

COLUMBUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2009-10 STUDENT HANDBOOK

CPS MISSION STATEMENT

Engaging All Learners to Achieve Success

- ~ Students are active and responsible participants in the learning process
- ~ Students become good citizens and have opportunities to learn the benefits of serving other
- ~ Parents and community work in partnership with the classroom
- ~ Staff, administration, and school board form a unified team committed to accomplishing district goals
- ~ Data is utilized to inform instruction and maximize the learning of each student
- ~ Continuous improvement is driven by data and the needs of students, parents and community

CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are required to supply the school with current information regarding their work, home and cell numbers so they may be reached in an emergency. Parents should also provide phone numbers of relatives or friends who may be called in the event that a parent cannot be reached.

AGENDA PLANNER

Every student in Grades 1–5 is issued an Agenda/Planner. One Agenda/Planner is issued FREE to each student. Lost or misplaced planners MUST be purchased for \$5.00.

HOURS

Office Hours:	7:30 – 4:00
Breakfast:	7:30 – 7:45
Grades K-5:	8:00 – 3:05

Students should be picked up promptly within 10 minutes of dismissal. Supervision is provided from 7:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

SCHOOL MEALS

The schools operate daily breakfast and hot lunch programs. Children who bring cold lunches may purchase milk. Meals must be paid for in advance.

Parents having children with food allergies or requiring special diets as specified by a doctor should contact the school.

Students going home for lunch need written parent/guardian permission.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE PROCEDURE

A student's presence at school is essential if he/she is to develop the academic, physical, emotional, and social skills necessary to become a productive member of our society. It is necessary to establish clear procedures to assure that the operation of Columbus Elementary Schools will be consistent with State Law and policies established by the Columbus Board of Education.

Students who are absent during the school day are not permitted to participate in after school or evening activities.

BUILDING ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order for students to gain the maximum benefit of the educational program provided by Columbus Public Schools, it is necessary for students to be regular and punctual in their attendance at school. It is the belief of Columbus Public Schools that students missing more than 20 days of school per year will not be able to achieve in the school setting. Exceptions should be made to this 20-day maximum only in the event of illness or accident, which would prevent the student from attending classes. All such major illness or accident-related absences should be verified in writing by the family physician and updated regularly. Arrangements should be made to obtain missing assignments by contacting the student's teachers.

5 Day - Any time a student accumulates a total of five (5) or more unexcused absences within a quarter of school, that parent will be contacted and notified of the total number of absences, the dates of these absences, and the time period of accumulation.

10 Days - Any time a student misses a total of ten (10) days of school, that parent shall be contacted and notified of the total number of unexcused absences and the current policy relating to attendance at school.

15 Days - When a student has missed a total of fifteen (15) school days, the parents shall be notified of the total number of unexcused absences and a telephone or personal conference shall be held with the parent, principal, and student (if appropriate) in attendance. At 15 days, parents may be told that all future absences will have to be verified by either the school nurse or a written excuse from the family physician.

20 Days - When a student misses a total of twenty (20) school days, the parents shall be notified of the total number of unexcused absences and a conference may be held. The county attorney will be notified of school concerns regarding the student's attendance. At 20 days, parents may be told that all future absences will have to be verified by the school nurse or by a written excuse from a physician.

Absence - Parents or legal guardians are REQUIRED to notify the school by 8:30 a.m. the day of the student's absence or tardiness unless the absence has been prearranged. Parents or guardians who do not call regarding a student's absence may be called at home or work.

Excused Absences – State law requires that school administrators designate student absences as excused or unexcused. Columbus Public Schools follow the guidelines listed below for determining whether an absence is excused.

The following reasons for being absent from school can be routinely excused by the principal unless the student has already accumulated an excessive number of absences, thus requiring the involvement of the principal:

- Illness (Examples—flu, cold, disease, surgery, personal injury)
- Family Emergency (Examples—death, funeral, accident, birth, weather, highly unexpected situation that cannot be preplanned)
- Special Occasion (Examples—wedding, graduation, athletic event, vacation, out-of-town trip)
- Other (Example—dentist, orthodontist, doctor, physical therapy counseling, probation office, court)

Unexcused Absences (Truancy) – Whenever a student leaves school without permission, skips class, or is home from school for a reason not excused by the school, the student is truant. All cases of unexcused absence/truancy will be dealt with by an administrator on an individual basis, and may involve the Police Department/School Resource Officer (SRO).

