclusion practices:

Seclusion shall never be used as a punishment or to force compliance.

Seclusion shall not be used:

- A. for the convenience of staff;
- B. as a substitute for an educational program;
- C. as a form of discipline or punishment;
- D. as a substitute for less restrictive alternatives;
- E. as a substitute for inadequate staffing;
- F. as a substitute for staff training in positive behavior supports and crisis prevention and intervention;
- G. as a means to coerce, retaliate, or in a manner that endangers a student; or
- H. if it deprives the student of basic needs.

Seclusion of preschool-age children is prohibited, except that a preschool-age child may be secluded from his or her classmates, either in the classroom or in a safe, lighted, and

well-ventilated space, for an amount of time that is brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and development, if the child is always within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member.

## **RESTRAINT**

There are different types of restraint, as defined above, including physical restraint, prone restraint, mechanical restraint, and chemical restraint. The use of restraint other than physical restraint is prohibited.

Physical restraint may be used only when the student's behavior poses an immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others and no other safe and/or effective intervention is possible. The physical restraint must be implemented in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate, does not interfere with the student's ability to communicate in his/her primary language or mode of communication, and otherwise in compliance with this Policy and the ODE's corresponding policy.

Physical restraint shall be implemented only by Student Personnel who have been trained in accordance with this Policy to protect the care, welfare, dignity and safety of the student, except in the case of rare and unavoidable emergency situations when trained personnel are not immediately available.

Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

If Student Personnel use physical restraint, they must:

- A. continually observe the student in restraint for indications of physical or mental distress and seek immediate medical assistance if there is a concern;
- B. use verbal strategies and research-based de-escalation techniques in an effort to help the student regain control;
- C. remove the student from physical restraint immediately when the immediate risk of physical harm to the student and/or others has dissipated;
- D. assess the student for injury or psychological distress after the use of physical restraint, and monitor the student as needed following the incident;
- E. conduct a debriefing including all involved staff to evaluate the trigger for the incident, staff response, and methods to address the student's behavioral needs; and
- F. complete all required reports and document their observations of the student.

Physical restraint shall not be used for punishment or discipline, or as a substitute for other less restrictive means of assisting a student in regaining control.

### **Prohibited Restraint Practices**

The following restraint practices are prohibited under all circumstances, including emergency safety situations:

- A. prone restraint as defined in Executive Order 2009-13 (which defines prone restraint to mean "all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal functioning of any portion, or all, of an individual's body while the individual is in a face-down position for an extended period of time");
- B. physical restraint that restricts the airway of a student or obstructs the student's ability to breathe;
- C. physical restraint that impacts the student's primary mode of communication;
- D. restraint of preschool-age students, except for holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain control;
- E. restraint that deprives the student of basic needs;
- F. restraint that unduly risks serious harm or needless pain to the student, including physical restraint that involves the intentional, knowing, or reckless use of any of the following techniques:
  - 1. using any method that is capable of causing loss of consciousness or harm to the neck or restricting/obstructing respiration in any way;
  - 2. pinning down the student by placing knees to the torso, head and/or neck of the student;
  - 3. using pressure points, pain compliance, or joint manipulation;
  - 4. dragging or lifting of the student by the hair or ear or by any type of mechanical restraint;
  - 5. using other students or untrained staff to assist with the hold or restraint;or
  - 6. securing the student to another student or to a fixed object.
- G. mechanical restraint (that does not include devices used by trained Student Personnel, or by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed); or
- H. chemical restraint (which does not include medication administered as prescribed by a licensed physician).

### **ADDITIONAL PROHIBITED PRACTICES**

The following practices are prohibited under all circumstances, including emergency safety situations:

- A. corporal punishment;
- B. child endangerment as defined in Ohio Revised Code 2919.22; and
- C. aversive behavioral interventions.

### **CONTACT LAW ENFORCEMENT AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL**

In accordance with the Board's Emergency Management Plan (see Policy 8400), District personnel shall contact law enforcement and/or appropriate emergency response

personnel if at any point they determine that an intervention (either a restraint or seclusion) is insufficient to maintain the safety of all involved.

### **FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN**

If a student repeatedly engages in dangerous behavior that leads to instances of restraint and/or seclusion, District personnel shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment to identify the student's needs and more effective ways of addressing those needs. If necessary, District personnel shall also develop a behavior intervention plan that incorporates positive behavioral interventions.

### **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The District shall provide training as follows:

- A. All Student Personnel, as defined in this Policy, shall be trained annually on the requirements of the Ohio Department of Education's Policy on Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, and Restraint and Seclusion; Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-15; and this Policy.
- B. the Superintendent, in consultation with each school building's principal and/or assistant principal, shall identify which District employees should receive additional training so that an adequate number of personnel in each building are trained in crisis management and de-escalation techniques, including the use of restraint and seclusion. District employees who receive such additional training must keep their training current in accordance with the requirements of the provider of the training.
- C. The Superintendent shall develop a plan to provide training to school personnel, as defined in this Policy, so that Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports are implemented on a District-wide basis.
  - Implementation of PBIS throughout the District may be a multi-year process, with training taking place over several years.

The District shall maintain written or electronic documentation on training provided and lists of participants in each training.

Only individuals trained in accordance with this Policy in the appropriate use of restraint and seclusion may use those techniques.

### **MONITORING AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

The Superintendent shall monitor the implementation of this policy.

Any parent of a child enrolled in school in the District may submit a written complaint to the Superintendent regarding an incident of restraint or seclusion. The Superintendent shall investigate each written complaint and respond in writing to the parent's complaint within thirty (30) days of receipt of the complaint.

