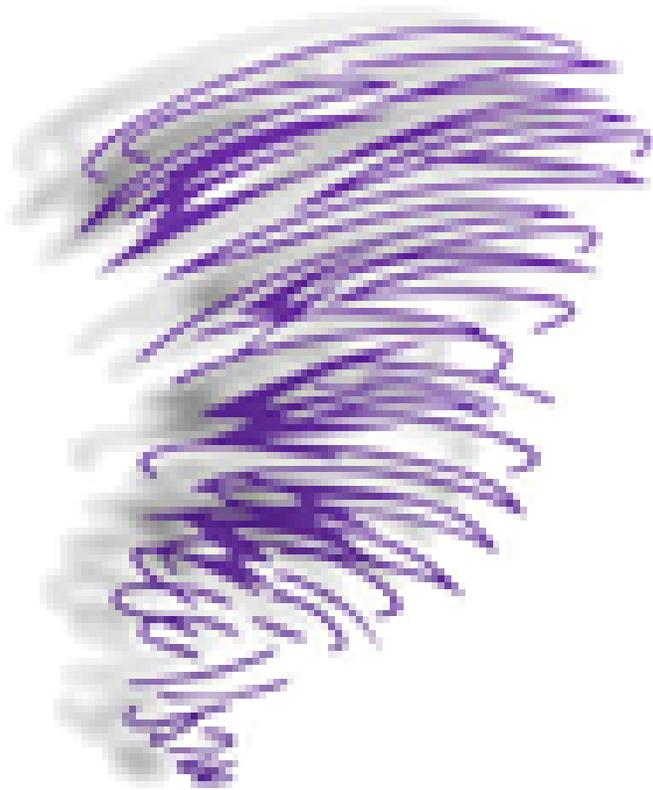


# NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL



## **Student Handbook 2025-2026**

*Connect, Inspire, Empower*

*Connect with us using our mobile app*

Download the app on

Android: <https://bit.ly/3wvzAty> or iPhone: <https://apple.co/3hOie7a>.



**Norwich Middle School  
Student Handbook  
2025-2026**

**Our Mission:**

Prepare future-ready contributors by ensuring learning for all students.

**NCSD Vision:**

*We aspire to be a model district that connects with our community and students, inspires a love of learning for all, and empowers every student to reach their full potential.*



