Student/Parent Handbook
2018-2019
for
BRANDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MARTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Community • Tradition • Excellence

1583 University
Martin, MI 49070

www.martinpublicschools.org

(269) 672-7253

SCHOOL HOURS
Doors Open at 7:45 a.m.
Classes Begin: 8:00 a.m.
Student Dismissal: 3:00 p.m.

Adopted by the Board of Education August 2018
MARTIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION

Dr. David Harnish  Superintendent/HS Principal  672-7194
Dave Hardenburgh  Principal, Brandon Elementary  672-7253
Robert VandenBerg  Athletic Dir./Dean of Students, JH/HS  672-5554
Samantha Ball  Bookkeeper  672-7194
Rachel Modderman  Supervisor, Special Education  672-9531
Keith Cormier  Supervisor, Maintenance  672-5800
Richard Meeker  Supervisor, Transportation  672-5086
Kim Hinga  Supervisor, Food Service  672-5556

BRANDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

Classroom Teachers

TBD  Young 5’s
Melissa Anderson  K  Jennifer Jonker  K
Amber Lenhart  1st  Taylor Wojciechowicz  1st
Lorrie Chamberlain  2nd  Tracey Hurdelbrink  2nd
Jodie Brenner  3rd  Michele Glessner  3rd
Brad Blauvelt  4th  Kelsey Dickinson  4th
Aleshia Blauvelt  5th  Alison Goyings  5th
Steve English  6th  Jason Lovorn  6th

Support Teachers

Sarah Engleman  ECSE  Katie Castora  Special Education
Cherie Kale  Special Education  Kelley Harnish  Special Education
Tammy Sweetman  Speech  Michelle Boerman  O.T.
Karen Andrews  Title I/Reading Specialist  Jessica Smith  Social Work
Julie Boyle  Physical Education  Kristie Steffes  Computers/Art
Rob Robrahn  Computers  Karsten Wimbush  Music

Paraprofessional Staff

Tammy Mohrland  Diana Schmidt  Kim Smith  Shari Wynsma

Office Secretary  Cheryl Mohr
Library Aide  Kelly Jager

Custodial/Maintenance Staff  Mae Adrianson & Cindy Vanlent
Martin Public Schools
2018-2019 Calendar

AUGUST

Monday, 8/27  Teacher Professional Development
Monday, 8/27  Open House 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 8/28  First Day of School, ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal); Teacher Professional Development in Afternoon
Friday, 8/31  No School – Break

SEPTEMBER

Monday, 9/3  No School – Labor Day
Tuesday, 9/4  School Resumes
Wednesday, 9/12  Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)

OCTOBER

Wednesday 10/10  Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Wednesday, 10/10  Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00 - 7:30 p.m.)
Thursday, 10/11  Parent/Teacher Conferences (3:30 - 6:30 p.m.)
Friday, 10/12  NO SCHOOL - Teacher Comp Day

NOVEMBER

Friday, 11/2  End of First Marking Period; ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. Dismissal)
Monday, 11/5  Beginning of Second Marking Period
Wednesday, 11/14  Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Wednesday, 11/21  NO SCHOOL - Break
Thursday, 11/22  NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving
Friday, 11/23  NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER

Wednesday, 12/12  Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Friday, 12/21  Last Day of School before Winter Break, ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal)
Monday, 12/24-1/4  NO SCHOOL – Winter Break

JANUARY

Monday, 1/7  School Resumes
Wednesday, 1/16  Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Thursday, 1/24  Semester Exams; ½ Day of School for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal); Teacher Professional Development in Afternoon
Friday, 1/25  Semester Exams; ½ Day of School for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal)
Friday, 1/25  End of Second Marking Period; End of First Semester
Monday, 1/28  Beginning of Third Marking Period
FEBRUARY

Wednesday, 2/20 Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Wednesday, 2/20 Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00 - 7:30 p.m.)
Thursday, 2/21 Parent/Teacher Conferences (3:30 - 6:30 p.m.)
Friday, 2/22 NO SCHOOL - Teacher Comp Day
Monday, 2/25 NO SCHOOL - Break
Tuesday, 2/26 School Resumes

MARCH

Wednesday, 3/13 Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Tuesday, 3/26 Academic Showcase (K-6) (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
Friday, 3/29 End of the 3rd Marking Period; ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. Dismissal)

APRIL

Monday 4/1-4/5 NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
Monday, 4/8 School Resumes
Monday, 4/8 Beginning of Fourth Marking Period
Wednesday, 4/17 Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)

MAY

Wednesday, 5/8 Early Release for Teacher Professional Development (1:00 p.m. Dismissal)
Mon.-Wed., 5/13-15 Senior Class Mackinac Island Trip
Thursday, 5/16 Senior Class Awards Night
Friday, 5/24 Last Regular School Day for Seniors
Monday, 5/27 NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day
Tuesday, 5/28 Senior Exams from 8:00-12:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 5/29 Graduation Practice from 8:00-9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, 5/29 Senior Exams from 9:30-12:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 5/29 Student Award Assembly Grades 9-12 from 1:00-2:45 p.m.
Thursday, 5/30 Graduation Practice from 8:00-9:30 a.m.
Friday, 5/31 Graduation at 7:30 p.m.

