

Williamston Middle School
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2022-2023



Williamston Middle School 3845 Vanneter Road
Williamston, MI 48895 (517) 655-4668 FAX (517) 655-7502

www.gowcs.net

The information in this handbook is intended to serve as a guideline for students and parents and should not be considered all-inclusive.

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WILLIAMSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

3845 Vanneter Road • Williamston, MI 48895 • p. 517.655.4668 • f. 517-655.7502

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Williamston Middle School! The students and staff at WMS take great pride in maintaining a positive learning environment with high academic achievement. The foundation of our school culture is built on staying responsible, safe, engaged, and respectful. This is evidenced by the systems in place such as Be Nice and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Dedicated and collaborative educators make student learning a priority by creating quality instruction that engages students, aligns to state standards, and meets the needs of all learners. Teachers and staff support students' academic, social, and emotional needs in the classroom and beyond. A variety of courses and extracurricular offerings are available at Williamston Middle School and we encourage students to become involved and participate in the opportunities. Our success at Williamston Middle School is attributed to the collaboration between school, home, and the community. We collectively take pride in our district and strive to support each other through active involvement with the school community.

This student handbook includes critical information about policies and procedures that are in effect at Williamston Middle School. Each student is responsible for the student handbook contents. Review it carefully and reference it throughout the year. If there is anything we can do to help or support you along the way, please ask for assistance. On behalf of the staff at Williamston Middle School, we look forward to our work together and wish you an amazing school year!

Sincerely,



Deb LaFleur
Principal

Mission Statement of the Williamston Community Schools

The Mission Statement is a declaration of what our District aspires to do. The mission focuses all of the District's attention and energies on one common purpose. Along with the belief statements, it is the cornerstone of the district school improvement plan.

We will ensure that our students will master the skills for graduation, life-long learning, and responsible participation in an ever-changing society.

Mission Statement of Williamston Middle School

We will maximize the academic, social, and emotional growth of all students.

In pursuit of this mission, the staff of Williamston Middle School is committed to maintaining a positive learning environment with high academic achievement. The foundation of our school culture is built on staying responsible, safe, engaged, and respectful.

WILLIAMSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION/OFFICE STAFF

Debra LaFleur, Principal
Paige Paulsen, Athletic Director
Rachel Foster, Administrative Assistant

WILLIAMSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mrs. Nancy Deal – President
Mrs. Sarah Belanger – Vice President
Mrs. Amanda Hathaway Frattarelli – Secretary
Dr. Christopher Lewis – Treasurer
Mrs. Julie Conley – Trustee
Mr. David Indish – Trustee
Ms. Deborah Wolf - Trustee

WILLIAMSTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Adam Spina, Superintendent
Kelly Campbell, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Michele Cook, Director of Curriculum and Special Education
Sarah Tynan, Director of Finance

CONTACT INFORMATION

Williamston Community Schools places great value in communication in all its forms with the parents of our students. Please visit or contact us often. Williamston Community Schools website: www.gowcs.net

Williamston Middle School Office Hours

Main office: 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Principal: Debra LaFleur

Phone: 517-655-4668 ext 6001

e-mail: lafleud@gowcs.net

Athletic Director: Paige Paulsen

Phone: 517-655-2142 ext 7008

e-mail: paulsep@gowcs.net

Director of Finance: Sarah Tynan

Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 5102

e-mail: tynans@gowcs.net

Superintendent: Dr. Adam Spina

Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 3

e-mail: spinaa@gowcs.net

Supervisor of Technology: James Doyen

Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 7777

e-mail: doyenjp@gowcs.net

Williamston Board of Education

Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 3

e-mail: WCSboard@gowcs.net

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Board shall not discriminate in its policies and practices with respect to compensation, terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, height, weight, marital status, political belief, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that individual's particular position or activity.

The superintendent shall have in place all appropriate procedures relative to the Americans with Disabilities Act. This statement of non-discrimination shall be published and disseminated to all students, parents, employees, applicants and the general public in a manner determined by the superintendent.

Any questions or concerns regarding compliance with this policy may be directed to:

Dr. Adam Spina, Superintendent
Williamston Community Schools
418 Highland St., Williamston, MI 48895
(517) 655-4361
spinaa@gowcs.net

TITLE IX POLICY

The District prohibits unlawful sex discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, in any educational programs or activities in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and corresponding implementing regulations.

Any questions or concerns regarding compliance with this policy may be directed to:

Kelly Campbell, Deputy Superintendent
Williamston Community Schools
418 Highland St., Williamston, MI 48895
(517) 655-2174 ext 5001
campbek@gowcs.net

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

Arrival to School

Students may arrive at school beginning at 7:40am. Students are to arrive and report to the cafeteria until 8:15am. At that time, they may travel to their lockers.

Early Departure from School

Whenever a student is being picked up during school hours, they must be picked up from the office and signed out by a parent or guardian or a person designated by the parent or guardian.

Departure from School

Students should depart from school grounds no later than 3:45 PM. Students who remain on school grounds after regular school hours (3:45 PM) must be in areas supervised by school personnel. Areas where supervision may take place include: participation in athletics, conferencing with a teacher in his/her room, or participation in a school-sponsored activity.

After-School Bus Transportation

All Williamston Middle School students who ride the school bus home, must board the bus at the Middle School. Students will not be allowed to walk to the elementary school and board the bus after school.

School Calendar/ School Day Schedules

Visit the WMS webpage to view the Williamston Community School calendar as well as the Williamston Middle School daily schedules (i.e.: regular school day, State Testing schedule, two-hour delay, afternoon assembly, etc...)

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Faculty and Staff Listing

Communication between home and school is an integral part of the success of your child's education and experience at Williamston Middle School. Staff phone numbers and email addresses can be obtained from our district website at www.gowcs.net and/or from our summer mailing.

Comprehensive Guidance Program

The four components of the program are: **Guidance Curriculum*: The curriculum consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically through classroom and group activities from 6th-8th grade. Topics include decision-making skills, career exploration, self-awareness, healthy living and study skills. **Responsive Services*: This area helps address immediate needs of students. It includes consultation, personal and crisis counseling, and referrals. **Individual Planning*: These activities help all students plan, monitor and manage their own learning as well as personal and career development. It is comprised of individual appraisal, advisement, and placement. **Systems Support*: This component is implemented and carried out through such things as professional development, advisory and outreach committees, and research and development.

School Materials

Students are provided with necessary materials for classes. Any destruction, loss, or misuse of books, desks, or any other school property will be charged to the student. *A replacement fee will be charged for lost or damaged books or other materials.*

Student Records

Pursuant to Williamston Board of Education policy, a parent or guardian of a student under 18 years of age may have access to the cumulative records relating to the student. Parents or guardians interested in reviewing their student's records should phone or write the middle school principal to request a review.

Grade Reporting

Students and parents assume ultimate responsibility for monitoring their progress. Each semester parents will receive a computer-generated report in all subject areas. Parents will also have the opportunity to meet with teachers to discuss their student's progress during Parent/Teacher Conferences twice a year or more frequently if necessary. WMS maintains a self-monitored progress reporting system through PowerSchool on the district website (<http://ps.gowcs.net/public>) for all interested students and parents to access. *Contact James Doyen at doyenjp@gowcs.net for any questions about utilizing the PowerSchool System.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be offered once each semester. Families will have the option to attend conferences in person or virtually.

Grading Scale and Procedures

Student progress and achievement will be evaluated in relation to the State Standards and/or Michigan High School Content Expectations (HSCE). Students are provided opportunities to practice content (formative assessments) and assess skills before a summative assessment. Williamston Middle School teachers use two types of assessments: formative and summative. Only summative assessments of learning targets will be used for grading purposes.