### **REQUIRED DATA AND REPORTING**

Each use of restraint or seclusion shall be:

- A. documented in writing;
- B. reported to the building administration immediately;
- C. reported to the parent immediately; and
- D. documented in a written report.

A copy of the written report shall be made available to the student's parent or guardian within twenty-four (24) hours of the use of restraint or seclusion. A copy of the written report shall also be maintained in the student's file.

All written documentation of the use of restraint or seclusion are educational records pursuant to the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act ("FERPA"), and district personnel are prohibited from releasing any personally identifiable information to anyone other than the parent, in accordance with FERPA's requirements.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION IN CLASSROOMS NOTIFICATION**

The District is providing you with the option to be informed prior to any application of a pesticide in a classroom or building this school year. In certain emergencies, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to control organisms that pose an immediate health threat, but you will be notified following any such application. If you would like to receive prior notification, please complete the form located at the back of this handbook

and submit it to: Liberty-Benton Local Schools, Superintendent Office, 9190 County Road 9, Findlay, OH 45840. You may also obtain a copy of this request from the elementary office.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Publications such as a student newspaper, literary magazine, and yearbook are connected to the overall school program and are subject to editorial control by the school's authorities.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT PHOTOS/MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

During the year, Liberty-Benton Local Schools often have the opportunity to photograph and videotape students in a variety of school related activities. Student recognition programs, academic programs and fine arts programs are a few examples of these



activities. As such, these personally identifiable photographs and/or videotape may be used in communication tools such as the district newsletter, calendar, website, and in communicating with the media such as allowing interviews or photographs with students. The district reserves the right to deny media requests for student interviews at any time. Highlighting achievements in our schools is an integral part of reporting responsibly to our community and is a way of sharing in the success of our schools and students. However, it is our primary goal to respect your privacy. Parents have the right to submit a written request to the Principal, within two weeks after the first day the student is enrolled in a school year, directing the district not to release the information as listed above. The written request or any questions should be directed to the Mr. Otley, Liberty-Benton Middle School, 9190 CR 9, Findlay, OH 45840, (419) 422-9166.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Student lockers, desks, cabinets, and similar property are the property of the Liberty-Benton Board of Education provided to students as a convenience for their use. Lockers and other such property carry no expectation of privacy for the students who occupy them. School lockers, desks, cabinets, etc. and their contents are subject to search by school authorities at any time and without warning.

### **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

The Board of Education recognizes the need for insurance coverage for injuries to students caused by accidents occurring in the course of attendance at school and participation in athletic and co-curricular programs of the schools. Therefore, at the beginning of each school year, the Board shall offer parents the opportunity to participate in group accident insurance at the expense of the parents. A signed statement of insurance coverage on the part of the student's parent or guardian shall be a prerequisite for student registration in any school activity having the potential for personal injury. These forms are available on the athletics webpage.

### **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

For students' safety and welfare, video surveillance cameras are placed throughout the building and school grounds and on busses. Actions recorded on these cameras may be used as evidence in disciplinary action and can be viewed by the administration or other designated school personnel only. Any attempt to damage or interfere with the function of these devices will result in disciplinary action by the school and possible referral to law enforcement agencies.

## **LIBERTY-BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT SCOPE OF JURISDICTION**

This code of conduct is in effect while students are under the authority of school personnel or involved in any school activity. This includes but is not limited to school

buses and property under the control of school authorities, and while at interscholastic competitions, extracurricular events, or other school activities or programs. In addition, this Code of Conduct includes:

1. Misconduct by a student that occurs off school district property but is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school district property.
2. Misconduct by a student that, regardless of where it occurs, is directed at a district official or employee or the property of an official or employee.

Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in verbal or written warning or reprimand, referral to the guidance counselor, parental contact or conference, detention, Saturday school, in-school suspension, community service, emergency removal, referral to law enforcement agencies, suspension, or expulsion.

#### **RULE 1: ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

A student shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, sell, or show evidence of having consumed any drug, look-alike drug or alcoholic beverage of any kind on school grounds or within the immediate vicinity of the school during or after school hours, off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; on school busses or rented carriers. Students showing evidence of having consumed drugs or alcohol or who are in possession of a “mood modifier” and/or drug related paraphernalia, will be immediately removed from classes pending further investigations.

#### **RULE 2: UNAUTHORIZED TOUCHING OR CONTACT**

A student shall not cause mental or physical harm, or behave in such a manner which could threaten to cause physical injury to school staff, other students, or other persons, while under the jurisdiction of the school. Students that violate this policy will be subject to punishment at the discretion of the principal.

#### **RULE 3: CLASSROOM TRUANCY AND TARDINESS**

A student shall not leave or be late for school or class without permission from the middle school office or the teacher responsible for the student at that time. A student shall not cut class or any assigned activity such as an assembly, pep rally, etc. After the third tardy, the student will be issued an after school detention. Truancy may result in a Saturday School.

#### **RULE 4: COLLUSION**

A student shall not by use of violence, force, noise, coercion or intimidation of any student, urge others to engage in any such disruptive conduct. No student shall assist or aid in any way another student in violating either school rules or any law or ordinance when either student is properly under the authority of school personnel.

#### **RULE 5: ABUSE OF SCHOOL COMPUTER HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, TECHNOLOGY, E-MAIL, INTERNET & PHONES**

A student shall not abuse the school district’s hardware or software including, but not limited to: tampering with computer programs (whether such programs are commercially

prepared or belong to another student or faculty/staff member); using equipment to make unauthorized or illegal duplicate copies of computer software; damaging or destroying computer hardware or software; **using computer, phone, or computer mail facilities of the school district for purposes unrelated to the instructional program of the district unless written permission from the superintendent has been obtained**; misusing district telephones to place unauthorized phone calls is prohibited as well.