JUNE

Wednesday, 6/5 Semester Exams; ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal); Teacher Professional Development in Afternoon
Thursday, 6/6 Semester Exams; ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal)
Thursday, 6/6 Staff Luncheon p.m.
Friday, 6/7 ½ Day for Students (11:00 a.m. dismissal); Last Day of School
Greetings from the Principal

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year and thank you for choosing Brandon Elementary, home of the Clippers!

Brandon Elementary School provides a high-quality education for every child in a safe and nurturing learning environment. With your commitment to parent involvement and your student’s commitment to learning, we are guaranteed to succeed in preparing your child for a bright, dynamic future.

This handbook provides important information about academic and behavioral expectations. I encourage you to review it with your child/children. We believe that good behavior and good manners are the foundation for academic success in our school.

Brandon Elementary is proud to have a positive behavior support policy. This means that students are recognized for “above and beyond” behavior; school staff are on the look-out for children exemplifying the behaviors we hope to instill in all our students here at Martin Public Schools. Positive notes and recognition will be handed out by staff members when a student is “caught” being a positive role model. We will also recognize students showing strong academic and moral character each month. All students have the same behavior expectations and we use the acronym “B.O.A.T.” as a reminder:

B – Be Safe
O – Outstanding Attitude
A – Act with Respect
T – Take Responsibility

You will notice that these expectations are posted throughout our school. This provides for consistent expectations and a positive experience for all students.

If you have any concerns or suggestions, please contact me at 269.672.7253.

Sincerely,

Dave Hardenburgh

Dave Hardenburgh, Principal
Brandon Elementary School
Martin Public Schools
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NOTE: This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was printed in August 2018. If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal or superintendent. Or soon you will be able to access the document on the District's website: www.martinpublicschools.org.
FOREWORD
This handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your child may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your child’s teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board’s policies and the School’s rules as of July 31, 2018. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after July 31, 2018, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL
The staff at Brandon Elementary is committed to building a solid academic foundation that develops employable, responsible, and respectful citizens.

BELIEFS
- Everyone is responsible for working to the best of his/her ability
- The learner is our focus and our future
- Everyone deserves to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect
- All students deserve the opportunity to achieve (at their ability level)
- Everyone needs to have his/her value recognized and appreciated
- Everyone deserves a safe environment
- Everyone deserves equitable opportunity for lifelong learning
- Everyone has the potential to grow
- Effort enhances positive results

VISION
The vision of Brandon Elementary is to inspire and encourage our students towards excellence so they can become productive members in a global society.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY
It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District’s Compliance Officer listed below:

Dr. David Harnish
Superintendent
P.O. Box 241, 1556 Chalmers Street
Martin, MI 49070
269-672-7194

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT
Parent/Guardian Involvement Policy
Martin Public Schools encourages parent/guardian participation in educational programs. The Board directs that the following actions be implemented to insure compliance with state & federal law:

The involvement of parents/guardians in planning, implementation and evaluation, through participation on building School Improvement Teams;
- Elementary PTO team
- Title I Committee
- District Improvement Team

Invitations to parents/guardians to attend an annual meeting, with additional meeting opportunities being available as needed, designed to provide information about programs and services, and to solicit parent/guardians' suggestions on program development, planning, evaluation and operation.
- Annual Open House
- Athletic parent/athlete meetings by season
Title I Committee

Distribution of information regarding student achievement and progress.
- Report Cards quarterly and Parent Portal (Infinite Campus)
- Progress reports mid-term and upon request
- Standardized test results published in Annual Report

Provide regularly scheduled parent/guardian teacher conferences and any additional communication as requested by the staff or parent/guardian.
- Parent/Teacher conferences held twice each year
- Additional contacts available upon request

Opportunities to enhance parent/guardians' capacity to work with children in the home on school learning.
- Playgroups

Professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent/guardian involvement strategies.
- Component added to staff In-Service programming

Ongoing communication between the school and parent/guardian.
- Building Newsletter
- Ship To Shore district newsletter
- Classroom newsletter

Other appropriate activities (i.e. Family Math Nights, parenting/guardian sessions, science, theatre, etc.)
- Academic Showcase
- Family Reading Night
- Girls on the Run/Heart & Sole
- Odyssey of the Mind