Formative Assessments (Practice)

Formative assessments (practice) are used to inform teachers and students of students' skills and knowledge to help teachers adjust instruction and provide feedback to students. Formative assessments are a snapshot in time of students' knowledge and skills. Examples of formative assessments include, but are not limited to quizzes, drafts/attempts, homework, journals, written or verbal responses, and classroom activities. Formative assessments are recorded in PowerSchool, but are NOT used to calculate the student's grade.

Formative Assessment Grading Scale

Skills and knowledge are measured on a 3 point scale.

3 - Proficient: You've got it, continue to make progress

2 - Developing: Almost there, keep practicing and ask clarifying questions as needed

1 - Limited: Additional help needed, consider making an appointment with the teacher

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are used to evaluate students' knowledge and skills. The summative assessment scores determine the student's final grade and indicate the extent to which a student has learned or mastered the concepts and skills that have been taught and practiced. Summative assessments may include, but are not limited to tests, exams, projects, final drafts/attempts, presentations, and performances. Summative assessments are recorded in PowerSchool and are used to calculate the student's grade.

Summative Assessment Grading Scale:

A 93-100	C 73-76
A- 90-92	C- 70-72
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 83-86	D 63-66
B- 80-82	D- 60-62
C+ 77-79	E 0-59

Communication Codes Used in PowerSchool

- (A) Assessment : This is a summative assessment of student achievement of skills and knowledge. Students may retake all or a portion of summative assessments in order to demonstrate their level of understanding of concepts and skills.
- (P) Practice: This is a formative assessment that measures student development of skills and knowledge of the standards and HSCE for this curriculum.

Evaluation Marks

- Teachers may also choose to use an **alternative method of evaluation marks**: (S) Satisfactory or (U) Unsatisfactory.
- **Extra credit** will NOT be awarded as it skews achievement data in relation to the Common Core Standards (CCS), standard and/or HSCE.
- A zero will not be used to indicate a missing assignment (assessment or practice). Instead, an **Incomplete** (INC) will be given until the student completes the assessment.

Retake Procedures

A student will have the opportunity to retake an assessment (in accordance with the teacher's written retake procedures) any time a student wants to demonstrate a higher level of his/her understanding of concepts and skills.

A student must provide evidence of having reviewed and/or practiced the material prior to doing a reassessment. A student will only have to retake the portions (CCS/concept/standard) of an assessment on which he/she failed to show proficiency on the original assessment.

A student's score will reflect his/her most recent summative assessment score.

A student must complete the reassessment within two weeks (or a time as agreed upon by the teacher and student).

The end of the retake window is on the last day of the school year. If a summative assessment is given at the end of the year, it is the student's responsibility to retake the assessment according to the teacher's written procedures PRIOR to the last day of the school year.

Work Habits, Participation, and Behavior

Visit the WMS webpage (Link: Academics) for the rubric. Paper copies are available in the main office.

General Academic Information

Additional academic information is located on the WMS webpage.

Course Descriptions

Visit the WMS webpage (Link: Academics) for an updated “Course Description” packet. Hard copies are available in the main office.

High School Credit

If a student completes one or more High School Content Expectation Michigan Merit Curriculum credits before entering high school, the student shall be awarded credit toward graduation and will be noted on the high school transcript. The grade earned (60% or above) in the course will not be included in the computation of the grade point average on the high school transcript.

Personal Curriculum

Middle School students entering ninth grade might be eligible for a personal curriculum. Students and/or parents should contact the high school counseling office for details.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance, Absences and Tardies

A. RATIONALE We believe that:

- Every day in school is of vital importance to each of our students.
- Days missed from school cannot be completely recovered. The rationale and focus of our attendance policy is to support student participation in class instruction, discussion and other related learning experience.
- Interaction between students and teacher and involvement in the total school environment is a critical component of the learning process and is dependent on the student’s presence in the classroom. Although students can make up work missed when absent, they are not able to replace the interaction and instruction that occurs between the teacher and the student.
- Students who have good attendance achieve more success, more satisfaction, are better prepared to handle the rigors of high school expectations, and are more employable after leaving high school.
- We must work as a team- parents, students, teachers, administrators- to ensure that absences are limited to necessities such as illness, family emergencies, funerals, or school-related absences.

B. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AN ABSENCE

- When your child is going to be absent or tardy, it is the parent’s responsibility to leave a message on our attendance line by calling 655-4668 and pressing #1. You may call 24 hours a day and must call within a 24 hour time period to excuse your child.
- Parents may also report an absence online at <https://www.gowcs.net/domain/164>

Truancy

Defined - Ingham County defines truancy as ten or more unexcused absences in a class. Truancy also includes the following:

- Excessive amount of days absent due to illness without documentation from a doctor
- Missing class hours or days without a valid reason
- Multiple days with unexcused absences
- Excessive number of tardies particularly in the morning

Classification of Absences

Excused Absences

The District accepts only the following as excusable reasons for absence from school.

- Personal illness or hospitalization – The administration may require a doctor’s confirmation if deemed advisable.
- Illness or medical emergency in the immediate family.
- Death of a relative or attendance at a funeral.
- Observance or celebration of an established religious holiday or attendance at religious instruction.
- Absence during the school day for professional appointments – Parents are encouraged to schedule medical, dental, legal, and other necessary appointments outside of the school day. Since this is not always possible, students are to do the following:
 - Students shall have a statement to that effect from their parents;
 - Students and parents are encouraged to bring documentation of professional appointments to be kept on file.
 - Students shall report back to school immediately after their appointment if school is still in session.
- School-related and sanctioned events, field trips, competitions, and activities.
- School-imposed suspensions.
- Pre-arranged absences, personal convenience absences and trips/vacations
 - For these types of absences to be excused, parent notification of the absence must be made in writing at least two days in advance to the main office.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence from class, other than excused/school-related absences or any absence that has not been verified with the main office within 24 hours will be considered unexcused. Moreover, an unexcused absence from class may be considered truancy and subject to discipline. The following are some examples of potential unexcused absences: oversleeping, missing the bus, and personal business.

Responsibility for School Work

Excused Absence

When students have excused absences, one day to complete make-up work for each excused absence shall be granted by the teacher. Students who have an extended illness of three days or more, should make arrangements with their teachers on an individual basis. Administrator and/or social worker or counselor may assist in making arrangements.

School-Related Absence

Students attending school-related functions (ex: field trips, contests, athletic events) must notify teachers in advance of the absence. Students must request homework prior to departure and arrange time to make up missed tests or quizzes (if appropriate) at a time that is acceptable with the teacher. Upon returning to school from a school-related absence, the work that was due on the day of the absence must be turned in.

School-Imposed Suspension

Students serving a suspension have full academic makeup privileges. The student is responsible for contacting his/her teacher and making arrangements for getting academic work (ex: Google Classroom, email, packet left in main office, etc).

Pre-Arranged Absences, Personal Convenience Absences, Trips/Vacations

Students are expected to be in classes while school is in session. There are generous vacation periods built into the school calendar, so absences of this type taken during school time are discouraged. Parents must notify the main office at least two days in advance for the absence to be excused. Students will be responsible for making necessary arrangements for missed coursework with their teachers and must notify teachers in advance of the absence. Students must request homework prior to departure and arrange time to make up missed tests or quizzes (if appropriate) at a time that is acceptable with the teacher. On the first day back to school from this type of absence, the work that was due on the day(s) of the absence(s) must be turned in.

Homebound Services

Students who face hospitalization or extended illness of five days or more should contact the main office as soon as possible in order to request homebound services. A doctor's verification and completed homebound services application will be required for homebound services.

Students with Disabilities

The IEP team or the 504 team will determine and document whether or not the Attendance Policy, as written, will be applied for a student with a disability under IDEA or Section 504 whose disability affects or is suspected of affecting his/her attendance.