#### **RULE 6: DAMAGE TO SCHOOL BUILDINGS, PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT**

A student shall not cause, incite, or attempt to cause damage to school property, including buildings, grounds, equipment, or materials. A student shall not cause, incite or attempt to cause damage to private property on school premises or at any school activity on or off school grounds. Students and/or their parents/guardians shall be held responsible for any damage to school buildings, equipment, and public or personal property. This includes the introduction of viruses into computers, or the deletion or changing of files or data bases. In addition:

1. Students 18 years of age or older, and parents of all other students shall be held responsible for any damage to the school building, property and/or equipment.
2. The responsible parties shall be responsible for restitution to the Liberty-Benton Local Board of Education for all costs involved in repairing or replacing school equipment and for repairing school buildings or property. HB 601 allows for up to \$10,000 reparations against the parent for failure to reasonably control a child when damage occurs to school property or theft, and/or willful destruction of school property occurs.
3. Grades, credits, and transcripts shall be withheld for any student who fails to make proper restitution.
4. All claims for damage shall be billed by the board treasurer or his/her designee.
5. Payments for damage shall be made to the board treasurer. The treasurer will notify the building administration when the claim has been paid.
6. Damage to buildings, property, and equipment may also result in disciplinary action by the school administration.

#### **RULE 7: DANGEROUS WEAPONS AND INSTRUMENTS**

Weapons of any sort are strictly prohibited. A weapon includes conventional objects like guns, incendiary devices, bombs, pellet guns, knives, or club type implements. A student shall not possess, handle, transmit or conceal any object which might be considered a dangerous weapon or appearing to be capable of causing serious bodily injury to a person including, but not limited to, fire crackers, smoke bombs, sharp instruments, knives, brass knuckles, incendiary devices, and chemical agents such as tear gas or pepper gas. This rule also includes any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon or an object converted from its original use to an object used to threaten or injure another. This includes, but is not limited to padlock, pens, pencils, chairs, jewelry, and so on. A threat to use such instruments against students, staff, or physical property will be handled in accordance with the Liberty-Benton Board of Education's Zero Tolerance Policy.

**RULE 8: DISRESPECT:** Students are expected to be respectful of all Board of Education Employees, visitors, and each other. A student shall not intimidate, insult, verbally abuse, or abuse in writing, gesture, or deed, any member of the student body, employee of the Board of Education, or a visitor in the school.

**RULE 9: DISRUPTION**

A student shall not by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, harassment, insubordination, horseplay, or repeated lack of cooperation, cause disruption or obstruction to the educational process, including all curricular and extracurricular activities.

**RULE 10: DRESS CODE**

A student shall not dress or behave in such a manner which calls attention to himself/herself, cause a disruption or presents a safety or health problem. If dress becomes objectionable, the principal will make a determination of the appropriateness of the attire. Specific articles which are not allowed are:

1. Flip flops
2. Spandex or tight fitting clothing (yoga pants etc.). **Leggings must be worn under skirts, shorts, or dresses.**
3. Sunglasses
4. Hats
5. Short shorts/short skirts
6. Boxer shorts/any visible undergarment
7. Halter tops or spaghetti strap shirts and sleeveless apparel
8. Sagging pants (pants must be worn at the waist)
9. Bare midriffs or shirt/pants combinations that allow for the exposure of the midriff
10. Pajama pants
11. Apparel portraying drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or questionable language is not permitted
12. Chains or gang related materials, or anything that can scratch or mar school furniture
13. Grossly ripped or frayed clothing where the skin is visible
14. Low cut tops

**\*The final decision regarding appropriate school attire rests with the principal.**

**First Offense:** Parent contacted and required to bring in appropriate school attire. Student will be detained in the office until the parent arrives with a change of clothing. A record of the infraction will be placed in the student's discipline file.

**Second Offense:** Saturday School

**Third Offense:** In-school suspension

**RULE 11: EXPLOSIVE AND INCENDIERY DEVICES/UNAUTHORIZED USE OF FIRE**

Students shall not possess, handle, transmit, sell, conceal or bring upon school grounds any, matches, cigarette lighters, fireworks, explosives, smoke bombs, munitions, or items of the like, nor shall students ignite, explode or detonate or attempt to ignite matches, cigarette lighters, fireworks, explosives, smoke bombs, munitions or items of the like.

**RULE 12: FALSE ALARMS**

Pulling the alarm or creating a form of panic is prohibited.

**RULE 13: FIGHTING**

A student shall not initiate or participate in any form of physical confrontation on school grounds or off of school grounds at any extra-curricular activity or function. An individual, whose deliberate behavior directly leads to a fight between other parties, shall be considered a participant as well.

**RULE 14: FORGERY, PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

It is expected that all students will be honest on all tests, assignments, etc. and no student will engage in the conduct of cheating, plagiarism, or forgery. Presenting someone else's work as one's own in order to obtain a grade or credit is considered to be cheating. Students' work must be their own and any form of forgery is prohibited. Cheating or plagiarism would result in an automatic "F" for that particular test, paper, or activity and a Saturday School will be issued for the first offense.

**RULE 15: FRIGHTENING, DEGRADING OR DISGRACEFUL ACTS**

A student shall not engage in any act which frightens, degrades, or tends to frighten, degrade, or disgrace teachers, students, or other persons by written or verbal means, or by means of gestures or pictures. A student shall not threaten verbally, electronically, in writing, gesture, or deed, with physical violence or coerce by any other means any student, teacher, or other school employee or visitor. A student shall not urge another student or person to threaten physical violence or coerce by any other means any student, teacher, school employee or visitor. Intimidation may include, but is not limited to, threats used to extort money or any other item of value from another student or person. The Board of Education Zero Tolerance Policy will be enforced where applicable.