Assure that the policy contains a compact that outlines how parents/guardians, the school staff and students will share the responsibility of improved student achievement.
- Distributed before the start of every school year
- Compact is discussed at Parent-Teacher Conferences

To distribute the district plan to parents/guardians of participating children.
- District Plan distributed on first day of school with enrollment materials or at the Fall parent/teacher conferences

PROCEDURE FOR RESOLVING CONCERNS

Communication is key in dealing with parent/teacher concerns. Please use the guidelines below in addressing concerns you might have during the year:

1. Parents should first discuss the situation with the classroom teacher. Face to face communication is best, however, other modes of communication are encouraged if it aides in resolving the issue.
2. Parents may call the school to schedule an appointment with the classroom teacher or to request that a teacher return a phone call.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved, please contact the building principal for further discussion. The principal will work with the teacher and parent in an attempt to resolve the issue.
4. If the situation cannot be resolved at the principal level, the superintendent may be involved in the process.

Communications of personnel concerns/complaints made to the superintendent level will be directed as described below. The parent or community member with a personnel concern will be asked by the superintendent if he/she has shared concern with the staff involved.

IF NOT:
1. The parent or community member will be requested by the superintendent to share concern(s) with the appropriate staff member. The superintendent will ask the parent or community member to keep the superintendent informed as to how the concern has been handled.
2. The superintendent will communicate concern to the staff member’s immediate supervisor. The superintendent will ask the immediate supervisor to keep the superintendent informed as to how the concern has been resolved.
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student’s responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child’s teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program. If, for some reason, this is not possible, the student should seek help from the principal or other appropriate staff member.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs along with proper documentation by a physician, to the School Office.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the district administration. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides, unless enrolling under the District’s open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

A. a birth certificate or similar document,
B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
C. proof of residency,
D. proof of immunizations.

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. The elementary office will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.
Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District’s schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District’s schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT
The principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

EARLY DISMISSAL
No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent or the parent coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without written permission signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT
Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. If a student plans to transfer from Brandon Elementary, the parent must notify the principal. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records, may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the elementary office for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL
No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS
Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the elementary office.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION
The Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form completed and signed by his/her parent in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment. At the beginning of each school year, a New School Year Student Data Sheet is sent home for review of the information we have on file for each student. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student’s educational program.

In the event of a serious accident to your child at school, you will be notified immediately by telephone. If we are unable to contact you, we will notify someone that you have listed as an emergency contact. If a student should become ill, a school representative will call and request someone to pick up your child. If a contact cannot be made at the home or work place, the emergency numbers on the child’s emergency card will be contacted.

A child may be sent home from school if he/she has any of the following:
- A temperature of 99.6 or over
- Discharging nose and/or eyes
- Cough, sore throat
- Earache or headache
- Skin eruptions or rashes
- Head lice, scabies, impetigo, pink eye or other communicable diseases.

If a child has been seriously ill, parents may make a written request for the child to remain indoors for up to three consecutive days. If a longer period of time is necessary, a written statement must be submitted from a physician.
USE OF MEDICATIONS

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

A. Parents should, with their physician’s counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.

B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form must be filed with the building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.

C. All medications must be in its original container and shall bear the name of the medication and must be registered with the principal’s office.

D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured. Medication may be conveyed to school directly by the parent or transported by transportation personnel (bus driver and/or bus aide) at parental request. This should be arranged in advance. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.

Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student’s lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.

E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.

F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.

G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician’s written instructions and the parent’s written permission release.

Asthma Inhalers and Epi-pens

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan developed by the school principal and updated annually.

Non-prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician’s prescription or order is necessary to allow students to take non-prescription medication at school. The student may be authorized on the request form by his/her parent to self-administer the medication in the presence of a school staff member. All other conditions described under prescribed medications will also apply to non-prescribed medications.

Before any prescribed or non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription and instructions from the child’s physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school’s professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

In order to keep the spread of lice to a minimum, we have a “nit free” policy. Students identified as having head lice will not be allowed to come back to school until treated and nit free. If children are found with head lice, their parents will be contacted and they will be sent home with information on proper treatment.

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school’s administrative guidelines.

CONTROL OF NON-CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In the case of non-casual-contact, communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non-casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.
As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child’s blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
The American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District’s programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact the superintendent’s office at 269-672-7194 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

STUDENT RECORDS
The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the Board nor its employee's shall permit the release of the social security number of a student, or other individual except as authorized by law (see AG 8350). Documents containing social security numbers shall be restricted to those employees who have a need to know that information or a need to access those documents. When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by an employee who has authorized access to such records.

Directory information includes:
- a student’s name
- address
- date and place of birth
- major field of study
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- height and weight, if member of an athletic team
- height, if member of athletic team
- weight, if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate
- dates of attendance
- date of graduation
- awards received
- honor rolls
- scholarships
- school photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all of such “directory information” upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may wish to consult the Board’s annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notice.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the School District is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age.

Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged to the parent. To review student records please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the elementary principal. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student’s privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the District has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District’s curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
B. mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
C. sex behavior or attitudes;
D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the District, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

A. activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose; and
B. the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605
Washington, D.C.
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses:

FERPA@ED.Gov and PPRA@ED.Gov.

STUDENT VALUABLES
Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES
Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the School. Parents’ rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

MEAL SERVICE
The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee of $2.80 for Young 5s through 5th Grade and $3.05 for 6th Grade. Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. Milk can be purchased for $0.50. No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without specific written permission granted by the principal. Breakfast is available before the start of the school day in the cafeteria for a fee of $1.80.
Applications for the school's free and reduced-priced meal program are distributed to all students. The school encourages families to complete and return the application even if you are unsure if you qualify or will ever use the school meal program. The number of students who qualify for free or reduced meals allows the school to receive additional funding.

**FIRE, LOCK DOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS**

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building. The alarm signal for fire drills consists of a loud buzzing sound.

Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State. The alarm signal for tornadoes is different from the alarm signal for fires and lock down drills, and it consists of a PA announcement made by an administrator stating it is necessary for all students and staff to proceed to the proper location in the building.

Lock down drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of two (2) times each school year. The alarm system for a school lock down is different from the alarm system for fires and tornadoes and consists of a PA announcement made by an administrator notifying staff to go into lock down mode.

**EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS**

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the School will notify the following radio and television stations:

- TV – FOX 17, WOODTV 8, WWMT 3, WZZM 13
- Radio – WBCM FM 93.7, WKZO AM 590, WKFR FM 103.3

An Infinite Campus Messenger Alert may also be sent out by district administration to parents/guardians. Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

**PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS**

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District’s Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request.

**VISITORS**

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the School, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the Principal.

**TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Anytime a student is assigned a textbook, which is the property of the school, the student becomes responsible for the book. Library materials are also the property of the school. When a student borrows these materials, he/she accepts responsibility for them. If textbooks or library materials becomes lost, stolen or damaged, the student shall be charged for the book and or the damages.

**USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

Students must receive the permission of the teacher before using any equipment or materials in the classroom and the permission of the Principal to use any other school equipment or facility. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and protection of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

**LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found area is in the hallway near the office. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at the close of the school year.

**STUDENT SALES**

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the building principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

**USE OF TELEPHONES**

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in an emergency, students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call.
ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

Brandon Elementary students are discouraged from bringing cell phones or any other electronic devices to school. There is always the risk of items being lost, stolen, or damaged when transported from home to school; leaving these expensive items at home lessens this risk.

Students that bring such items must store them in their lockers or book bags throughout the school day. If cell phones or other devices are out during school hours, they will be confiscated by school staff. Parents will be requested to pick up the items from the school office. At any school event (field trips, sporting events, etc.), school personnel have the authority to confiscate a device they feel a student is using inappropriately and turn it in to the building principal.

Any student who damages a school purchased electronic device (such as a graphing calculator, IPad, Chrome Book, etc.) will be responsible for paying one-half or the full cost of replacing the device depending on the circumstances, which will be reviewed by administration. The school will not be liable for personal electronic devices (including cell phones) at school in the event the device is lost, destroyed, or stolen.

ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within twenty-four (24) hours of their receipt.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school’s co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

GRADES

Brandon Elementary School has a standard grading procedure, as well as additional notations that may indicate work in progress or incomplete work. The purpose of a grade is to indicate the extent to which the student has acquired the necessary learning. In general, students are assigned grades based upon test results, homework, projects, and classroom participation. Each teacher may place a different emphasis on these areas in determining a grade and will so inform the students at the beginning of the course work. If a student is not sure how his/her grade will be determined, s/he should ask the teacher.

Grading Periods

Students shall receive a report card at the end of each marking period indicating their grades for each course of study for that portion of the academic term. When a student appears to be at risk of failure, notification will be provided to the parents so they can talk with the teacher about what actions can be taken to improve poor grades.

You may use our Infinite Campus online grade-book to check your child’s grades at any time. Instructions on accessing the Parent Portal are available in the Elementary Office.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION

Refer to Policy 5410

The Board of Education recognizes that the personal, social, physical, and educational growth of children will vary and that they should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their needs at the various stages of their growth.

It shall be the policy of the Board that each student be moved forward in a continuous pattern of achievement and growth that is in harmony with his/her own development.

Such pattern should coincide with the system of grade levels established by this Board and the instructional objectives established for each.