The following reasons for student absence from school are unexcused:

- Tiredness (got to bed too late, didn't sleep well, oversleeping)
- Lack of transportation (can't find a ride, missed a ride, doesn't want to walk)
- Lack of responsibility (doesn't have assignments done, can't find books, doesn't have any clean clothes to wear, can't find shoes)
- Vacations during the school year
- Statements which lack rationale (doesn't feel good, doesn't feel like coming, has an appointment, shopping)
- Lack of childcare (has to baby-sit for younger siblings or someone else's children)
- Suspicious calls in which the attendance clerk believes someone other than a parent may be trying to excuse the child from school.

Makeup Work – Work missed during an absence MUST be made up. Students are responsible for obtaining make-up work from each of their teachers and completing the work in a reasonable amount of time. Parents or siblings may make arrangements to pick up textbooks or other materials by contacting the school office, which is open until 4:00 p.m. Students may be required to stay after school in order to make up the missed instructional time and assignments.

Vacations – We request that parents or guardians notify the school of vacations at least one week prior to the start of the vacation. Students are responsible for getting and completing all work missed during the vacation. Families are strongly encouraged to use scheduled school breaks for vacations whenever possible and to avoid having their students miss school.

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

CHECK OUT PROCEDEURES

- The student must present a parental note to their teacher before school starts. Phone calls from parents will also be accepted.
- The student must report to the office in order to be checked out by an adult before leaving the school building.
- The student must report to the office to check in if he/she returns to school before the end of the day.

Tardiness – Students are expected to be on time to school. Students will be counted tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. **An adult must check in students who arrive late at the office.**

BICYCLES

Bicycles should be parked in the racks as soon as students arrive at school. The school is not responsible for damage to or theft of bicycles. It is recommended that sturdy locks be used with bicycles to discourage theft.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All adults are required by law to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the authorities. Abuse and/or neglect are defined by Nebraska State Law LB 28-710 as follows: *“Abuse or neglect shall mean knowing, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child or an incompetent or disabled person to be: (a) placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health; (b) cruelly confined, or cruelly punished; (c) deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care; (d) left unattended in a motor vehicle, if such minor child is six years of age or younger; or (e) sexually abused.”*

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

The school provides a list of classroom supplies needed by students. If any additional supplies are needed throughout the year, parents will be notified.

UNNECESSARY STUDENT ITEMS

Students should not bring items to school that may interfere with learning or endanger the health and safety of others. This includes but is not limited to cell phones, hand-held games, i-pods, etc. The school is not responsible for the lost, theft or damage of any unnecessary items brought to school. The teacher or principal may confiscate such items. The return of confiscated items is at the discretion of the teacher or principal. **If an item is not on the school supply list or directly requested by a teacher or staff member, please do not bring it to school.**

CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit their child's school during school hours. Please check with your child's teacher regarding the best time to visit. All visitors are asked to report to the school's office when they arrive. Children not attending the school may not visit unless accompanied by an adult.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTION & INTERNET USE NETWORK\INTERNET USE GUIDELINES

Computer Network/Internet access is available to students and teachers in Columbus Public Schools. We believe that an Internet/Network access offers valuable, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in the district by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with users throughout the globe. In addition, the system is used to increase school and district communication, enhance productivity, and assist teachers in upgrading their skills through greater exchange of information with their peers. The system also assists us in sharing information with the local community, including parents, social service agencies, government agencies, and businesses. With access to computers and people from around the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Families should be warned that some material obtained via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. We have taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials through the installation of an Internet filtering device. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information, either by accident or deliberately. We firmly believe, however, that the

benefits to students from online access far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with our educational goals. We strive to ensure that use of Internet/Network resources is consistent with our stated mission, goals, and objectives. The smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the students and faculty who must adhere to strict guidelines and proper ethical behavior when using the Internet/Network. To use our computers, network and Internet connection, all students must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with our educational focus. **If they fail to do so they will be subjected to disciplinary sanctions by the administration and by administration and by law enforcement.**

COUNSELORS

Counselors can be contacted by calling building secretaries. Counselors will seek parental permission to meet with children for more than one session. Counselors support district curriculum and building goals by assisting classroom teachers with instruction.