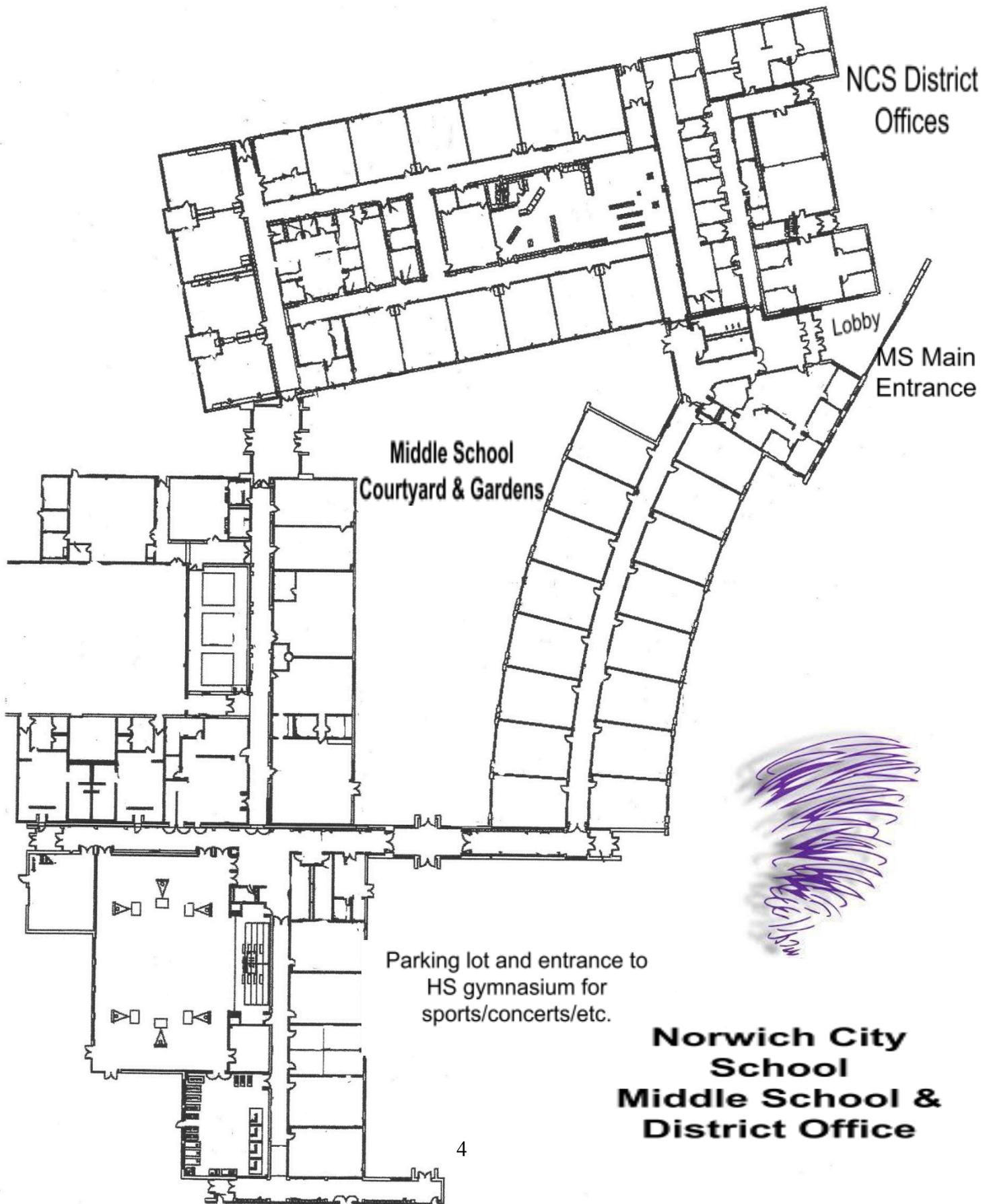
89 Midland Drive  
Norwich, NY 13815

Mr. Terence Devine, Principal  
Mrs. Ellyse Powers-Leech, Associate Principal

Main Office 607-334-1600  
Ext. 2001/2002  
Fax: 607-334-6210

[www.norwichcsd.org](http://www.norwichcsd.org)

***CONNECT, INSPIRE and EMPOWER***



## NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL

### ADMINISTRATION

Principal.....Terence Devine  
Associate Principal.....Ellyse Powers-Leech

### STUDENT SERVICES

A-M.....Josh Bennett  
N-Z.....Elaina van der Sommen  
Nurse.....Jessilee Portelli  
Social Worker.....Jessica Button  
On-Track Coordinator.....Inez Moutarde

### MAIN OFFICE SUPPORT STAFF:

Secretary to the Principal.....Stephanie Jenkins  
Admin Assistant.....Samantha Longo

### 6<sup>th</sup> GRADE

English..... Jamie Dowdall  
English..... Caitlin Stratton  
English ..... Wendy Irwin  
Math.....Jennifer Messenger  
Math .....Joseph Downey  
Science..... Janet Maust  
Social Studies.....Ian Zingaro

### 7<sup>th</sup> GRADE

English.....Cathy Marsh  
English.....Laura Taft  
Math.....Kyle Ellis  
Math.....Sande Wenzel  
Science.....Amy Melville  
Science.....Cassie Nipe  
Social Studies.....Eric Stratton  
Social Studies.....Matt Leach

### 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE

English.....Erika Sylstra  
English.....Julia Roach  
Math.....Gary Skellington  
Math .....Sande Wenzel  
Science.....Lauren Thresh  
Science.....Cassie Nipe  
Science.....Amy Melville  
Social Studies.....Eric Stratton  
Social Studies.....Matt Leach