A student will be promoted to the succeeding grade level when s/he has:

A. completed the course requirements at the presently assigned grade;
B. in the opinion of the professional staff, achieved the instructional objectives set for the present grade;
C. demonstrated sufficient proficiency to permit him/her to move ahead in the educational program of the next grade;
D. demonstrated the degree of social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade.

It is essential that each child experience both challenge and success from school activities. Grade placement should enhance this possibility. The concept of grade placement is based on the premise that each teacher will provide appropriate experiences for children at particular stages of physical, emotional and academic growth.
The district curriculum indicates goals for achievement by students at each grade level. However, academic growth, like physical growth, does not take place at the same pace or time for all individuals. Certain students may achieve mastery in a shorter period, while others need additional time.

Promotion or retention of a student will be considered according to the following criteria:

A. Academic achievement as compared to district grade level curriculum
B. Social and emotional development of the child
C. Age of the child
D. Physical growth (size) of student
E. No child will be retained more than once in the elementary school.
F. Any recommendation concerning grade placement must be made to the Principal by the teacher. Consultation regarding the situation, with the parents, teacher, and other personnel as appropriate will then take place.

**RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Students who have displayed significant achievements during the course of the year are recognized for their accomplishments. Areas that may merit recognition include but are not limited to academics, athletics, performing arts, citizenship, and volunteerism. Recognition for such activities is initiated by the staff and coordinated by the elementary principal.

**Honor Roll**

The Honor Roll, for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders will be posted at the end of each marking period. The Honor Roll will be posted in the display case outside of the office, on the school’s website, and published in the school newsletter.

**End of the Year Assembly**

At the end of the school year, students will be recognized for accomplishments throughout the school year. Such awards could be for perfect attendance, academic achievement, physical education achievement, reading achievement, citizenship, or art achievement.

**COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS**

Before any student may take advantage of the School’s computer network and the internet, s/he and his/her parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student’s computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. Copies of the School District’s Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed from the elementary office yearly.

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

For the 2018-2019 school year, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) will continue to administer the M-STEP to students in grades 3-11. This assessment is aligned to Michigan Standards, administered in the spring, and measures current year versus past year student knowledge.

Additional group tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Classroom tests will be used to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected or prepared by teachers to assess how well the students have achieved specific objectives.

**LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the superintendent’s office at 269-672-7194 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

**SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

Brandon Elementary School provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning or to pursue additional worthwhile experiences through extra-curricular activities. Some of the programs that have been offered, depending on student interest and staff availability are:

* Odyssey of the Mind
* Girls on the Run/Heart & Sole
* PTO Events (Dance, Carnival, Movie Night, etc.)
NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Non school-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during non-instructional hours. The applicant for permission can be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that non-school persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

Membership in any fraternity, sorority, or any other secret society as proscribed by law is not permitted. All groups must comply with School rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

No non district-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE

School Attendance Policy

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Many important learnings result from active participation in classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study.

Parents need to notify the school by phone, 269-672-7253, before 8:30 a.m. on the day of their child’s absence, identifying the student, his/her teacher, and the reason for the absence. After 8:30 a.m. the school office will call the home to verify the student’s whereabouts if a message has not been received. Upon return to school, a note stating the reason for the absence should be presented to the office.

Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed school work and/or tests. The absence will be considered excused if reported to the office by the parent or legal guardian for one of the following reasons:

- Personal illness (The principal may require a doctor’s confirmation if she deems it advisable)
- Medical/Dental/Professional appointments
- Recovery from accident
- Family emergency
- Required court attendance
- Death in the immediate family
- Religious observances
- Pre-excused absences

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

It is also important to note that certain types of absences cannot be considered excused. These include such reasons as: oversleeping, transportation problems (missed the bus, etc.), and shopping trips. The school reserves the right to determine if an absence is to be considered excused or unexcused.

Unexcused Absences

Absences will be considered unexcused if the absence is not cleared in the office within two (2) school days by the parent or guardian or if the absence does not meet the guidelines for excused absences listed above.

Notification of Absence

If a student is going to be absent, a parent or guardian should contact the school at 269-672-7253 by 8:30am and provide an explanation. In order to be considered an excused absence, the parent must notify the school as soon as possible. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

An excused absence allows the student to make up all possible work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of school work such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

The skipping of classes or any part of the school day is considered an unexcused absence and no make-up of class work will be permitted. Disciplinary action will follow.
Vacations During the School Year

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the principal and the student’s teacher(s) to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip. If a student is absent from school because of a scheduled vacation, it will not be considered truant, and s/he may be given the opportunity to make up the school work that is missed.

Tardy policy

Tardiness can be disruptive to the educational process. Habits are set early, including being on time. It is a sign of cooperation and respect for the people you associate with. Students who are late to school should report to the office to check in and be signed in by a parent or legal guardian. Parents will be notified similar to truancy if excessive tardies are accumulated.