**RULE 16: GAMBLING**

Gambling of any type shall be prohibited.

**RULE 17: HARASSMENT/BULLYING/INTIMIDATION****BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board of Education will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property or while enroute to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education's Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

A. any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently

severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s); or

B. violence within a dating relationship.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well being. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Any student or student's parent/guardian who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The building principal or appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior. Making intentionally false reports about aggressive behavior for the purpose of

getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify the parent/guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

If after investigation, act of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the parent/guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

#### Complaints

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review, investigation, and action.

#### Privacy/Confidentiality

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against who the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

#### Reporting Requirement

At least semi-annually, the Superintendent shall provide to the President of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District web site (if one exists). The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

Allegations of criminal misconduct and suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or to Child Protective Services in accordance with statute. District personnel shall cooperate with investigations by such agencies.

#### Immunity

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R.C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

#### Notification

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

#### Education and Training

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of aggressive behavior, including bullying and violence within a dating relationship. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines and aggressive behavior and bullying in general will be age and content appropriate.

To the extent that State or Federal funds are appropriated for these purposes, the District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students. Time spent by school staff in these training programs shall apply toward mandated continuing education requirements.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed. The complaint procedure established by the Superintendent shall be followed.

R.C. 3313.666, 3313.667

State Board of Education Model Policy (2007)

Adopted 4/18/06

Revised 12/17/07

Revised 3/21/11

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

- A. Verbal: The making of written or oral sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.
- B. Non-Verbal: Causing the placement of sexually suggestive pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or the making of sexually suggestive or insulting gestures, sounds, leering, whistling, and the like to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.
- C. Physical Contact: Threatening or causing unwanted touching, contact, or attempts at same, including patting, pinching, pushing the body, or coerced sexual intercourse, with a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.



## **GENDER, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, DISABILITY, HEIGHT, WEIGHT HARASSMENT**

- A. Verbal: Written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, national origin, religious beliefs, etc. toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district. (Hate speech). Conducting a "campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.
- B. Non-Verbal: Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.
- C. Physical: Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, hissing, or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district.

This guideline does not negate the requirements for reporting suspected child abuse to the proper authorities in compliance with AG 8462. Some forms of sexual harassment of a student by another student may be considered a form of child abuse, which would require that the student-abuser be reported to proper authorities in compliance with State law.

## **RULE 18: HAZING**

Hazing activities of any sort are prohibited. Hazing is defined as subjecting students to abusive or humiliating rituals or actions by way of initiation.

## **RULE 19: HORSEPLAY**

Students will not engage in horseplay at school, on the bus or during other school related activities. Horseplay is characterized by mischievous actions or activities that are disruptive to the educational process or school related activity (pushing, mock fighting, tripping etc.).

## **RULE 20: INSUBORDINATION**

A student shall not disregard or refuse to obey reasonable directions given by school personnel. Repeated infractions for the same offense may be viewed as an act of insubordination.

## **RULE 21: PROFANITY/OBSCENITY**

Students shall not use profane or obscene language, either written or verbal, when communicating, including obscene gestures, signs, pictures or publications.

**Profane** Showing disrespect, contempt, or irreverence for sacred things.

**Obscene** Offensive to modesty or decency. Using profanity, making obscene gestures or comments or other forms of disrespect toward any person or school employee on or off school property is prohibited.

## **RULE 22: PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

Public display of affection is unacceptable behavior. The display of affection in a manner not suited to the school environment is not permitted and may result in discipline.

Hugging, and holding and kissing are not appropriate during school hours or after school activities. Actions such as passionate embraces and hands on persons are inappropriate during all school activities as well.

#### **RULE 23: REPEATED VIOLATIONS**

Students who continually fail to comply with school rules and policies will be subject to discipline at the discretion of the principal in addition to possible law enforcement intervention.

#### **RULE 24: SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

Students shall abide by all transportation guidelines outlined in this handbook.

#### **RULE 25: THEFT/UNAUTHORIZED POSSESSION**

A student shall not take or attempt to take into possession the public property or equipment of the school district or the personal property of another student, teacher, visitor, or employee of the school district.

#### **RULE 26: THREATS**

A student shall not threaten verbally, electronically, in writing, gesture, or deed, with physical harm or violence or coerce by any other means any student, teacher, or other school employee or visitor. A student shall not urge another student or person to threaten physical violence or coerce by any other means any student, teacher, school employee or visitor. Students may be suspended for making threats. Law enforcement officials will be contacted if the situation warrants it.

#### **RULE 27: TOBACCO/PARAPHERNALIA**

A student shall not possess tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia (cigarette butts, clips, lighters etc.) in any form on school property, on any school bus, at a school but stop, at school events or within sight of any school building.

**First Offense: Saturday School and tobacco counseling**

**Second Offense: 3-day out-of-school suspension**

**Third Offense: 5-day out-of-school suspension**

**Fourth Offense: 10-day out-of-school suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion**

#### **RULE 28: USE/POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

Some electronic equipment necessary in school is supplied by the school. Students may listen to MP3 players, walkmans, I-Pods etc. on the bus so long as headphone are used.

**Cell phones must be off and may not be used on the bus. Upon entering the school building, students must turn off all electronic equipment and place it in their locker.** Failure to comply with this rule will result in the confiscation of the device and possible disciplinary action. **Cell phones must be kept in a locker and turned off during school hours (see cell phone policy).**

**The Student Network, Internet Acceptable Use, and Student iPad Use Agreement shall be followed at all times. The student code of conduct will apply to violations of**

**these agreements. These policies can be reviewed following the last page of this student handbook.**

### **CRIMINAL CHARGES**

Criminal charges may be filed for violations of any of the aforementioned rules depending upon the severity of the offense and the discretion of the building administrator.