DISCIPLINE

All students are expected to comply with rules and regulations established by the School District, the school building, and the classroom teacher(s). Self-discipline is the goal for students. When rules or regulations are breached, professional personnel are authorized to use reasonable and appropriate means to discipline students. This may range from a conference for minor infractions, to suspension, expulsion, and/or administrative reassignment.

(See Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities.)

SUPPORT SERVICES

A variety of support services are offered by Columbus Public Schools. In order to be eligible for these services, students must meet criteria established by the District or State.

DRESS CODE

Students may wear any clothing that does not interfere with the purpose of school or break one of our school rules. Clothing which creates a distraction to staff or students or disrupts the learning process in any manner will not be allowed. **Students who wear inappropriate clothing to school will be asked to change into appropriate clothing provided by the school, parent, or guardian.**

The dress code specifically prohibits the following kinds of clothing:

- Any piece of clothing or any item brought to school containing any reference to violence, gang affiliation, profanity, sexual innuendoes, or promote the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
- Clothing identified by police and other law enforcement agencies as gang-related apparel.

Some of these items would be sagging pants, long baggy coats, specific colors that promote gang activity with slang symbolism.

- Clothing which is disruptive to the learning environment because it is too tight, too short, has holes in inappropriate places, or exposes bare midriffs.
- Girls may be asked to wear a sweater or shirt over shirts with spaghetti straps halter if determined to be inappropriate by an administrator.

If parents or guardians are unsure as to whether clothing is appropriate, they are welcome to call the school and visit with school personnel.

FIELD TRIPS

Classes may take educationally based field trips during the school year under the direction of the classroom teacher. **Permission slips need to be signed by parents/guardians prior to field trips that are outside of the School District.** Parents will be notified of any field trips within the School District.

Elementary students not participating in a field trip due to parent request may remain at home during the field trip time. Students remaining at home will be regarded as absent from school. Children who arrive after the bus departs will be the responsibility of the parent.

Rules regarding student behavior enforced at school shall also be enforced during the trip.

VOLUNTEERING AND PARENT SUPERVISION ON FIELD TRIPS

On occasion, parents are asked, or may volunteer, to help supervise groups of students for various school related functions, such as class parties and field trips. We want parents to keep in mind that their first priority, when taking on this responsibility, is for the safety of the children they have been designated to supervise. For this reason we ask that parents who have accepted this responsibility not bring their younger children along with them to these functions. It is our belief that the parent would not be able to adequately supervise our students if they also had to care for their baby or toddler at the same time.

HOMEWORK

Homework refers to tasks that a student is assigned to do on his/her own time after school hours. It may be work for which the student needs additional practice due to absence or lack of attention or effort at school. Homework assignments serve as a means of providing a bond of common effort between parent, child, and teacher. In order for homework to be effective, each participant – teacher, student, and parent – must understand and be committed to carrying out his/her responsibility. If any of the three (teacher, student, parent) do not fulfill their responsibilities, then the positive effects of homework will be reduced.

Homework Responsibilities of Teacher

1. Communicate to students and parents homework goals and expectations.
2. Set clear and concise expectations concerning assigning, returning, and evaluating homework.
3. Coordinate homework assignments with other teachers with whom students work, and who may assign homework.
4. Assign appropriate homework.

Homework Responsibilities of Students

1. Know and understand what is required for completion of the assignment.
2. Assume responsibility for completing and returning assignments.
3. Complete assignments neatly and do quality work.