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Spanish.....Nicole Brooks  
Spanish.....Calvin Locke  
French.....Sarah Waters

### ENCORE

Middle School Mindset/AIS.....Kristen Mills  
Art.....Samantha Ivy  
Agriculture.....Jesse Howe  
Technology.....Greg Thomas  
Coding.....Karl Gee  
Band.....Megan Carpenter/Michele Pomares  
Chorus/General Music.....DJ Smith  
Orchestra.....Sam Verneuille / Mitchell Devine

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Direct Consultant 7/8.....Peri Swackhammer  
Direct Consultant 7/8 .....Carrie Lambrecht  
Direct Consultant 6.....Sueann Edwards  
Direct Consultant 6.....TBA  
12:1:1.....Zack Race  
8:1:1.....Stephanie Sejersen  
6:1:1.....Michelle Sojak  
Speech.....Michelle Benenati  
Occupational Therapist.....Cathy Heggie

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Boys.....Connor Nial  
Girls.....Tanya Yahner

## CALENDAR 2025-2026

September 1----- Labor Day  
September 2-3----- Staff Development  
September 4-----First Day of School  
October 13----- Columbus Day  
November 11----- Veterans Day  
November 26-28----- Thanksgiving Recess  
December 22-January 1----- Christmas Recess  
December 25----- Christmas Day Observed  
January 1-----New Year's Day Observed  
January 19----- No School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
February 16-20----- February Recess  
February 16-----Presidents Day Observed  
March 13-----Staff Development  
April 3-10-----Spring Recess  
April 15-16-----NYS ELA testing  
April 29-30-----NYS Math Testing  
May 12-----NYS Science 8 Test  
May 25-----No School/ Memorial Day  
June 19 -----Juneteenth  
June 15-25----- Regents -  
June 26-----Last Day of School

# CODE OF CONDUCT

The following by-law is enacted in accordance with the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Part 100.2(1).

## Section I: Bill of Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Students of this district shall have the rights afforded to students under the provisions of the Federal and State constitutions and the laws of the State of New York. Although the rights of students are not identical to the rights of adults, it is recognized that a student's private, non-school sponsored and non-program related conduct cannot be regulated unless the educational community is affected by such conduct.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

A student shall not act in such a manner which disrupts the rights of others or which causes disorder or invades the rights of others.

A school is a place of learning. Learning involves the expansion of knowledge as well as acting in a manner considerate of the rights and feelings of others. Students learn from each other. Students must be conscious that younger students follow the leadership of upper class students. Such examples should enhance the school environment.

### PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY NORWICH CITY SCHOOLS Administrative Guidelines B402.1

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Norwich City School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The District has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

The District recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, to identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline when necessary is administered promptly and fairly. Unless otherwise indicated, this code applies to all students, school personnel, parents and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function. For a complete copy of the Code of Conduct see Board Policy A402.1.

## II. STUDENT DRESS CODE

Purpose:

*The Norwich City School District aims to connect, inspire and empower all students in attendance. To build upon this, the district recognizes the need for students to feel welcome and comfortable in their own bodies as well as all buildings across the district. Therefore, our dress code is designed to reflect this purpose:*

Underlying Principle: The responsibility for a student's dress rests primarily with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

Students must wear:

- a. *Attire that is safe, appropriate and does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.*
- b. *Attire that is without items that are vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex.*
- c. *Attire that is without images or language depicting/suggesting drugs, alcohol, vaping or paraphernalia (or any illegal item or activity).*
- d. *Attire that is without profanity.*
- e. *Attire that completely covers undergarments, naval, and buttocks.*
- f. *Appropriate footwear for all scheduled classroom activities.*

Students may wear:

1. Yoga style pants, leggings, and "skinny jeans."
2. Ripped jeans *provided that one's undergarments or buttocks are not exposed.*
3. Hats and other headwear - Face must be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any other student or staff.
4. Tank tops, including spaghetti straps and halter tops.
5. Sandals - provided appropriate footwear is available for scheduled classes (Physical Education, recess, labs, shop, etc.)
6. Athletic Attire