### **DISCIPLINE MATRIX**

This matrix is a tool to help the building administrator determine disciplinary

Rule	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense	4 <sup>th</sup> Offense
Alcohol and Drugs	10 day OSS possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE		
Classroom Truancy	SS	1 day ISR	3 day ISR	5 day ISR
Collusion	1 day ISR	3 day ISR	5 day OSS	10 day OSS
Computer abuse	1 day ISR	3 day OSS	5 day OSS with 30 day loss of computer privileges	10 day OSS with loss of computer privileges
Damage to property	SS with restitution	1 day ISR with restitution	3 day OSS with restitution	5 day OSS with restitution
Dangerous Weapons	10 day OSS possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE		
Disruption	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS	5 day OSS
Dress Code	D	SS	1 day ISR	3 day ISR
Explosives, Incendiary devices, Unauthorized use of fire	10 day OSS with possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE		
False Alarms	3 day OSS	5 day OSS	10 day OSS with possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE
Fighting	3 day OSS	5 day OSS	10 day OSS with possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE
Forgery, Plagiarism, Cheating	SS and no credit	ISS and no credit	2 day ISS and no credit	OSS and no credit
Frightening, Degrading, Disgraceful Acts	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS	5 day OSS
Gambling	W	D	SS	1 day ISR
Harassment	3 day OSS	5 day OSS	10 day OSS with possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE
Hazing	10 day OSS with possible RFE	10 day OSS with RFE		
Insubordination	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS	5 day OSS
Profanity and Obscenity	D	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS
Public Display of Affection	D	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS
Theft or Unauthorized Possession	SS	1 day ISR	3 day OSS	5 day OSS
Tobacco	SS, tobacco counseling	3 day OSS	5 day OSS	10 day OSS and RFE
Use/Pos. of Electronic Devices/Cell Phones	D and confiscation	SS and confiscation	ISS and confiscation	1 day OSS and confiscation

consequences that may be enacted as a result of student infractions.

### Definition of terms

RFE = Recommendation For Expulsion

OSS = Out of School Suspension

ISS = In School Suspension

SS = Saturday School

D = Detention

W = Warning

RWI = Reduction of consequence with intervention approved by the principal

*The proper authorities may be contacted concerning any offense.*

## DISCIPLINE TERMS

**Warning--**This is a statement to a student during a minor infraction that continued behavior will result in a more serious penalty. This usually occurs in the classroom for initial offense.

**Detention--**Some teachers utilize after school detention for students who misbehave in classes or fail to complete assignments. Detention begins at 2:35 p.m. and ends at 3:35 p.m. Students will receive one day's notice prior to any detention.

**Parent Conference--**A conference can be called at any time to discuss and review classroom or school-wide behavior concerns.

**Saturday School--**A Saturday school program from 7:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. will be used to deal with certain discipline situations and conduct infractions. Students will complete school work under a supervised environment. Failure to serve a Saturday School may result in a 3-day out-of-school suspension.

**In-School Suspension--**This consists of a student being confined in isolation during the school day and not attending classes. While in this position, the student is required to keep up on daily assignments and take all missed tests or quizzes. Students on in-school suspension are not allowed to attend any extracurricular activities for the duration of the suspension.

**Suspension--**This is considered the most severe penalty imposed by the building principal. It is from one to ten days in duration and students suspended are to remain under their parents' direction while not attending school or extracurricular activities. Students suspended from school will receive credit for work missed, but the absence will be unexcused. All work is due the day of reinstatement to school.

**Expulsion--**Only the superintendent of schools may expel a student from school. This expulsion can be for a period up to but not exceeding eighty days. Normally, a student is expelled upon the recommendation of the principal although it can be initiated by the superintendent.

**Alternative School--**A student can be assigned to the Hancock County Alternative Opportunity Center for a short term (up to 10 days) or a long term (up to 80 days) placement if school behavior or performance warrants such action. The principal will make this recommendation. All local discipline code of conduct rules and alternative school rules will be followed at all times.

**Emergency Removal--**If a pupil's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process either within a classroom or elsewhere on school premises, then the principal may remove the student from the premises or from the curricular or extracurricular activity.

## **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

Grounds for expulsion shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Unauthorized contact or touching to any school personnel, other student(s) or visitor while on school property, or under school authority, including buses, or at any school-sponsored activity.
2. False alarms--including fire and bomb threats.
3. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages prior to arriving on school premises, on school property (including buses) or at any school-sponsored activity.
4. Illegal use, possession, or possession for sale of any narcotic drug, drug paraphernalia,

- "look-alike" drug, or mind-altering substances prior to arriving on school premises, on school property (including buses) or at any school-sponsored activity.
5. Disruption of school by use of violence, force, coercion, threat or disorderly conduct. This shall include use of same to incite others toward acts of disruption.
  6. Unauthorized use of fire or attempted arson to any school building or property.
  7. Explosives--possession or use of explosive devices including fireworks, stink bombs or smoke bombs or munitions.
  8. Possession or use of weapons or any object which might be considered a dangerous weapon or instrument of violence.
  9. Repeated offenses or flagrant violations where suspension is normally considered appropriate.