Homework Responsibilities of Parents

1. Maintain a positive attitude towards learning and the value of homework.
2. Be aware of the homework policy and individual teacher requirements.
3. Help your child find a study area that is quiet and relatively free of distractions.
4. Be patient with your child and praise him/her for any effort made.
5. If the child has difficulty understanding directions, help them with explanations. **DO NOT DO THE HOMEWORK FOR THE CHILD!**
6. Look over the assignment when the child reports the work is complete to affirm completion and quality.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Students may check out materials (books, videotapes, filmstrips, magazines, etc.) for a period of two weeks and may renew the materials once. No fines are charged for overdue materials, however, students are expected to pay for damaged or lost materials. If the item is not returned, a letter will be sent to parents requesting that the material be returned. In the event that materials are not returned or paid for, or if a student repeatedly returns items in a damaged condition, the student may have library media center privileges restricted or report cards withheld. Money will be refunded for materials that were lost and paid for, then later found and returned to the library media center.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The School District assumes that non-custodial parents have all the rights and privileges of custodial parents unless presented with a certified copy of a court order or decree limiting those rights.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

In our schools we welcome volunteer help. These volunteers help students and teachers with various tasks. The volunteer program is open to anyone. You can volunteer any amount of time that you feel you

can spare. Volunteers are requested to stop in the school office upon entering and leaving the building.

PETS IN SCHOOL

Due to allergies and safety issues, we are asking families to request permission from the building principal before bringing pets into the school. There may be children with allergies as well as the obvious safety issues where pets are concerned.

PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS

The school year is divided into four grade report periods. Report cards are distributed at the end of each grading period. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. Dates and times of these conferences will be sent to parents prior to conferences being held. Parents or teachers may arrange additional conferences when they are necessary.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

Parents may send treats to school to celebrate a student's birthday. **All treats should be restricted to commercially pre-packaged items that require no food handling or purchased from a licensed food facility such as a grocery store or bakery.** Parents who wish to provide treats for parties/birthdays must adhere to this policy concerning food items. Parents should inform the teacher prior to sending treats.

Birthday party invitations should not be distributed at school unless they are given to all the boys and/or girls in the classroom.

Gifts sent to students at school on birthdays or other occasions will be kept in the office and given to students at the end of the school day in order to minimize disruptions during instructional hours.

HEALTH SERVICES

Immunization-Nebraska law requires that students receive the following immunizations prior to admission into school: Mumps, Measles, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Polio, Varicella or date of disease in case of varicella (chicken pox) and DPT. Exceptions to this requirement are based on religious beliefs or medical waiver from a physician. In addition, students must have a physical exam and vision exam prior to Kindergarten entrance or when enrolling from out of the state.

Keeping Students Home-Students should not be sent to school if the student:

- a) has a fever
- b) is vomiting
- c) has a contagious disease or contagious skin condition
- d) has diarrhea

If a child exhibits any of these symptoms while at school, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child. Children should remain at home until they are fever or symptom-free for twenty-four (24) hours.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO LIFE-THREATENING ASTHMA OR SYSTEMIC ALLERGIC REACTIONS

A new state regulation became effective on October 1, 2003. This regulation requires that our school (*or early childhood education program*) be prepared to implement an emergency treatment plan, called a protocol, anytime a student or staff member experiences a **life threatening** asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). The protocol requires that 911 is called first. After that call is made, an EpiPen injection will be given and then albuterol is provided through a nebulizer. An EpiPen is a small pre-filled, automatic injection device that resembles a highlighter. It is used to deliver epinephrine. Epinephrine is a medication that is used to bring quick relief by improving breathing and lung function. Albuterol is another medication that is used to bring breathing relief (commonly found in metered-dose inhalers). The nebulizer is a machine that mixes the albuterol with air to provide a fine mist (aerosol) for breathing in through a mask or mouthpiece.

The protocol steps are designed to provide quick, effective care in order to prevent death from occurring due to a severe asthma attack or anaphylaxis. Staff members have been trained to recognize signs and symptoms of a life-threatening "breathing" emergency and to properly administer the medications.

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

EMERGENCY HEALTH SITUATIONS

In the event of a student needing emergency medical attention 911 will be called first and then the parents will be notified.