Procedures for filing truancy

A student shall be considered truant each day or part of the day he or she is inexcusably absent from his/her assigned school. Truancy demonstrates a deliberate disregard for the educational program and is considered a serious matter. When it becomes necessary to file a truancy referral with the Truancy Officer, the following procedure shall be followed:

Step 1: After seven unexcused absences in a semester a letter shall be sent to the parent or guardian to notify them of the attendance concerns for their child.

Step 2: After ten unexcused absences in a semester a letter is sent to the parent or guardian, requesting a meeting be schedule with the parent. The school may notify the Truancy Officer before or after the meeting with the student, parent or guardian, staff member, and principal.

Suspension from School

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from the elementary office beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school.

Make-up of Tests and Other School Work

Students who have an excused absence from school, or who have been suspended, shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact the classroom teacher as soon as possible to obtain assignments.

One day for each day of absence is allowed for make-up work to be completed, up to a maximum of five days.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to excused absence, s/he may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If s/he misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the classroom teacher or other school personnel to arrange for taking the test.

STUDENT 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 nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, 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. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at Brandon Elementary is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

THIS HANDBOOK DOES NOT CLAIM TO CONTAIN EVERY RULE OR POLICY OF THE SCHOOL. Rules, policies, and/or activities are subject to change during the school year, with sufficient notification to the students.
**Expected Behaviors**

Each student shall be expected to:

- abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;
- respect the civil rights of others;
- act courteously to adults and fellow students;
- be prompt to school and attentive in class;
- work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability, or ethnic background;
- complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;
- help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;
- act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

**Dress and Grooming**

While fashion changes, the reasons for being in school do not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting.

**Dress Code:**

A. Skirts or shorts, higher than three inches above the knee, may not be worn.
B. No midriff, spaghetti straps or halter blouses may be worn.
C. No altering of shirts (cut up shirts, slits in shirts, etc.)
D. Coats, hats and other “outside” apparel are not to be worn in the classroom areas.
E. Hats and attire containing questionable or obscene materials are not acceptable. This includes items promoting alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
F. Clothing must be appropriate for the weather.

Students who are representing Brandon Elementary School at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. Usually, this applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, bands, and other such groups.

Students with inappropriate dress, or who violate the dress code, shall be required to modify their appearance by removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline.

**Gangs**

Gangs which initiate, advocate or promote activities which threaten the safety or well-being of persons or which are disruptive to the school environment are not tolerated.

Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidations or related activities which are likely to cause harm or personal degradation are prohibited.

Students wearing, carrying or displaying gang paraphernalia or exhibiting behaviors or gestures which symbolize gang membership or causing and/or participating in activities which are designed to intimidate another student will be disciplined. Prohibited gang paraphernalia will be specifically identified and posted by the building principal.

**Care of Property**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.
Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the responsibility of the staff of Brandon Elementary to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. Student behaviors disruptive to the learning environment may require disciplinary action. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

**EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE**

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

**Aiding or abetting violation of school rules**

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

**Bullying**

It is the policy of Martin Public Schools to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, 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, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

**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 teacher, students, 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.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

**Reporting:**

The district shall report incidents of bullying to the Department of Education on an annual basis according to the form and procedures established by the Department of Education.

Should this policy be amended or otherwise modified, the district shall submit a copy of the amended or modified Policy to the Department of Education no later than thirty (30) days after adopting the modification.

**Implementation:**

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy. This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District does reserve the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.
Procedure:
Any student who believes she/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor 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.

A student may also submit a report or complaint to any of the above designated individuals through email, voicemail, regular mail, or by leaving a sealed note addressed to the individual at that person’s office or desk. The student may submit a report or complaint anonymously, but this may affect the ability to fully investigate the matter, when the complaining student is not available to provide additional information during the course of the investigation.

The identity of a student who reports bullying, hazing or aggressive behavior, as well as those students who provide information during an investigation will remain confidential to the extent possible and to the extent allowable by law. Only school personnel directly involved in the investigation of the complaint or responsible for Remedy: any violations will be provided access to the identity of the complaining student(s) and student witnesses, and then only to the extent necessary to affectively deal with the situation.

The identity of the student who files the report or complaint will not be voluntarily shared with the alleged perpetrator(s) or the witnesses unless the student, and his/her parent or guardian, give written permission to do so. Any investigation report will likewise not be voluntarily produced with the names of the reporting student(s) or witnesses. However, under certain circumstances, the district may be required by law to disclose the report and/or the student(s) names. Also, under certain circumstances, the identity of the reporting student may become obvious without disclosure by school personnel.

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 shall be made to those identified above. While reports may be made anonymously, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report without other corroborating evidence.