## **SUSPENSION**

Grounds for suspension shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Damage or of school property or private property on school premises.
1. Smoking/smokeless tobacco. This shall not be permitted in the school building, on school buses, school grounds, vicinity of the school, or at school activities. (Vicinity shall be defined as in sight or view of the school.)
2. Possession of tobacco products.
3. Profanity or obscene language, written or verbal, directed toward school personnel, students, or other visitors. This shall include use of obscene gestures and signs.
4. Insubordination in refusing to comply with directions of school personnel or others in authority.
5. Violation of PDA policy.
6. Violation of student driving/parking lot regulations.
7. Possession of or having used alcoholic beverages, illegal narcotics, illegal drugs, look-alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, or mind-altering substances, prior to arriving on school premises, while on school premises (including buses), or at any school sponsored activity.
8. Theft of school property or equipment or personal property of any school personnel, another student, or visitor.
9. Possession or use of weapons or any object which might be considered a dangerous weapon or any instrument of violence.
10. Fighting among two or more students while on school property, vicinity of the school, school buses or at any school sponsored activity.
11. The act of extortion from any person while on school property, school buses, or at any school sponsored activity.
12. Health, dress and safety standards, as posted for each department, activity, and/or school.
13. Non-compliance with rules and regulations of student activities including organizations, departments, and/or school.
14. Loitering at any time on school grounds, buildings, or adjacent properties.
15. Repeated or flagrant violations of any school rules or accepted standards of school behavior.
16. Displaying gang insignia in written, tattoo, jewelry or graffiti form, wearing of

- clothing displaying such and signing of such. (Signing means use of hand gestures, handshakes and language.)
17. Failure to show for assigned detention, Saturday School or assignment to the Alternative School.
  18. Any offense which is grounds for expulsion.
  19. Gross misconduct. It should be noted that other possible student conduct or persistent disobedience may also serve as grounds for suspension, as provided by law.

### **DUE PROCESS**

Due Process of law shall be given to each student in the event of suspension or expulsion in accordance with Sections 3313.66 and 3313.661 of the Ohio Revised Code. Fully detailed procedures of the process appear on page 11 of this handbook.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURE FORM**

At the beginning of the school year, each parent is asked to complete an emergency procedure card. This card provides all the necessary information (including parental consent) that is required for the school to take action in case an individual emergency arises. This form must be completed yearly, and it is a very important part of the student's records.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR (CO-CURRICULAR) ACTIVITIES**

A student's school years are usually much more rewarding if he/she becomes involved in student life outside of the classroom. In an attempt to provide opportunities to broaden their educational experiences, students are offered a number of activities. These organizations include but are not limited to the following:

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| A. Band         | D. Honor Society |
| B. Chorus       | E. Quiz Bowl     |
| C. Cheerleaders | F. Project HAPPY |

### **FIELD TRIPS**

In order to significantly complement their in-class instruction, teachers sometimes arrange field trips to utilize meaningful community resources. Before these trips are approved by the building principal, their educational purpose is studied. **In order for a student to attend a field trip, a signed permission slip must be on file in the office.** While on a field trip, students are to behave as if they were within the school building. It is important to remember that each student on a trip represents not only the school and his/her parents, but the community as well.

### **GRADE AVERAGING PLAN (NINE WEEKS PLAN)**

A. In computing grades, the 4 point scale will be used:

A = 4

B = 3

C = 2

D = 1

F = 0

A. We are using a nine week grading plan in order to give our students more of an opportunity to raise grades after the interim period.

**For the 2018-2019 school year, the following classes for all students will have a seven weeks rotation: Art, Physical Education, Health, iPad, and Agricultural Science.**

C. Anything less than a 1.0 average (without rounding) is a failure for any course.

D. Any grade .5% or above will be rounded up to the next whole number for quarter grades only. Ex: 92.5% B+ would be rounded to a 93% A-. Semester averages and final grades will not be rounded.

E. Semester grades will be computed by averaging the two quarter grades by percent. Final grades will be computed by averaging the two semester grades.

F. High School grading criteria will be applied to all courses taken at Liberty-Benton Middle School for Liberty-Benton High School Credit (Spanish I, Algebra I, Health 8, Physical Education 8).

### **GRADE CARDS**

At the end of the grading period, students are given grade cards that reflect their current performance in the subjects they are taking. These grade cards are then taken home to the parents for their consideration.

### **GRADING SCALE**

100.....A+	76-79.....C
96- 99.....A	73-75.....C-
93- 95.....A-	70-72.....D+
90- 92.....B +	66-69.....D
86- 89.....B	63-65.....D-
83-85.....B-	60-62.....F
80- 82.....C+	

**\*Any grade .5% or above will be rounded up to the next whole number for quarter grades only. Semester averages and final grades will not be rounded.**

### **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

Many essential services are provided by the guidance counselor. Some of the primary reasons for visiting the guidance counselor are the following:

- A. to obtain information regarding college and career planning
- B. to obtain information regarding vocational planning
- C. to interpret standardized test results
- D. to aid in solving learning difficulties
- E. to assist in the registration of courses
- F. to aid in dealing with personal problems



- G. to assist in obtaining financial aid
- H. to strengthen student-teacher relationships

Since an “open door” policy is maintained, the guidance counselor is available for conference with students and parents at any time during the school day. Parents and students are encouraged to explore this avenue when the need arises.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY—ZEROES AREN'T PERMITTED (ZAP)**

### **Philosophy:**

- Teachers assign homework to reinforce material covered in class and to prepare students for learning the next day. **Homework is important.**
- Meeting deadlines on time, time management, and reliability are valuable life skills. Completing assignments on time prepares students for this skill. When work is not completed on time, or when we miss deadlines, there are consequences in life and at school.
- Parents play an important role in helping their student become responsible and accountable for doing their homework. **We want parents to be informed regarding their students academic progress in a proactive manner that maximizes the chances for students to succeed.**
- **Z.A.P. hall is a support for students** that do not do their homework.

### **How it works:**

When a student forgets to complete an assignment on the due date, the teacher will hand the student a Z.A.P. form.