Tardy Procedures

Punctuality is essential to maintain the integrity of the learning environment and foster responsibility. Students have 4 minutes passing time between classes. A student will be marked tardy by the teacher if they are late to class before 5 minutes after the beginning of class. Being late to class means the student is not in the classroom with the needed materials for class by the time the tardy bell rings to signify the beginning of class.

If students are more than 5 minutes late to school, they are marked absent from their first period class. If a student is more than 5 minutes late to any class, they will be marked absent for that class. The only exception is a note provided by a staff member excusing the tardiness.

Consequences for Multiple Tardies Within an Individual Class

1. Third tardy - RTP plan development, parent contact from RTC Coordinator
2. Fourth tardy - Lunch detention, parent contact from RTC Coordinator

3. Fifth tardy - Revisit RTP plan, lunch detention, parent contact from RTC Coordinator
4. Six or more tardies - Parent contact from administration

STUDENT CONDUCT AND CITIZENSHIP

Internet / Intranet Policy

These policies shall apply to all users, students, teachers, and administrators of telecommunications systems which are entered via equipment and access lines located at Williamston Community Schools or who obtain their access privileges through association with these schools:

1. All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with purposes of Williamston Community Schools.
2. Use of the network for commercial or profit purposes is prohibited.
3. Extensive use of the network for personal and private business is prohibited.
4. Any use of the network for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
5. Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
6. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
7. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
8. Users are expected to abide by generally accepted network rules of etiquette.
9. No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by others; hardware or software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
10. Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
11. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, bullying and other aggressive behaviors are prohibited on the network. This includes, but is not limited to, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive or illegal material.
12. The illegal installation of copyrighted software for use on district computers is prohibited.
- *13. Use of the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network is prohibited. Students accessing proxy servers, games and social networking sites (for example: Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok) are prohibited.
- *14. Subscriptions to Listservs must be reported to the building system operator (SYSOP). Get the name of the SYSOP in the principal's office. Prior approval for Listservs is required for students.
- *15. Mail Listservs must be monitored daily and deleted from the personal mail directory to avoid excessive use of fileserver hard disk space.
16. From time to time, Williamston Community Schools will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the acceptable use practice.
 - A. *Williamston Community Schools reserve the right to log Internet use and to monitor fileserver space utilization by users while respecting the privacy of user accounts.
 - B. *Williamston Community Schools reserve the right to temporarily remove a user account on the network to prevent further unauthorized activity.

C. *Williamston Community Schools and Ingham Intermediate Schools make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Williamston Community Schools will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. Williamston Community Schools specifically deny any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

D. *Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a system administrator or your District Internet Coordinator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log-on to the Internet as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

E. *Vandalism of computer hardware or software will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any of the above-listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the NSFNET Internet backbone. This includes but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

F. *These items in addition to the Williamston Community Schools District Internet Acceptable Use Statement as included in the district code of conduct.

G. Any violations may result in a loss of computer access, as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Users are subject to all local, state, and federal law.

H. Users must adhere to copyright and trademark laws and licensing agreements in the use of hardware and software and in the transmission or copying of files on the Internet. Users must also comply with all other applicable laws, both state and federal with respect to use of technology.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Users may be disciplined for violating any of the above. Users will be required to make full restitution if any damages or expenses are incurred. In addition to disciplinary action as defined by this policy, users may also face additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate in accordance with the District disciplinary policy. Users found in violation of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy may be subject to the following suspension or revocation of access privileges or other disciplinary actions deemed appropriate by the district:

First Offense:

The loss of use of District technology for three weeks. The offense will be recorded in the user's file. Before privileges are reinstated, the user must review and re-sign the Acceptable Use Policy.

Second Offense:

The loss of all technology privileges for the six weeks, rest of semester, or for the entire remainder of school year.

Limit on District Liability: Williamston Community Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, regarding the use of its technological resources, including, but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delay, non-delivery or any service interruption. Furthermore, the district is not responsible for any damage to user's hardware or software incurred from a computer virus or other malfunction of the District's computer system or other technological resources. Williamston Community Schools shall not be responsible for any claims for damages arising from the use of the District's technological resources. *These items are in addition to the Williamston Community Schools District Internet Acceptable Use Statement as included in the district code of conduct.

Closed Campus/Security Policy

Williamston Middle School has adopted a “Closed Campus Policy.” Every student is required to remain in school unless granted an exception from this policy by a school administrator. This policy is a reflection of our belief that the school has a responsibility for the safety and welfare of students assigned to it during the school day.

Definition of Campus

The campus of WMS is defined as the physical boundaries of the main building, west parking lot/playground area during lunch recess, and the sidewalk outside the entrance during the instructional day.

Procedure for Closed Campus Policy

The Closed Campus Policy requires that all students assigned to the building are in the building unless absent from school or granted an exception by the school administration. Accordingly, every exception must have prior approval and be recorded in the office.

Dress and Appearance

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment.

- Student dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or depict alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.
- Student dress (including accessories) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times (state law).
- Student dress may not cause a substantial disruption to the orderly process of school functions or endanger the health or safety of the student, other students, staff, or others.

The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress. Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. Parents will be called if appropriate clothing is not available or the student refuses dress code appropriate clothing. Infractions of dress guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Food and Beverage Policy

1. All food must be consumed in the cafeteria unless students have teacher approval.
2. Students should refrain from having food or drink in the hallways or outside at all times.

School Meals Policy

- If the student’s meal account is at zero, the student is permitted to charge a maximum of three meals. Once the limit is reached, an alternative meal of cereal, fruit/vegetable and milk will be offered. The cost of this alternative meal will be added to the student’s account
- Charging privilege pertains to full school meals only not a-la-carte items.
- An email will be sent to parents/guardians when account funds are low. When the account falls below zero, parent/guardian will also be notified by email. If the balance reaches negative \$10.00, the parent/guardian will receive a phone call as well as the emails.

- Unpaid balances are due by the last day of each school year.
- No charging is allowed the last week of school.

Items Not Allowed In School

To assist students in behaving in a kind, safe, cooperative and respectful manner, the following items are not to be brought to school:

- Glass containers, items that squirt water, slingshots, matches & lighters, fireworks, laser pointers, knives & guns etc... in accordance with the Weapon Free Law.
- Media players and electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, game playing devices, and similar electronic devices are not allowed outside of a student's locker during the school day, unless permission has been granted by a teacher for a specific educational purpose that is directly connected to a classroom lesson, project, or assessment.

WMS Behavior Referral System

- The middle school staff and administration are dedicated to maintaining a positive school environment for all students. This referral system is meant to be a way of documenting student behaviors and responding accordingly. It is our mission to provide a school that is safe, orderly, and productive. Students must accept their role as learners and responsible members of the middle school community. All students shall be liable to consequences for harmful behaviors.
- In order to reach our goal of reducing classroom and hallway disruptions and to assure a safe and orderly learning environment for all children, the Responsible Thinking Process (RTP) will be used throughout the middle school. RTP is a tool for our students and staff members to employ in order to grow and learn in a consistent and safe environment. Through the use of The Responsible Thinking Process, students will learn and be required to self-manage their behavior.

RESPONSIBLE THINKING PHILOSOPHY:

- Students have the right to learn and teachers have the right to teach in safety.
- No one has the right to disrupt, to prevent other students from learning or to violate the rights of others.

Responsible Thinking Referrals: A student will be sent to the Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) to develop a plan of self-management after his/her second disruption in the classroom or hallway. The student will then negotiate with his/her teacher in order to be admitted back into the classroom from which the referral was received.