HEAD LICE

1. When it is reported or suspected that a student may have head lice, the school personnel will examine that child's head for evidence of lice.
2. If a student is found infested with head lice, the student will be removed from the classroom and sent home for treatment. Each class member will receive a letter to inform the parents or guardians of the infestation. Students' confidentiality will be maintained. It is the responsibility of parents to check the hair of their own children. The entire class may be checked for head lice as needed.
3. All students with evidence of lice will be excluded from school until treatment has been completed. All treated students will be examined on reentry to school. At this time they may remain in school if treatment is evident and progress is being made towards removal of nits and casings.
4. Those students with remnants of head lice will be periodically reexamined.
5. Extended absences due to head lice treatment and infestation will be referred to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

MEDICATIONS

In the event that a student needs to be given a prescribed or "over the counter" medication at school, parents need to complete the proper form available at the school's office. The form includes the dosage and the frequency with which the medicine is to be given. Normally, no more than a week's supply should be sent at any time. Prescription medications must be in a properly labeled container dispensed by a pharmacy. Any non-prescription medications such as aspirin, Tylenol™, or cough drops must be in their original container. Aspirin or Tylenol™ is not routinely given to students at school. In the event of a headache, parents will be notified, and they may bring medication to their child.

STUDENT RECORDS

School Board Policy 507 and its accompanying rules govern the maintenance of student records. These records are maintained to assist the instructional, guidance, and educational progress of the student and for legitimate research to better the educational programs of the school district.

Parents and/or legal guardians may request in writing that information contained in student records be released for their purposes. In the event of a student transfer out of the district, student records, including academic, attendance, and discipline information will be sent to the requesting school district.

Schools may make public certain non-confidential "directory information" in association with recognition for such things as academic excellence, extracurricular honors and awards, or participation in officially

recognized school-sponsored activities. "Directory information" may include such things as name, address, date and place of birth and dates of school attendance. Any parent or legal guardian who does not wish the school district to release such "directory information" must notify the principal of the school that the student presently attends.

STUDENT RETENTION

Parents are included in the retention process. The school will notify parents as early as possible if retention is being considered. Parents, teachers, and principal discuss placement. The building principal makes the final decision regarding student placement.

TELEPHONE USAGE

The telephone at the school is a business telephone. Therefore, the use is limited to students. If the reason to use the telephone is legitimate, the teacher will give the student permission to use the telephone. These calls should be kept to a minimum and be kept brief. Calling to make arrangements to go to or play at another student's house is not a legitimate reason.

STUDENTS RIGHTS, RULES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

State rules, rights, and responsibilities are automatically school district policy as well as building level policy. Therefore, we must be sure that students and parents have been given the opportunity to read them. **Parents and students are required to sign the SIGNATURE SHEET found at the end of this handbook.** This information is reviewed with students at the beginning of each school year.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

A student's right to an education in Nebraska is granted because of provisions in the state's Constitution. There are two very important things a student must do faithfully to protect this constitutional right. Those two things are: attend school and participate in the learning activities.

There are many other things responsible students do while they are students, but nothing is more important than doing the schoolwork assigned by their teachers and being in school on a regular basis.

The policy of the Columbus Public Schools regarding the right to an education states: *"The State of Nebraska, as provided for in Article VII, Section I of the Nebraska Constitution, established public schools to provide free education for students between the ages of five and twenty-one. All residents of the Columbus Public Schools from ages five through twenty-one are entitled to attend public schools without tuition. All students are entitled to equal educational opportunities."*

Along with one's right to equality of educational opportunity, each student has a commensurate responsibility to act in such a way as to not interfere with the rights of others to the same opportunity.

Essential to the fostering and maintaining of educational opportunity, is reasonable and necessary order in the schools. A student may forfeit his/her right to educational opportunities when his/her conduct is such that it substantially disrupts the educational process and deprives others of their rights.