1. The student **must** get a **parent/guardian signature** acknowledging that the student missed the work.
  2. **If the student turns in the late assignment with a signed form the next day before school begins (during home room), they do not have to attend Z.A.P. hall.** The work will be accepted by the classroom teacher with a 10% reduction in points.
  3. If the student fails to turn in their signed Z.A.P. form with the completed missing assignment, the school will contact the parent to inform them about the missing assignment. The student will be scheduled a Z.A.P. hall on the next available day to work on the assignment and to develop organizational skills. The work completed in Z.A.P. hall will carry a 20% reduction. Z.A.P. halls will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2:35-3:35 p.m.
  4. If a student accumulates 5 Z.A.P. halls in a quarter, a parent letter will be sent home with a scheduled date and time for a parent teacher conference. It will be the responsibility of the parent to contact the school to confirm their attendance. At this meeting, methods for improving organizational skills and work ethic will be discussed with the parent.
- Students who do not attend ZAP sessions may receive a disciplinary referral.
  - Students who do not complete homework in ZAP hall will receive a “zero” and may receive a disciplinary referral.

**\*It will be the student's/parent's responsibility to arrange for transportation home from Z.A.P. Hall.** A teacher will be at Z.A.P. hall to provide instructional assistance for the student and to help them develop organizational skills.

## **HONOR ROLL POLICY**

The Middle School Honor Roll will consist of an “All A” and an “A-B” Honor Roll. In order to make the honor roll, one must meet the A or A-B criteria and not have a “U” during the grading period.

### **ILLNESS**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she should be reported to the office. If it appears to be a temporary situation, the student will be returned to class and monitored. If it appears to be more severe, contact will be made with the parents for their care. This contact must be made in the office and students are not to call parents to come pick them up unless directed to do so by the office. At no time will medication be administered by school personnel.

### **IMMUNIZATION/MEDICATIONS**

In compliance with state mandates, the county nurse checks all student health records to be sure they have received the required immunization. When deficiencies are identified, parents are notified and steps taken to correct the situation. Students who are not in compliance after a specified date will be excluded from school. **Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription from the child’s physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent.** Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require the prior written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication. Any type of medication (prescription or non-prescription), must be turned in to the middle school office by a parent. **Under no circumstance should a student keep medication in their possession or lockers. The medication must be in the original container with the student’s name, name of medication, purpose, time to be administered, and dosage.** It is the student’s responsibility to go to the office to take the medication under the supervision of school personnel. No student is allowed to provide or sell any type of over-the-counter medication to another student. Violations of this rule will be considered of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **MIDTERM REPORTS OF CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE**

Grades are an expression of student performance at a given point in time. Parents and students have 24 hour access to student academic performance using the electronic grade book and should be monitoring student grades weekly. Below are the 2018-2019 midterm dates to help parents meter student progress for each grading period.

#### **Mid-Term Dates**

Qtr. 1—September 21  
Qtr. 2 –November 29  
Qtr. 3 – February 15  
Qtr. 4 – April 26

#### **Grade Cards Mailed Home**

Qtr. 1—November 2  
Qtr. 2—January 18  
Qtr. 3—March 29  
Qtr. 4—May 31

#### **Seven Weeks Class Dates**

For the 2018-2019 school year, the following classes for all students will have a seven weeks rotation: Art, Physical Education, Health, iPad, and Agricultural Science.

First 7 Weeks: August 20-Oct. 12 (34 days)

Second 7 Weeks: October 15-December 7 (38 days)

Third 7 Week: December 10-February 8 (36 Days)

Fourth 7 Weeks: February 11-March 29 (39 days)

Fifth 7 Weeks: April 1-May 23 (35 days)

## **LOCKERS**

The lockers remain the property of the Liberty-Benton Board of Education and are supplied for student use in storing personal belongings and books. They are at no time to be used for storing articles which are against the law, against the rules of the school, or serve no useful purpose for school related activities. **Lockers and other such property carry no expectation of privacy for the students who occupy them. School lockers, desks, cabinets, etc. and their contents are subject to search by school authorities at any time and without warning.**

## **LUNCH**

The school lunch program furnishes a well-balanced meal. Nutritious meals and ala carte items will be available for purchase by all students. Only sack lunches from home are allowed. Items from restaurants such as Wendy's, Taco Bell, Burger King, McDonald's, etc. are not allowed. Students are expected to keep the cafeteria clean and place all trash in the waste cans provided. Students are not to take any food or drink outside the cafeteria. After finishing lunch, students must remain in the cafeteria area until dismissed by teachers assigned to supervise the lunchroom.

## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT REQUEST**

Parents who do not have residential custody of a student do have rights to information regarding school information on their child. A Non-custodial Parent Request Form can be completed in the office so that copies of progress reports (grade cards), interim reports, etc. can be mailed home to the non-custodial parent. A \$5 fee is due upon submitting this form to the office to help offset the cost of envelopes and postage during the year. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

## **OHIO PARENTAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTER**

Ohio Parental Information and Resource Center provides a wide range of services to parents and families, parent organizations, school personnel, and other social services agencies to increase parental involvement with their child's educational issue. Ohio PIRC also works to strengthen partnerships between parents and professionals to help meet the educational needs of their children. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging supportive working relationships between home, schools and any significant other involved with the child. To that end, Ohio PIRC provides opportunities for parent to learn more about child development, increase their confidence in child-rearing skills, and become leaders in their communities.

Ohio PIRC provides a wide range of training and support services such as: parenting information, parenting support groups, parent leadership training, referral services, family literacy services, and educational issue training. If you would like more information on the Ohio Parental Information and Resource Center, you may contact the Middle School office or you can access the Ohio Department of Education's web site at: <http://www.ode.state.oh.us> and search for "Ohio Parental Information and Resource Center".