CODE OF CONDUCT

RATIONALE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to foster an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. Within our school, the administration and all other school personnel are responsible for creating and supporting such an environment. To achieve this goal, faculty, staff, parents, students, and other members of the community must have a clear understanding of the school's expectations for student behavior. The Williamston Middle School Code of Conduct provides those expectations by:

- integrating various sources of authority including state law, Board of Education policies, and administrative guidelines,
- identifying expectations and responsibilities of WMS students and administrators,
- defining the conduct that violates those rights and responsibilities,
- standardizing the procedures that the school will use in responding to conduct violations; and
- assuring the rights and responsibilities of students when disciplinary action is taken.

APPLICATION

The Code of Conduct applies to any student who is:

- on school property,
- enroute to and from school (public or private transportation);
- traveling on school-affiliated transportation,
- attending school or involved in any school-affiliated activity,
- with respect to any misconduct toward any school employee or damage to his/her property, whether on or off school premises; and
- whose conduct at any time or place directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of other students, school employees, or the school.

Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may use their discretion to search a student, backpack, purse, locker, desk, or any other area under the circumstances outlined below and may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Student lockers and desks are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school district; however, students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers and desks. Students should not expect privacy regarding items placed in school property because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. School authorities may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers and desks for any reason at any time without student consent and without a search warrant.

A student's failure to permit searches and seizures as provided in this policy will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g., purse, book bag, athletic bag, vehicles) may be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials. If a properly conducted search yields illegal or contraband materials, such findings shall be turned over to proper legal authorities.

Categories of Misconduct

To establish the best possible learning environment for the student, as well as to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of all students and school personnel, the following categories of misconduct have been adopted. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Other misconduct may give rise to discipline. **Violation of any of the following may result in student discipline, up to and including permanent expulsion from school.**

Abusive/Offensive Language (level 2-3): Any gesture or written, verbal, graphic or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts) that includes the use of abusive/offensive language. This includes, but is not limited to, swearing, racial and ethnic slurs, and abusive/offensive comments about one's religion, race, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, height, weight, or socioeconomic status.

Academic Integrity (levels 1 & 3): Academic Integrity requires high standards of personal achievement, ethical conduct and academic honesty. It creates an academic environment in which a student's search for knowledge is a true and honest reflection of that effort.

1. Classroom Level Violation (level 1)

- Violating the teacher-established rules for any assignment or assessment.
- Submitting another's assignment as one's own.
- Knowingly allowing another student to use an assignment or test to submit as his or her own.
- Looking at another's test or essay and submitting the work as one's own.
- Knowingly assisting another student to misrepresent the content or authorship of his/her school work.
- Using any type of notes or technology without teacher approval.
- Plagiarism, including but not limited to:
 - quoting or paraphrasing directly all or part of someone else's written or spoken words without documentation within the body of the work.
 - presenting an idea, theory, or formula originated by another person as one's own.
 - using information, which is not common knowledge, including statistics and demographics, without documenting the source.
 - copying or pasting from the Internet or another document material that is not one's own without documentation from the source.

Classroom level violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed by the classroom teacher and documented.

The following consequences may result:

- A. Student may be given an Incomplete (INC) for the assignment or assessment
- B. Student may submit a new assignment/assessment as determined by the teacher
- C. Student may be assigned a detention

Parents/guardians will be notified.

2. Administrative Level Violation (level 3)

Unauthorized possession, use and/or theft of test materials, answer sheets, teacher materials, computer files, grading programs, and/or altering teacher records.

Administrative violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will be addressed by the teacher and administration and documentation will occur. The following consequences may occur:

- A. Student may receive disciplinary action.
- B. Student may fail the test, paper and/or project in question.
- C. Student may be required to resubmit the work and/or to do additional work; student may or may not receive credit or points for the additional work.
- D. Students may fail the marking period and/or semester.

Parents/guardians will be notified.

Arson (level 5): Setting fire to a building or other real property or the contents thereof, or doing any act which results in the starting of a fire, or aiding, counseling, inducing, persuading, or procuring another to do such act or acts.

Assault (level 4): Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm or bodily injury.

Breaking and Entering (level 4): Breaking into and/or entering any school building, facility, office, room, storage space, or other enclosure without authority to do so.

Bullying (level 3): Bullying is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic or physical act or any electronic communication, including cyberbullying*, that a reasonable person should know may have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property, insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Bullying may also constitute harassment and/or intimidation. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, behavior reasonably perceived as motivated by a student's religion, race, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, height, weight, socioeconomic status, or by any other distinguishing characteristic including racial and ethnic slurs.

**Cyberbullying is defined as the use of information and communications technologies such as, but not limited to, e-mail, cell phone, instant messaging, social media, defamatory personal websites, and defamatory online personal polling websites to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.*

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices (levels 1-3): Cell phones and electronic devices (ECDs) shall not be used during instructional time without the direct and explicit permission of the classroom teacher or at any school-sponsored events where there is a reasonable expectation of quiet attentiveness or where the device would cause any disruption. "Use" refers to, but is not limited to, sending and/or receiving calls and text messages, accessing social media, accessing the internet, playing games, utilizing applications (apps), but also using the cell

phone or ECD for any other purpose. Furthermore, the use of any recording, video, or camera functions without consent of the subject (students, staff, building guests, etc.) is strictly prohibited.

Additionally, the following policies will govern cell phones and ECDs:

1. The use of any personal communications device that has a wireless connection must follow the district's Appropriate Use Policy (see AUP).
2. Williamston Middle School is not responsible for the loss of theft of any personal cell phone or ECD.

Using a cell phone or other ECD in an unauthorized or inappropriate manner or in violation of policy will result in confiscation of the phone and/or ECD and may result in additional disciplinary action. Students refusing to hand over a cell phone and/or ECD to school personnel will be considered "insubordinate" per the Student Code of Conduct.

Closed Campus/Security Violation (level 2): Leaving school property without following proper sign-out procedures; walking into the parking lot or to a vehicle during any part of the school day without administrative authorization; failing to follow the Closed Campus Policy as outlined in the Student Handbook. For security purposes, propping exterior doors (Ex: Using a pencil or rock in the doorway so the door does not lock) to allow access to the building other than the main office entrance is strictly prohibited.

Criminal Acts (level 4): Committing or participating in any act prohibited by federal or state law, or local ordinance, when such act affects the safe and orderly operation for the school, including but not limited to an act committed on school property, on school-related transportation, or otherwise related to any school program, function, or activity. School officials may take appropriate disciplinary action regardless of whether a criminal charge results.

Damage/Destruction of Property (level 2): Defacing or damaging school property, classroom materials, equipment, or books, which includes removing of bar codes; defacing or damaging another's property.

Dangerous Article (level 4): Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing or concealing any dangerous article, lighter, instrument, device, material, look-alike, replica, or any other item capable of causing bodily harm. This includes, but is not limited to, knives with blades of three (3) inches or less. The definition of a knife includes, but is not limited to, a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle.

Dangerous Weapon (level 5): Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing or concealing any weapon capable of causing great bodily injury or death. This includes, but is not limited to, a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, and knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bars, or brass knuckles. The definition of a firearm is based on federal law. The definition of a knife includes, but is not limited to, a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle.

Dishonesty to a Staff Member (level 2): Attempting to make a person believe as true something false which includes, but is not limited to, failing to disclose information, hiding/covering up information or evidence regarding oneself or others, or giving a false name or identification.

Display of Affection (level 1): Physically demonstrating affection that may be considered sexual in nature, which includes, but is not limited to, touching, petting, kissing, or any other physical contact.

Disrespect (level 1-2): Rude, inconsiderate or disrespectful behavior.

Disruptive Conduct (levels 1-3): Behavior which substantially interferes with the educational process.

Dress Code Violation (level 1): Dressing or using personal adornment which jeopardizes the health, safety, welfare and orderly conduct of the educational process; failing to follow the dress code as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Drugs/Alcohol/Substance Abuse: Mood-altering substances (including counterfeit or look-alike substances), narcotics, drugs, including prescription (Except those for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy. All medications that a student needs to take at school shall be maintained in the office and only accessed through the school staff.), controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, inhalants, anabolic steroids, paraphernalia, other intoxicants, or any other illegal substances so designated and prohibited by state or federal law.