The Principal (or other designated administrator) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial 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 or other appropriate officials.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the principal or appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the principal will report the act of bullying or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517 – Anti-Harassment.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Criminal acts
Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

Damaging property
Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

Disobedience
School staff is acting “in loco parentis,” which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in suspension or expulsion.
Displays of affection
Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. This includes touching, petting, or any other contact that may be considered sexual in nature. Such behavior may result in suspension from school or possibly expulsion.

Disruption of the educational process
Any action or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

Explosives
Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Extortion
Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats
A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Falsification of school work, identification, forgery
 Forgery of hall/bus passes and excuses as well as false I.D.’s are forms of lying and are not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Gambling
Gambling includes casual betting, betting pools, organized-sports betting, and any other form of wagering. Students who bet on an activity in which they are involved may also be banned from that activity. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Harassment
Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment 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 would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal, or may report it directly to the superintendent by calling 269-672-7194. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member must report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.
The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

A. submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;

B. submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;

C. the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student’s education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

A. verbal harassment or abuse;

B. pressure for sexual activity;

C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;

D. unwelcome touching;

E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;

F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, or safety;

G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;

H. remarks speculating about a person’s sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one’s own sexual activities or sexual history.

Note: An inappropriate boundary invasion by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life is sexual harassment. Further, any administrator, teacher, coach, other school authority who engages in sexual or other inappropriate physical contact with a student may be guilty of criminal “child abuse” as defined in State law. M.C.L.A. 722.621 et. seq.

Hazing

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing – any type of initiation procedure for any school related activity, which involves conduct such as but not limited to:

A. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;

B. physical punishment or infliction of pain

C. intentional humiliation or embarrassment;

D. dangerous activity;

E. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;

F. forced detention or kidnapping;

G. undressing or otherwise exposing initiates.
Note: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff members are involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy.

**Knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence**

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

**Persistent absence or tardiness**

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absences or tardies could lead to a referral with the County Truancy Officer or suspension from school.

**Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District**

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed and subject the student to expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

**Possession of a firearm, arson, and criminal sexual conduct**

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the principal's office.

**Possession of a weapon**

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive item

B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle

C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

**Profanity**

Any behavior or language, which in the judgment of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Purposely setting a fire**

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony and will subject the student to expulsion.
Refusing to accept discipline

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

Safety concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Student disorder/demonstration

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

Theft

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the principal. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not trespass onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Unauthorized use of school or private property

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guideline. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

Use of an object as a weapon

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to expulsion.

Use of Breath-Test Instruments

The principal may arrange for a breath test for blood-alcohol to be conducted on a student whenever s/he has individualized reasonable suspicion to believe that a student has consumed an alcoholic beverage.

The student will be taken to a private administrative or instructional area on school property with at least one (1) other member of the teaching or administrative staff present as a witness to the test.

The purpose of the test is to determine whether or not the student has consumed an alcoholic beverage. The amount of consumption is not relevant, except where the student may need medical attention.

If the result indicates a violation of school rules as described in this handbook, the student will be disciplined in accordance with disciplinary procedures described in this handbook. If a student refuses to take the test, s/he will be advised that such denial will be considered an admission of alcohol use with the consequent discipline invoked. The student will then be given a second opportunity to take the test.

Use of drugs

A student's use or sale of a performance-enhancing substance is a violation that will affect the student's athletic eligibility and extracurricular participation.
The Department of Community Health periodically distributes to the District the list of banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3.1 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Use of any drugs or substances appearing on this list will affect the student's athletic and extracurricular participation.

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

The sale, distribution, possession, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs that has a negative effect on the school environment is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. This includes nonalcoholic beers and wines, and the like. Many drug abuse offenses are also felonies. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

Use of tobacco

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

Violation of bus rules

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules.

Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the school shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Brandon Elementary School - Discipline Policy

The goal of our discipline policy is to present simple, comprehensive rules that children can understand. The broad nature of these rules encourages students to analyze their actions and make decisions about their behavior. We want children to take responsibility for their actions and be able to reflect upon whether or not these actions are appropriate to meet the intent of the rule.

We believe that when the home and school work together toward common goals, a safe and stimulating environment can be achieved. Children learn best when expectations for behavior are consistent among the important adults in their lives.

Behavior incidents will be documented with a Behavior Referral. Minor behavior problems will be handled by the classroom teacher. Major behavior problems will be handled and consequences will be assigned by Mr. Hardenburgh. Our intention is to have better communication between school and home as well as a more effective way of identifying problem area/times for specific students. All referrals will be sent home and need to be signed and returned to school the following day. The student’s teacher will also make a phone call home so that parents are aware that the referral is coming home that day. Students who do not return their referrals will lose recess privileges. Continual referrals may necessitate further consequences, such as before or after school detention. Further disciplinary procedures are also explained below. This referral system will allow us to review our school practices and make adjustments to ensure that
Disciplinary Procedures

Level 1-Initial Intervention:
The student’s behavior may be a violation of the “code of conduct” or disruption of the classroom or group activity. The inappropriate behavior is addressed with the student by the teacher/staff member.