### **PASS SYSTEM**

The purpose of a pass system is to aid the school in its responsibility to constantly account for the students entrusted to its care. At Liberty-Benton Middle School, two passes are utilized. They are briefly described below.

- A. ***Permit to Leave School***-- A student receives a pink slip, and he/she gives the building principal an acceptable note from a parent to leave school during the day. This note must specify the time to be excused from school and the specific reason.
- B. ***Special Excuse*** -- A student receives a blue pass from a teacher anytime it is necessary to leave his/her assigned area. These passes are given when a student needs to go to the restroom, to his/her locker, or to the library.

### **PERFECT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The teaching staff and administration would like to reward students who maintain perfect attendance. We hope the following plan will help stimulate good school attendance practices. Perfect attendance means being in attendance everyday throughout the school year unless absent because of an approved school function. If a student is absent for two periods and this does include lunch time, a ½ day absence will be credited. If a student is absent for four periods, and this does include lunch time, a full day absence will be credited.

### **POLICE QUESTIONING AND APPREHENSION**

Schools should cooperate with law enforcement agencies in the interest of the welfare of all citizens. Concurrently, the school must protect the welfare of the students and parents while the students are at school and/or school sponsored activities.

- a. Interrogation of students should occur off school premises if related to out-of-school matters.
- b. If it is necessary to interrogate a student in school, parents shall be notified prior to questioning.
- c. The principal, assistant principal, or his designee, should be present at all times during the questioning of the student.
- d. Any interrogation should be done in private, in strict confidence, preferably in the privacy of an office.
- e. A student SHALL NOT be released unless a warrant for the student's arrest or a court order, properly signed by a judge, is presented to school authorities.
- f. If a student is removed by a warrant or court order, the parents shall be notified as soon as possible.
- g. If a crime has been committed on school premises, students may be questioned in the school WITHOUT parental consent.

## **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

As a parent of a student at Liberty-Benton Middle School, parents have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their children. Federal law allows parents to ask for certain information about their child's classroom teachers, and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- a. Whether the Ohio Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches?
- b. Whether the Ohio DOE has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances?
- c. The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and if so, the subject of the degree.
- d. Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications?

## **RETENTION**

Optimal school achievement is obtained when students experience success in their daily activities and build upon successful experiences as they encounter new learning situations. All aspects of the student must be considered as grade placements are made. Retention occurs when a student is not doing the caliber of work that indicates the student should be promoted to the next grade, based on the recommendation of the Intervention Assistance Team with the concurrence of the building administrator. Parents will be notified of possible retention in early April with a final decision regarding placement in May.

## **SEMESTER EXAMS**

Exams will be given each semester for Spanish and Algebra I and included within the semester grade.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Liberty-Benton Schools compiles and maintains necessary information and records on all students. Parents/Guardians must sign a permission form to release records to another agency. RC 3313.642 authorizes a public school to withhold a student's grades and credits for failure to pay assessed fees for materials "used in a course of instruction" other than textbooks, which must be furnished without charge under RC 3329.06.

## **TELEPHONES**

The telephone in the principal's office is reserved for official business during school hours. Students may only use the office phone if the circumstances are of an emergency nature.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Textbooks are provided at public expense for all students who are responsible for returning them upon course completion or withdrawal with only normal wear. A fine will be assessed for damage or misuse of textbooks and a lost book will be charged at the replacement cost. Students should inspect books as they are issued and report any damage to the teacher. Students are solely responsible for the proper care of their assigned texts.

## **VACATIONS**

Parents should make every effort to make vacation plans to correspond with school vacations; but if that cannot be arranged, students should obtain a "Student Vacation Form" from the principal's office in advance. Vacations approved by the principal are excused absences and these days are counted toward the maximum allowable absences.

1. A student will have the same number of days to make up assignments as they have missed. However, every effort should be made to make up the work as soon as possible.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request work missed in advance up to one week prior to departure.
3. The teaching staff will provide work up to one week prior to departure as accurately as possible, but pace of the class and assigned work may vary due to the nature of the learning process.

All work must be completed in the specific period after returning from vacation. All unexcused days of absence will result in F's for all school work.

## **VISITORS**

Parents, student teachers, and individuals on school business are always welcome to the school. It is necessary, however, for visitors to check with the principal's office upon arrival. During the visitation period, the procedure followed is the same as for a visitor to your home. Please note that student visitors are not permitted except by special permission from the building principal and this is normally for a potential student to experience Liberty-Benton Schools.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

If it becomes necessary to withdraw from school, the student should obtain the proper form from the main office secretary. This form is then initiated by all of his/her teachers when returning textbooks, paying any financial obligations, and receiving the current grades in each course being taken. The necessary student records are then sent to the new school upon the parent giving the required permission.

**LIBERTY-BENTON LOCAL SCHOOLS**  
**ADVISORY OF PESTICIDE APPLICATION IN CLASSROOM BUILDINGS**

The District is providing you with the option to be informed prior to any application of a pesticide in a classroom building this school year. In certain emergencies, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to control organisms that pose an immediate health threat, but you will be notified following any such application. If you would like to receive prior notification, please complete the information below and submit to:

Liberty-Benton Local Schools, Superintendent Office, 9190 County Road 9, Findlay, OH 45840  
Phone 419-422-8526 Fax 419-422-5108

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**PRIOR NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE APPLICATION REQUEST**

PARENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

BUILDING/GRADE LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

DAY PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

EVENING PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

Please Check One:

I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide application inside the school building.

I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide application on the outside grounds of the school building.

Both of the above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date