Voluntary agreement to undergo a substance abuse assessment, and taking the assessment seriously, could result in having any suspension reduced.

- A. Possession, concealment, use or under the influence of (level 3)
- B. Selling, purchasing, bartering, distributing, or intent to do so (level 4)

Explosive Device (level 4): Using, possessing, attempting to possess, brandishing, or concealing any explosive or incendiary device including, but is not limited to, fireworks, firecrackers, and poppers.

Failure to Comply with Discipline Assigned by a Teacher and/or Administrator (level 2): Progressive discipline will be assigned (Ex: Detention to In-school Suspension to Out-of-school Suspension).

Failure to Follow Classroom/School Rules (level 1): Not following the classroom/school rules and/or procedures as determined by a staff member.

False Alarms/Misuse of Emergency Equipment (level 4): Falsely activating the fire alarm system; misusing a fire extinguisher/AED/tourniquet kit; or making a false “911” call.

Falsifying a Document (level 2): Falsifying, forging, or altering a document.

Fighting/Physical Aggression (level 3): Engaging or attempting to engage another in a physical conflict.

Gambling (level 2): Participating in or organizing games of chance to gain money or other items of value.

Hall Pass Misuse (level 1): Abusing the privilege of a hall pass; leaving class without permission.

Harassment (level 2): Behaving in a persistent, annoying, unwanted, or negative manner with the intent of humiliating or upsetting another individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or age.

Hazing (level 3): Engaging in any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization that causes or is likely to cause physical harm, personal degradation, or disgrace. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not negate this prohibition.

Instigating, Conspiring With or Assisting Another to Violate Any School Rule (levels 1-5): Student will be subject up to and including the same disciplinary penalty associated with the rule violated.

Insubordination/Defiance (levels 2-3): Refusal or failure, either verbally or non-verbally, to comply with handbook or school regulations; reasonable directions or instructions of school personnel; refusal to identify self to school personnel. This includes being in an unauthorized area; refusal to leave school grounds at the request of authorized personnel; and/or any failure to cooperate with school personnel in the reasonable exercise of their duties.

Intimidation (Level 2): Intimidating others by the real or implied infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically-transmitted, or emotional abuse, which includes posturing or attacking the property of others for the purpose of intimidation.

Littering (level 1): Intentionally throwing, dropping, or leaving paper, trash, or other materials in non-designated areas.

Loitering (level 2): Being present in or about the school premises under one or more of the following circumstances: after a reasonable request to leave; without a legitimate purpose for being there; without proper authorization; or after refusing to properly identify oneself.

Minor Physical Incident (levels 1-3): Engaging physically with another person including but not limited to pushing, shoving, slapping, wrestling, or horseplay.

Persistent Offenses (levels 2-4): Engaging in a pattern of repeated or chronic misbehavior and/or persistent disobedience despite interventions may result in a need for greater disciplinary consequences including a recommendation for expulsion.

Physical Assault against School Personnel (level 5): Causing or attempting to cause harm through force or violence to any District employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor of the District.

Robbery/Extortion (levels 3-4): Obtaining money, information, or property from another student by threat, intimidation, or coercion.

Safety (level 1-2): Verbal or non-verbal acts that impede the safety of oneself or others that include, but are not limited to running in the building, throwing objects in the school setting.

Sexual Misconduct & Behavior:

- A. **Criminal Sexual Conduct (level 5):** As defined by Michigan law (MCL 750.520b,c,d,e,g) including but not limited to unwelcome sexual touching or sexual penetration by force or coercion.
- B. **Sexual Harassment (levels 2-3):** Including unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors or intimidating, hostile or offensive verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. See Sexual Harassment Policy.
- C. **Sexual Activity (level 4):** Inappropriate sexual behavior, even when consensual, on school property or during school related activities.
- D. **Indecent Exposure (level 4):** Displaying one's private parts to one or more people in public view, usually with the intent to shock the unsuspecting viewer.

Smoking/Tobacco Product (level 3): Using, selling, purchasing, distributing, possessing, or attempting to possess tobacco, vaping, or juuling products in any form.

Technology Misuse (level 1-3): Violating the Acceptable Use Policy for Technology and Telecommunications; using cameras, computers, copiers, cell phones, or other similar equipment without permission, or for illegal, inappropriate, or obscene purposes.

Theft (levels 2-3): Stealing, attempting to steal, possessing, or transferring school or private property, or participating in the theft or attempted theft of school or private property.

Threat/Harassment against School Personnel (level 4): Intentionally causing or attempting to cause intimidation to any District employee or against a person engaged as a volunteer or contractor of the District.

Threat of Serious Bodily Harm (level 4): Threatening another, either verbally or non-verbally, with death or serious physical injury which may create a fear of actual harm. Includes threats made by electronic means.

Threats of Violence (level 4): Including but not limited to, bomb threats, shootings, etc directed at students, staff, a school building, school property, or a school-related event. Includes threats communicated verbally, electronically (such as social media, text, etc.), written, and all other forms of communication.

Trespassing (level 3): Being in or on a school building, on school property, or at a school-sponsored event without permission or authorization.

Truancy/Unverified Absence (level 2): Being out of scheduled classes without permission or failing to follow proper attendance sign-in or sign-out procedures; skipping;

Vandalism (level 3): Destroying, defacing, or damaging property in a willful or malicious manner, that includes, but is not limited to acts of graffiti, tagging, or marking.

Code of Conduct Infraction Levels

Level 1 Infractions (Conduct that impedes orderly operation of classroom or school)

Level 1 behavior should be handled by the classroom teacher whenever possible. Ordinarily, a teacher will not refer a student engaging in Level 1 behavior to the school administrators until the classroom teacher has documented and taken progressive disciplinary actions and has initiated contact or communicated with the student and parents. Thereafter the classroom teacher may refer the student to the office through a written referral. However, teachers may write referrals directly to an administrator when the misbehavior occurs outside the classroom or in exceptional circumstances where the classroom teacher believes outside assistance is necessary.

Level 2 Infractions (Conduct that is serious or illegal)

Normally, a student who commits a Level 2 violation will be subjected to disciplinary actions at the discretion of the administrator. Parent or guardian contact may be made either through a personal conference, phone conference, or in the event the previous are not possible, through written communication. Teachers making an office referral must do so in writing either at the time of the violation or as soon as possible thereafter.

Note: Any student who commits a Level 2 violation may be denied participation in any school or school-related, extra-curricular or co-curricular activity or event. Furthermore, the administration reserves the right and discretion to notify the Williamston Police Department or other proper authorities in the event of Level 2 Infractions.

Level 3 Infractions (Conduct that is serious or illegal)

A student who commits a Level 3 violation will be suspended and subjected to other disciplinary actions at the discretion of the administrator. Parent or guardian contact may be made either through a personal conference, phone conference, or in the event the previous are not possible, through written communication. Teachers making an office referral must do so in writing either at the time of the violation or as soon as possible thereafter.

Note: Any student who commits a Level 3 violation will be denied participation in any school or school-related, extra-curricular or co-curricular activity or event. Furthermore, the administration reserves the right and discretion to notify the Williamston Police Department or other proper authorities in the event of Level 3 Infractions.

Level 4 Infractions (Conduct that is serious or illegal and is potentially life or health threatening)

A student who commits a Level 4 violation will be suspended, may be recommended for expulsion from Williamston Community Schools, may be subjected to legal action, and/or may be subjected to other disciplinary actions at the discretion of the administrator. Students expelled from Williamston Community Schools may be reinstated in accordance with Board of Education policy. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be required to meet with school personnel and, if necessary, the proper authorities.