The most important things a student must do to protect his/her right to an education are stated as Responsibilities. These Responsibilities include:

RESPONSIBILITY AND RIGHT OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The right to freely express oneself is justifiably tempered with responsibilities to ensure that the expression made does not interfere with the rights of others. The official school policy and the responsibilities students have when expressing themselves are contained in this handbook to promote reasonable communication to reflect one of the purposes of Columbus Public Schools. **That purpose is to encourage the use of good language skills while providing educational experiences for students.**

The official school policy in regard to Freedom of Expression states: *"The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools recognizes the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America as being an essential part of the learning process. The Board of Education further recognizes that students need guidance in exercising the right of Freedom of Speech so that they do not interfere with the rights of others. The following statements are made to guide students in exercising their constitutional right of Freedom of Speech."*

RESPONSIBILITY AND RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Official school policy states: "The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools recognizes that Freedom of Assembly is a right protected by the First Amendment of the constitution of the United States. The exercise of this right must be conducted in a responsible manner so as not to interfere with the educational activities of the school district."

The right to assemble in a school building, on school grounds or at school activities can be protected by students by fulfilling the following responsibility.

SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Symbolic expression is defined as that type of expression, exclusive of verbal and written expression, which conveys the personal ideas, feelings, attitudes and opinions of an individual. Length of hair, choice of clothing, buttons, badges, armbands, and physical gestures are some examples of symbolic expression.

Each student has the right to express himself/herself by way of symbols subject only to the restrictions that such expression does not result in overt exhibitionism, disruption of the educational process, obscenities, disrespect, or obvious annoyance to others.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS WHEN EXPRESSING THEMSELVES

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

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

Any student who fails to meet these requirements when expressing himself/herself may be disciplined.

RULES

The following rules have been established and approved by the Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools for use in all schools of the school district and at all school-sponsored events.

Compliance with the following standards of conduct is mandatory. These rules may be changed during the school year by the Board of Education, and students and parents/guardians will be informed if and when there are any changes.

CLASSROOM RULES

Teachers may establish reasonable rules in their classrooms to assist them in providing a positive environment for learning. Students are expected to follow these rules and may be disciplined for noncompliance.

CHEATING

Students who cheat, plagiarize, or forge in connection with academic endeavor and/or school procedures are subject to disciplinary action.

INSUBORDINATION

Students are to comply with reasonable directions or requests from teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, secretaries, principals, and other school personnel during any period of time the student is properly under the authority of school personnel. Any student who fails to comply with directions or requests of school personnel will be considered insubordinate.

ACTIVITIES FORBIDDEN BY LAWS OF NEBRASKA OR THE UNITED STATES

Students, as citizens of the United States and the State of Nebraska, are to obey all laws established by these respective governmental agencies. The school, in addition to any action taken by law enforcement agencies, may discipline students who violate these laws during the school hours or at school-sponsored events.

FALSE FIRE ALARMS AND/OR BOMB THREATS

Students are not to falsely set off fire alarms or report bomb threats.

FIGHTING

Students may not engage in verbal or physical fights in school buildings, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or on their way to and from school. Students are prohibited from hitting, striking, kicking, or in any other way harming another student or school personnel.

DAMAGE OR THEFT OF SCHOOL OR PRIVATE PROPERTY

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

IDENTIFY SELF

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

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND TOBACCO

Students are not to consume, possess, sell, or distribute any drug (including tobacco), narcotic, alcohol, or substance purported to be a drug, narcotic, or alcohol, at school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored

events. This rule does not prohibit possession or consumption by a student of a substance that has been prescribed to him/her by a person licensed to prescribe.

Students are prohibited from consuming any drug, narcotic, controlled substance, alcohol, or substance purported to be a drug, narcotic, alcohol, or controlled substance in any quantity immediately prior to coming on school grounds or to a school-sponsored event.

FIREARMS, WEAPONS, EXPLOSIVES, AND MATERIAL THAT CAN BE IGNITED

The before-mentioned material items are prohibited on school property or at school-sponsored events unless authorized by proper school authorities. A student shall not knowingly possess, handle, or transmit any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or resembles a weapon.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Students possess the right of privacy of person as well as freedom from unreasonable search and seizure of property guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution. This individual right, however, is balanced by the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students.