Level 2-Parent Notification:
The student’s behavior has warranted his/her parents to be notified by the classroom teacher.

Level 3-Parent Involvement:
A meeting with the student’s parents is scheduled to discuss the incident and what disciplinary action will ensue.

Level 4-Behavior Plan:
If a student’s behavior has become persistent and/or more severe, the teacher and principal will schedule a meeting with the parents in order to discuss and implement a behavior plan. This plan will be agreed upon by all parties and become a part of the student’s school file.

Level 5-Suspension of 10 school days or less: see below for “due process rights”
This level is for severe violation or misconduct in regards to school policies and procedures.

Level 6-Long term suspension or expulsion: see below for “due process rights”
This level is for severe violation or misconduct in regards to school policies and procedures.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Short-term suspension from school

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension. The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice to the Superintendent. The request for an appeal must be in writing.

During the appeal process, the student shall not be allowed to remain in school.

The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the Board of Education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

Long-term suspension or expulsion from school

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- the charge and related evidence;
- the time and place of the Board meeting;
- the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion;
- a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the principal during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within 3 days (as in AG 5610) after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student’s parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

The school will make a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the principal or superintendent.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student’s consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock’s combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students’ privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student’s refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

**STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION**

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, non-sponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

A. A material cannot be displayed if it:

1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent, pervasive or vulgar,
2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
3. intends to be insulting or harassing,
4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
5. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.

B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.
STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.

A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

Dear Parents,

The safe operation of our bus fleet is dependent upon qualified drivers and daily cooperation from parents and children. The following rules and discipline procedures are provided so that there is no question about required behavior for children who desire district transportation or the discipline to be administered for failure to follow the rules. It is the responsibility of each parent to review these “rules and regulations” with their children if they expect them to be provided transportation to and from school. If you have any questions, please contact:

Mr. Richard Meeker, Director of Transportation
Martin Public Schools
(269)672-5086

Bus Transportation To and From School

The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Director of Transportation at 269-672-5086.

Students may only ride assigned school buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by a staff member in the elementary office.

A staff member in the elementary office may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the approval of a note from the parent stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

Bus Conduct

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation.

The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain that transportation safety.

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

EACH STUDENT MUST:

1. Obey all classroom rules which may be applied to riding a bus.
2. Remain in your seat until the bus has come to a full stop.
3. Remain fully in their seats except when entering and exiting the bus.
4. Hold musical instruments, books, or bundles in their lap.
5. Ride your assigned bus to and from school unless you have provided your driver with approved permission to ride to another bus.
6. Inform your driver when you expect to be absent from school the next day.
7. Be on time for your bus stop
8. Stay off the roadway while waiting for the bus, line up in an orderly fashion, and refrain from all forms of “horseplay”.
9. Cross in front of the bus when crossing the road or highway. NEVER IN BACK OF THE BUS.
10. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus. Take a seat quickly and quietly, remain seated while the bus is in motion, and enter or leave the bus only at the front door except in case of an emergency.
11. Before crossing the road to or from the bus stop, look at the driver and wait until he/she gives you the signal, with the paddle, to cross.
12. Obey the driver and report promptly to the building principal when instructed to do so by the driver.
EACH STUDENT MUST REFRAIN FROM:

1. Engaging in fighting, pushing, loud talking, throwing of objects, and any form of rowdiness.
2. Talking at all when the bus is stopped at a railroad crossing.
3. Having in their possession alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
4. Extending any portion of their bodies from the bus windows.
5. The use of profane or vulgar language or gestures.
6. Bringing with them any food, drink or gum for use on the bus.
7. Bringing pets, animals, or insects on the bus.
8. Bringing knives, glass or sharp objects on the bus.
9. Bringing pre-school or non-district children on the bus.
10. Making distracting noises on the bus.
11. Causing any form of damage to the bus.
12. Students will be liable for any damage they cause to the bus.

It is the parents’ responsibility to inform the bus driver when their child will not be aboard school transportation. The bus will not wait. Drivers will not wait for students who are not at their designated stops on time.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless s/he has proper authorization from school officials.

Videotapes on School Buses

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

Penalties for Infractions

In the event any student fails to follow the bus rules, the following steps of discipline will be used by each driver: verbal warning, contact parents, suspension from transportation, extended suspension, and the bus suspension for the remainder of the current school year. In some instances, depending upon the severity of the misconduct, the driver may “skip” one or more steps and move directly to suspension or extended suspension.