Note: Any student charged with a Level 4 violation will be denied participation in any school or school-related, extra-curricular or co-curricular, activity or event. Furthermore, the administration reserves the right and

discretion to notify the Williamston Police Department or other proper authorities in the event of Level 4 Infractions.

Level 5 Infractions (Conduct that is extremely serious, illegal and is potentially a great threat to life or health)

A student who commits a Level 5 violation will be suspended, recommended for permanent expulsion from Williamston Community Schools, subjected to legal action, and/or other disciplinary actions at the discretion of the administrator. These consequences are in compliance with the *Safe Schools Act* (MCL 380.1311). However, as modified by 380.1310d, before suspending or expelling a student for these infractions, the Administration must consider the following factors:

- The student's age,
- The student's disciplinary history,
- Whether the student has a disability,
- The seriousness of the violation or behavior,
- Whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member,
- Whether restorative practices could be used to address the violation or behavior, and
- Whether a lesser intervention could properly address the violation or behavior.

*Note – these factors do not apply when a student possesses a firearm in a weapon-free school zone.

With regards to a dangerous weapon, there is a rebuttable presumption that expulsion for possessing the weapon is not justified if the School Board or its designee determines in writing that the student has established that he or she fits under any of the exceptions listed below by clear and convincing evidence, and that the student has no previous history of suspension or expulsion:

- The object or instrument was not possessed for use as a weapon (or delivery for another person to use as a weapon)
- The student did not knowingly possess the weapon
- The student did not know or have reason to know that the object constituted a dangerous weapon
- The student had the weapon at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of school or police authorities.

Students expelled from Williamston Community Schools may be reinstated in accordance with Board of Education policy. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to meet with school personnel and, if necessary, the proper authorities.

Note: Any student charged with a Level 5 violation will be denied participation in any school or school-related, extra-curricular or co-curricular, activity or event. Furthermore, the administration reserves the right and discretion to notify the Williamston Police Department or other proper authorities in the event of Level 5 Infractions.

Disciplinary Consequences

It is our mission to keep parents fully informed concerning the conduct of their child. Students who accumulate multiple referrals may be excluded from participation in school events including athletics, extracurriculars, after school events, field trips, etc.

***Not in strict order of severity; administrators have the full discretion to determine the appropriate consequence(s) to fit the behavioral infraction(s) in question.**

- Student Conference
- Warning/Correction/Redirection
- Parent Phone Conference
- Parent Conference
- Denial of Privilege (such as prohibited from attending or participating in athletic/extracurricular activities)
- Confiscation of Property
- Restitution
- Removal from class
- Removal/Suspension from Bus
- Detention
- Suspension (short-term, 1-10 days)
- Suspension (long-term, 11-45 days as assigned by the Superintendent)
- Expulsion (Up to solar year as decided by the School Board)
- Permanent Expulsion (Solar year with application for re-admittance as decided by the School Board)
- Referral to Substance Abuse Assessment
- Referral to Agency/Law Enforcement (mandatory for all drug and alcohol related offenses)

In all disciplinary cases, the administration may elect to employ after school detention, suspension, mediation and/or other disciplinary measures deemed appropriate and not specifically outlined here, in lieu of or in addition to other discipline. (See below for description of penalties.)

The severity of the offense, a continuation of misconduct, and/or persistent disobedience, may result in more severe consequences than those outlined here including a recommendation for expulsion.

The following may be considered when applying the Code of Conduct to a student's behavior:

- Cooperation/honesty
- Severity of offense
- Level of disruption to the learning environment
- Prior infractions/offenses
- Responsibility or level of ownership and willingness to make changes
- Willingness to participate in Restorative Justice (if applicable)
- Discipline involving students with disabilities will be applied in a manner consistent with applicable student discipline procedures as well as federal and state laws.

Restorative Justice Practices

Administrators should consider using restorative practices as an alternative or in addition to suspension or expulsion. Restorative Justice should be the first consideration for infractions such as interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, theft, damaging property, class disruption, harassment, and cyberbullying.

Restorative practices may include target-offender conferences that:

- Are initiated by the target;
- Are approved by the target's parents or legal guardian or, if the target is at least 15, by the target directly;
- Are attended voluntarily by the target, a target advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the target and the offender;
- Provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm.

The attendees of the conference may require the student to apologize; participate in community service; restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution, or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

Classroom Progressive Discipline Procedures

Teachers are expected to use progressive discipline which includes:

1. Explanation of established classroom rules, disciplinary procedures, and consequences.
2. Teaching, modeling, and practicing appropriate behavior throughout the year.
3. Parent/guardian contact where a pattern of misbehavior exists or where there is extreme misbehavior.

In-School Suspension

The administration may assign an in-school suspension in lieu of out-of-school suspension. The in-school suspension is held during the school hours and is supervised by a staff member.

Students are required to bring their books and school materials. During the day the students will work on class assignments provided by their teachers and may meet with their counselor. The students will receive full credit for work completed while in in-school suspension. The students will be separated from their peers for the school day and they will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities from the beginning of the first day of in-school suspension until the close of the school day on the final day of in-school suspension. The students may not sleep, play games or cards, or use any personal electronic device. Should a student cause a disruption, or be insubordinate to the staff member, he/she will be given an out-of-school suspension equivalent to the number of days he/she was originally assigned to in-school suspension.

The process of appeal for in-school suspension will be the same as for a short-term suspension (see "Suspension Appeal Process" below).

Short Term Suspension (1-10 school days)

A principal or designee may suspend a student from school or any school function for up to ten (10) school days for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

A student on suspension is not allowed on campus, including extra-curricular participation or activities from the time the suspension is imposed until midnight of the final day of suspension. A suspended student is allowed full make up privileges - homework assignments, quizzes, chapter, unit, quarter, and final exams.

If a student is suspended prior to 4th hour (the first half of the school day), the student can be sent home once parent/guardian contact is made and that day will be counted as a day of suspension.

Before the suspension is issued, the student shall be informed of the specific charges and have the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The administrator shall provide written or telephone contact, if possible, to the parent/guardian of the suspension, its cause and its length.

Short-term suspensions may be appealed following the procedures listed below (see “Suspension Appeal Process”). During a suspension appeal, the suspension or that portion of the suspension remaining shall be held in abeyance until the appeal is completed. A suspension cannot be held in abeyance if it is considered to be an offense of gross misconduct including, but not limited to, fighting, physical assault, hazing, sexual misconduct, theft, weapons, and bullying including cyber-bullying. If the student and/or parent/guardian cannot meet within the timelines, then the suspension shall be re-instituted unless this provision is waived by the person or committee hearing the appeal. In unusual cases, where in the opinion of the principal or designee, the student or school personnel's safety, or school property would be endangered by returning the suspended student during the appeal, the principal may prohibit the student's return. In such case, a meeting with the student and/or parents or guardian shall be held at the earliest possible time.

Long Term Suspension (11-180 school days)

The superintendent may suspend a student from school or any school function up to and including 180 school days for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

A student on suspension is not allowed on campus, including extra-curricular participation or activities from the time the suspension is imposed until midnight of the final day of suspension. A suspended student is allowed full make up privileges - homework assignments, quizzes, chapter, unit, quarter, and final exams.

If a student is suspended early in the school day, the student can be sent home once parent/guardian contact is made and that day will be counted as a day of suspension.

The principal or the designee may suspend a student pending the long term suspension hearing before the superintendent. A written notice of any proposal for a long-term suspension and the charges upon which the suspension is based shall be given to the student proposed to be suspended and to the parents or guardian during the first three days of the short term suspension. Any notice of a proposal to suspend for a long-term shall state the time, date and place that the student will be afforded an opportunity for a formal hearing, and the hearing shall be held not later than 10 calendar days after the start of the short-term suspension.