School employees may conduct searches when they have reason to suspect that the health, safety, and welfare of students may be in danger. Any school employee making a search or a seizure will follow these guidelines:

1. General searches of school property (including personal items found on school property) will be conducted at any time when there is a reasonable cause for school employees to believe that something that violates a law or school rule is on school property. This search of school property may be made without the student being present.
2. Illegal items (firearms, weapons, drugs) or other possessions reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of others, or may possibly interfere with school purposes, may be seized by school personnel.
3. Items, which are used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be temporarily removed from a student's person.
4. A student's person may be searched by school employees when there is reasonable cause to believe that the student has on his/her person illegal items or other items that may interfere with school purposes.

BULLYING, EXTORTION & INTIMIDATION

Threatening, bullying or intimidating another student(s) or school personnel is prohibited at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, or going to and from them.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment in any form will not be tolerated. If violations occur, disciplinary action will be taken. Any discrimination on the basis of race, creed, national origin, sex, age, or handicap will not be tolerated.

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Columbus Public School District to comply in spirit as well as in fact with the regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. Specifically, Title IX states: *“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”*

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

BEHAVIOR TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Students are not to interfere with the ability of other students to travel to and from school safely and without verbal, physical, or sexual harassment. Students are not to participate in activities, which are potentially dangerous to themselves, other students, or the public while on their way to and from school.

THE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS THAT A TEACHER AND/OR ADMINISTRATOR CAN ADMINISTER ARE:

1. Guidance: A conversation between the student and school personnel. The purpose of this form of counseling is not to scold the student, but to inform him/her that his/her behavior needs to change so that he/she does not violate the rights of others, or to help the student improve his/her learning capabilities.
2. Conference: A meeting of student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and school personnel to discuss the student's behavior or learning progress. The school intends to seek the assistance of the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) in helping the student to become a better student.
3. Detention: Requiring that a student remain after school for a period of time. It is intended that students serving detention will be doing prepared worksheets concerning behavioral problems and how to avoid detention in the future.
4. School Clean Up: Requiring a student to clean up certain items of the school that the student failed to care for properly. The student may be required to clean more than just the item(s) damaged by

himself/herself in order to encourage the student to take better care of school property in the future.

5. The Use of Force: Teachers, administrators, and other school district employees may use force to restore order to the educational environment or to protect a student from physical harm.

THOSE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS THAT ONLY ADMINISTRATORS MAY ADMINISTER ARE:

1. Rearrangement of School Schedule: Assigning a student a new schedule of classes, which may be shortened from a regular schedule due to academic and/or behavioral needs and/or in-school suspension when the behavior of the student is such that the student cannot conduct himself/herself in an acceptable manner. A student assigned to a shortened schedule will be required to check into the office before his/her school day begins and out of the office after his/her school day ends. A student assigned to in-school suspension for the reasons of usage of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, extortion, possession of firearms, setting off false alarms or bomb threats, or at administrative discretion, shall not be allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities until he/she is reinstated to school. The intent of this action is to improve the student's behavior.
2. Restriction of Extracurricular Activities: Informing a student that he/she cannot participate in certain activities because of his/her past or present behavior. Such actions as this are intended to improve student behavior at home and at school.
3. School Probation: Action taken by the principal and/or assistant principal(s) to assist a student in resolving his/her behavioral problems. The action is in the form of certain stipulated conditions agreed to by the school, the student, and parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
4. Requirement That a Student Receive Counseling/Educational Evaluation: An action that may require a student to visit a guidance counselor, medical counselor, or psychological counselor to assist the student in resolving his/her problem.
5. In-School Suspension: Students are placed in the detention room rather than their regularly scheduled class(es). Students are supervised and expected to carry on their studies, as well as abide by the rules set down for in-school suspension. Assigning students to in-school suspension is at the discretion of the principal.
6. Suspension and Emergency Exclusion:
 - (a) Short term: A forced withdrawal of a pupil from school. Such action will comply with state statutes. A short-term suspension will not exceed five school days in length.
 - (b) Long term: A forced withdrawal of a pupil from school. Such action will comply with state statutes. A long-term suspension will not exceed twenty school days in length.

Any student who is suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in school activities until he/she is reinstated to school

Expulsion: The permanent withdrawal of a student from school. Such action will comply with existing state statutes.