Upon the conclusion of any formal hearing which results in a long-term suspension, the Superintendent (Hearing Officer) shall make a written report of the findings and results of the hearing. The report shall be directed to the Board and shall be open to the inspection of the student who is suspended, and if the student has not attained 18 years of age, to the parents or guardians and counsel or other advisor of the student.

Whenever any formal hearing results in a long-term suspension, the student will remain on short-term suspensions up to a maximum of ten (10) school days. If the student has not had the guaranteed hearing on this matter before the tenth (10th) day of short term suspension, he/she may return to school until the hearing has been conducted. However, it should reasonably be anticipated that the student not continue to cause repeated material disorder, disruption or interference with the operation of the school or substantial and material impingement upon or invasion of the rights of others.

Long-term suspensions may be appealed following the procedures listed below (see "Suspension Appeal Process"). During a long-term suspension appeal, the student will remain on out-of-school suspension until the appeal is completed.

Expulsion

"Expulsion" means a permanent and complete severance of the relationship between the student and the District. While the word "expulsion" or "expel" may appear, at times, in State of Michigan law or rules which refer to a time period less than a permanent and complete severance of the District/student relationship, the term, for the purposes of this District, shall mean a permanent severance.

A student may be expelled only by action of the Board of Education following recommendation by the building administrator or designee. The expelled student will not be allowed to enter school property, attend or participate in any school or school-related activities, including but not limited to, athletic, music, drama, club events, dances, prom, award and recognition events, and commencement.

A written notice of any proposal to permanently expel and the charges upon which the permanent expulsion is based shall be given to the student and the student's parents or guardians. The notice of the proposal to permanently expel shall state the time, date and place that the student will be afforded an opportunity for a formal hearing before the Board. It shall also state the right of the student to be represented by counsel, to produce witnesses, and submit evidence on his or her behalf, and to cross-examine any adult witnesses who may appear against him or her. A copy of the Board policy and the administrative procedures shall also be given with the notice.

The hearing before the Board shall not be held later than 10 calendar days after the date of the notice.

Upon any conclusion which results in a recommendation to the Board for permanent expulsion, the Superintendent shall submit a written report detailing the reason(s) for the recommendation to the Board. The report shall be open to the inspection of the student who is being recommended for permanent expulsion, and if the student has not attained 18 years of age, to the student's parents or guardians and counsel or other advisor of the student. If the student is 18 years of age or older, the report shall be open to inspection by the parents or guardians and counsel or other advisor of the student only upon written consent of the student.

At the permanent expulsion hearing, the Board shall hear evidence of whether the student is guilty of the gross disobedience or misconduct as recommended. After the presentation of the evidence, the Board shall decide the issue of guilt and take such action as it finds appropriate.

Due Process Rights

Any student whose conduct may warrant suspension or expulsion will be provided due process.

Student:

- Notice of the alleged violation
- Opportunity to present his/her side of the story
- Opportunity for a speedy and impartial conference with the principal or principal's designee

Parent:

- Notification of the alleged violation
- Opportunity for a speedy and impartial conference
- Written notification of the suspension/expulsion
- Opportunity to appeal the suspension/expulsion decision. See "Suspension Appeal Process" below

A student with an Individualized Education Program ("IEP") or Section 504 Plan is also entitled to additional rights under state and federal law if facing a potential removal from school exceeding ten (10) school days.

Suspension Appeal Process

Short-Term Suspension Appeal

The principal (or designee) is authorized to suspend a student for up to ten (10) school days. A suspension will continue to be implemented during the appeal process, until which time the decision is reversed, or the suspension has been served.

A suspension may be appealed by the student's parents or guardians in writing to the principal within two (2) school days of receipt of the suspension notification. The written appeal must contain the reason(s) for the appeal.

Upon receipt of a written appeal, the principal (or designee) will review the issues and reach a decision as soon as possible. The review may include a parent conference, if appropriate, but this step is optional. If there is no parent conference, the letter of appeal will represent the parent's point of view.

The principal (or designee) may uphold, modify, or vacate the suspension and will notify the parent as soon as possible of the decision.

The principal's decision may be appealed in writing to the Superintendent within two (2) school days of the parent's receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent (or designee) will reach a decision and inform the parent in writing within three (3) school days after the receipt of the written appeal.

The Superintendent's decision is final. The parent may appeal to the Board only for an alleged violation of due process by the Superintendent. In such cases, the appeal shall be made in writing to the Board President within two (2) days after the parent's receipt of the Superintendent's decision and shall include a statement of the alleged

violation of the policy. The Board shall notify the parent of its decision within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written appeal.

Long-Term Suspension Appeal

Any student who has been suspended for a long-term suspension may appeal the long-term suspension to the Board by filing a written notice of the appeal with the Board Secretary not later than 10 calendar days after receiving written notice of the long-term suspension.

Any appeal shall be heard by the Board or a Board committee not later than 20 calendar days after the notice of appeal is filed.

The student and his/her parents or guardians shall be notified in writing of the time and place of the appeal hearing at least five days prior to the appeal hearing. The appeal hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures stated above.

Suspension and Denial of Athletic and Extracurricular Activities

On any and all days a student is serving suspension, that student correspondingly is denied all participation and attendance at any District-sponsored athletic or extra-curricular activity. If a suspension involves days that include a weekend, the denial extends to all District-sponsored or extra-curricular activities during that weekend. If a student serving suspension fails to adhere to this policy, it is considered *Trespassing* per the WMS Code of Conduct and results in additional days of suspension.

Step-up and Report What Is Happening

Tell a trusted adult at school.

Complete incident report.

“In the end we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

-Martin Luther King, Jr.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletics

Williamston Middle School offers interscholastic sports for 6th, 7th & 8th graders. Sixth grade athletics includes cross country, wrestling, and track and field. We encourage student participation in athletics and the goal of winning is superseded by the goal of participation. A physical exam is required for any student participating in interscholastic sports. Electronic registration and physical forms are available on the district website under the category of “co curricular activities”. Additionally, each student will be required to pay an annual one-time athletic registration fee before s/he may compete with a Williamston athletic team.

School Attendance

Students must be in school all day in order to participate in an athletic contest or practice that afternoon or evening. The exception to this rule is a prearranged absence as requested by the parents such as a dental/doctor appointment or funeral. Please see the excused absence section of the handbook.

Athletic Code of Conduct

Additional athletic related guidelines and policies are available on the district website under the category of “co curricular activities”.

Attendance at Williamston High School Athletic Events

Any student in the 6th grade or younger, must be accompanied by an adult in order to gain admission to any Williamston High School athletic event. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of all students.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bicycles

Students may ride bikes to school. Once students arrive at school, bikes must be parked and locked in a bike rack and remain there until dismissal. There are bike racks located at the front and the back of the building.

Bus Policy

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and are subject to the Code of Conduct while getting on, off, at the bus stop, and riding the bus.

Birth Certificates / Immunizations

Michigan law requires all schools to have a birth certificate on file and a current immunization record for each child. All children entering school must be adequately immunized against (DTAP) diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (HIB), haemophilus B, polio, (HBV) hepatitis B, (MMR) measles, mumps and rubella, and (Varivox) chicken pox. Students entering 7th grade are required to have one dose of Meningococcal (MCV4 or MPSV4) vaccine (meningitis). Also, children are required to now have 2 doses of varicella vaccine or history of chickenpox disease, and one dose of Tdap vaccine (if 5 years have passed since the last dose of tetanus/diphtheria vaccine - Dtap, Td or DT). Parents or guardians must present to school officials, by the first day of entrance into school, a

certificate of immunization or a statement of exemption. When your child receives a booster shot, be sure to notify the school so that the student record can be updated.