1. Exclusion: Immediate withdrawal of a student from school for:
 - (a) presenting a clear threat to the physical safety of himself/herself or others, or for being so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.
 - (b) a dangerous communicable disease 79-4177
2. Legal Action in Court of Law: Any disciplinary action taken against a student will comply with existing state and school board policies and shall afford the student due process.

PROTOCOL FOLLOWED FOR STUDENT THREATS

1. Principal is informed of the threat.
2. Parents of the student making the threat are called. SRO or Police may be called to assist with the initial investigation.
3. Student may be suspended under emergency exclusion.
4. Student may return to school after a psychologist has evaluated the student to determine the child is no longer considered a threat to themselves or others. This evaluation is at the cost of the parent
5. Depending on the outcome of the evaluation, a re-admission plan needs to be written with a team from the school to determine if safety is still a concern.
6. Ultimately it is the school's decision based on the information and investigation whether student is re-admitted.
7. Student is re-admitted or re-assigned to a different placement.

RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS

The policy of the Board of Education states:

"The Board of Education of the Columbus Public Schools views the establishment of rules and responsibilities governing student behavior as a necessary element of the educational process."

The rules and responsibilities governing student behavior established pursuant to this policy and other School Board policies affecting student personnel shall be approved by the district's established procedure prior to their use.

All rules and responsibilities established by the school district and any rules established by individual buildings governing student behavior at the school shall be publicized.

The Board recognizes that each classroom teacher needs to establish certain rules governing the educational process he/she is in charge of. Any rules established by individual teachers are to be reflective of school policies and rules. Such rules are exempt from Board approval and need only to be made known in each individual class of which he or she is in charge.

Any behavior on the part of a student that violates school policies, rules, or regulations may be subject to disciplinary action.

Any disciplinary action shall be administered within the fundamental framework of due process.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURE (1-5 DAYS)

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

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

The decision of the administrator shall be final.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURE (6-20 DAYS)

Due process afforded the student in Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Exclusion, and covered in detail in School Policy JD. Written notification to parent(s) or legal guardian(s) indicating the following:

- (a) the rule(s) or standard(s) of conduct allegedly violated.
 - (b) the penalty recommended by the school official in charge.
 - (c) a statement indicating the student has a right to a hearing on the specified charges upon request.
 - (d) a description of the hearing process and appeal procedure.
 - (e) a form for parents to fill out in order for parents to request a hearing (to be signed and returned to the Superintendent of Schools).
- Nothing in the above procedure precludes the student, student's parent(s), legal guardian(s), or representative from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school personnel prior to the hearing. In the event the school does not receive a request for a hearing within five (5) school days following the receipt of the written notice, the punishment shall go into effect. A hearing can still be requested prior to

thirty (30) calendar days after the actual receipt of written notice; however, the punishment imposed may continue in effect pending the final determination. The appeal procedure shall be as set forth in School Policy 1005.02.

PARENT APPEAL PROCEDURES

In the event a parent is denied access to any topic listed in Board Policy 1005.02 or who is unsatisfied with the solution presented by the administration in Accordance with the Parental Objection Provisions of 1005.02, said parent has the right of appeal as listed below:

1. Upon receipt of the administrator's decision the parent has five (5) school days to appeal that decision by contacting the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. The Superintendent of Schools shall inform the Board no later than the next regularly scheduled Board meeting that an appeal has been made. The privacy of the individual filing the appeal shall be maintained.
3. The Superintendent of Schools shall meet with the parent and administrator in an attempt to resolve the matter within ten (10) school days of receipt of such an appeal.
4. The parent shall receive from the Superintendent his/her decision within five (5) school days of the meeting stated in #3.
5. Upon receipt of the Superintendent's decision, the parent shall have five (5) school days to appeal this decision to the Board of Education to be considered at its next regularly scheduled meeting. Such requests are made by contacting the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. Appeals to the Board will include the parent's/guardian/s name and the nature of the objection.
6. Final decision will rest with the Board of Education.

The Columbus Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, marital status, age or handicap in administration or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. If you have any special needs request that will assist you in participating in services, program and activities of the Columbus Public School District, please contact your building principal or the superintendent of schools.