Waivers

ALL non-medical waivers (religious or philosophical) must be issued from the Local Health Department. Based on the Public Health Code when a child enters a school, childcare, preschool or head start the child must be either fully immunized or have a certified waiver on file. If a child continues to be enrolled at the same childcare, preschool, or head start program for consecutive years, waivers do not need to be signed annually, unless the child becomes eligible for immunizations not previously waived, then a new waiver education session will need to occur. Forms cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing information out). For further information see: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/schedules/index.html>

Proof of Residency

Williamston Community Schools requires proof of residency for children enrolling in school. It must include a copy of one of the following: a rent receipt, mortgage receipt, or utility bill. It must have your name and address on the proof of residency.

Closing of School

During the year, it may become necessary to close school, delay the opening of school, or dismiss school early. You can get this information from the district website at www.gowcs.net or local television and radio stations. The District will also use School Messenger, an automated notification system, to inform parents/families. Directions for enrolling in School Messenger can also be found on the District website. Parents may keep students home if it is felt it is unsafe to travel to school due to weather conditions. In the event of a delay, students should arrive at school no more than 15 minutes before the announced start time.

Directory Information

The following information concerning students of the Williamston Community Schools will be designated as “directory information” and may be disclosed without prior written consent unless a parent or eligible student requests otherwise:

1. The name of the student’s parents
2. The student’s address and phone number
3. The student’s date of birth
4. The student’s class designation (i.e., 6th grade, 7th grade, 8th grade)
5. The student’s extracurricular participation
6. The student’s achievement, awards, or honors (not specific grades)
7. The student’s height and weight if a member of an athletic team
8. The student’s photograph
9. The school/school district the student attended before s/he enrolled in W.C.S.
10. Health, immunization record

If you have questions concerning the list of directory information, please contact the building principal. If you have items from the list above that you do not want disclosed, you must notify the school in writing within two weeks of the beginning of school. Please understand that we are extremely careful about which individuals or groups have access to the above information.

Emergency Information

Please keep your emergency information up to date. It is important for us to have any pertinent health information and current phone data on how to reach you or other designated emergency contacts. In all cases of perceived serious injury or illness, we will call EMS. In addition, please contact one of the secretarial staff regarding changes in address or phone number changes at home or work.

Home-School Communication

In order to optimize the opportunities your child has for success while at school, it is crucial to build strong home-school communication. The following tools are recommended and will be used to facilitate that communication: email, Williamston Community Schools website, School Messenger (phone system), mailings, conferences, phone calls, and the outdoor sign. Please contact the main office if you do not have access to email or the website.

Additionally, your Williamston Board of Education also places great value in communication in all its forms with the parents of our students. Please visit or contact us often.

Principal: Debra LaFleur Phone: 655-4668 ext. 6001 e-mail: lafleud@gowcs.net

Superintendent: Dr. Adam Spina Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 3 e-mail: spinaa@gowcs.net

Williamston Board of Education Phone: 517-655-4361 ext. 3 e-mail: WCSBoard@gowcs.net

Williamston Community Schools website for information: www.gowcs.net

Notice of Section 504 Due Process

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in all programs and activities operated by a recipient of federal financial aid. For purposes of affirmative assistance (regular or special instruction, supplementary aids and services) the statute defines a "handicapped person" as "any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities." Under Section 504, school districts must provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible students in elementary and secondary programs.

When a student is referred for an evaluation because of a suspected handicap, or when a student has been determined eligible under Section 504, the parent or guardian of that student has certain rights. Any parent has the right to file a grievance for suspected/alleged disability harassment.

Visit the district website for further clarification or information or contact:

District 504 Coordinator: Dr. Michele Cook cookm@gowcs.net (517) 655-4361 x 5108

District Director of Special Education: Dr. Michele Cook cookm@gowcs.net (517) 655-4361 x5108

Lockers

All lockers are the property of the school and the student is responsible for care of his/her assigned locker(s).

Lockers or lock combinations should not be shared. Valuables should not be kept in this locker. The school does not accept responsibility for loss of personal property from lockers. In addition, the school is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. Locker checks and locker cleanings will be done periodically. Students are also assigned gym lockers for storage of gym clothes. A gym padlock is assigned to students at the beginning of the year. If the lock is not turned in, the replacement cost will be paid for by the student.

Lunches

A hot lunch program is provided for students. Lunches may be purchased as either a full lunch or as ala carte items (ala carte can never be charged). Lunch may be paid for by the week, month, or year. Students must take checks to the main office in the morning before school starts. The cost of lunches will be posted at the beginning of the school year. Our participation in the Federal Hot Lunch Program requires us to sell a lunch, which consists of 3 to 5 food pyramid choices. If your family is experiencing unemployment or other financial hardships, you may qualify for a free or reduced lunch. Forms may be requested and picked up at the office.

Medication

Medication should not be brought to school unless it is essential to the health of the student. **All** medications must be kept in the office and no medication may be possessed without approval from the building principal.

1. Medications will be administered by school personnel.
2. All medications must be delivered to the office in their original containers. Please use the smallest container possible, as storage is limited.
3. All medications must be filed with written doctor and parental authorization and the required dosage (including over the counter medications). You may pick up a form in the office.
4. Prescription and non-prescription medications must be labeled with student name, date, doctor's name, and instructions.
5. Asthma inhalers may be kept on the student's person, but must be recorded with the office.
6. Under no circumstances should students transport medication to school.

Messages

Occasionally parents may need to leave messages in cases of emergencies. When it is necessary to leave a message for a student, the student's name will be called at lunch or the end of the school day. Class time is not interrupted to deliver messages in person.

School Parties

School Parties are held throughout the school year. These take place after school, typically until 5:00pm. Parties include games, dancing, and refreshments. Parents are needed and welcome to attend the parties (see WMS webpage). All school rules apply at these activities. Students must remain in attendance and will not be allowed to return should they leave the building during a school party. These parties are reserved for enrolled Williamston Middle School students only. This rule allows for the appropriate supervision, protection, and safety of our students. Students must be in school all day in order to attend school parties. The exception to this rule is a prearranged absence as requested by the parents such as dental/doctor appointment or funeral.

School Trips

Students attend many learning trips each year. We will provide more information about these opportunities after school begins. To attend these or any other learning trips, students must have a permission form signed by their parent/guardian and be in good standing with behavioral referrals. In addition, many of these trips cost money. Please contact the middle school office regarding scholarship availability for these trips. All school rules apply during any school trip.

Security

A vast majority of the outside doors to the building are locked before, during, and after the school day for the safety of our students. Door #8 on the west end (in the back) of the building is unlocked prior to the start of school and after school when evening events are occurring. The main door #1 on the east side of the building is locked throughout the day. Please ring the doorbell security system, and the office staff may then open the door.

Telephones

Office phones are available for student use. Other than during their lunch period or after school, students should obtain a pass from their teacher prior to using office phones. Students may not use the phones for extended conversations and must be considerate about their use.

Visitors & Volunteers

We encourage adult members of the community to visit and volunteer within our school. When parents wish to visit, it will be necessary to schedule a time if you are going to be in a classroom. Whenever you visit, please report to the office upon your arrival so you can be identified as a visitor to our school. Student visitations may only occur with authorization from the building principal. We ask that persons interested in volunteering at WMS contact the office, grade level team, or individual teacher. Volunteers should register in the office upon arrival for identification as a WMS Volunteer. All volunteers must have filled out a volunteer background check form prior to the event.

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed on district property (district policy #5032) to assist individuals with disabilities. Animals might be present in a wide variety of locations throughout the school day, to include buses and before and after school events. Should you have questions or concerns regarding the authorization or use of service animals, please contact the building principal.

Williamston Community Schools assures accessibility to events for all our visitors. If you need assistance, please contact the building administrator with your request one full school day before the performance/event.

Updated May 2022