Students cannot wear:

1. Hoods
  - a. Students must take off their hood when entering the building. Students may put their hood on as they exit the building.
    - i. *First offense – verbal warning*
    - ii. *Second offense – take article of clothing, call home*
    - iii. *Third offense – Lunch detention*
2. Body armor, including bullet proof vest and tactical gear.
3. Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon.
4. Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance)

Discipline relative to dress code violations:

Students who violate the student dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

### III. PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. Students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

**Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:**

A. Engage in Conduct that is Disorderly

Examples of disorderly conduct include:

1. Running in hallways.
2. Making unreasonable noise.
3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
5. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
6. Trespassing. Students are not permitted in any school building, other than the one they regularly attend, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building.
7. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
8. Inappropriate use of cell phones, electronic devices, etc.

B. Engage in Conduct that is Insubordinate

Examples of insubordinate conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
2. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
3. Skipping or refusing to attend detention.
4. Failing to report to AI (Alternative Instruction).

C. Engage in Conduct that is Disruptive

Examples of disruptive conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.

D. Engage in Conduct that is Violent

Examples of violent conduct include:

1. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.
2. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
3. Possessing a loaded or unloaded weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.

4. Displaying what appears to be a loaded or unloaded weapon.
5. Threatening to use any loaded or unloaded weapon.
6. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property.
7. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
8. Harassment, bullying, or intimidating students or school personnel.

E. Engage in any Conduct that Endangers the Safety, Morals, Health or Welfare of Others

Examples of such conduct include:

1. Lying to school personnel.
2. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
3. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
4. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
5. Harassment or illegal discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, weight, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, sex, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent or pervasive pattern or actions or statements.
6. Bullying
7. Cyberbullying
8. Sexting
9. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
10. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
11. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
12. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing or swearing.
13. Possession or use of a cigarette, cigar, pipe, e-cigarette, chewing or smokeless tobacco.
14. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, or being under the influence of either or synthetic cannabinoid products including but not limited to incense herbal mixture potpourri. "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroid look-alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
15. Possessing, using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
16. Gambling.
17. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
18. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

F. Engage in Misconduct While on a School Bus

It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.

## G. Engage in Any Form of Academic Misconduct

Examples of academic misconduct include:

1. Plagiarism
2. Cheating
3. Copying
4. Altering records
5. Assisting another student in any of the above actions

## HALLWAY BEHAVIOR

The hallway is a very busy place in between classes when students are moving from one class to the next. Some classes may still be in session at the change of the bell; therefore, it is necessary for **all** students to conduct themselves in a mature way that will not interfere with the learning environment or jeopardize the safety of others. Students must adhere to the following hallway expectations:

- Stay to the right side of the hall
- Move along so you are on time for class.
- Keep your voice to a low volume
- Use appropriate language
- Keep your hands to yourself. The “hands off” policy means no pushing, shoving, interlocking of arms/blocking the hallway, tripping, jumping on backs, or handholding.

Failure to follow these expectations can lead to disciplinary action.

## BIKE/SCOOTER/SKATEBOARD USE

Skateboards/bikes/scooters should not be ridden on the school property.

*First offense – verbal warning*

*Second offense – call home, and the student may not bring bike/skateboard to school for a week.*

## Definitions of Bullying

Bullying (being an aggressor) is: When someone **repeatedly** and on **purpose says** or **does mean** and **hurtful things** to **another person** who has a hard time **defending** himself or herself.

CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Occasional	Occasional	Once or Twice	Is REPEATED
Not planned; in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous; unintentional	Intentional	Is planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings; upset	Can hurt others deeply	The target of the bullying is upset
All parties want to work things out	Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism	Based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person accepts responsibility	Behavior often regretted;	The bully blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem			The target wants to stop the bully's behavior; the bully does not
Can be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/ should NOT be ignored	CANNOT be resolved through mediation

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

### Reporting Procedures

Students are to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying, cyber bullying, hazing or sexting by completing a “Harassment/Bullying Prevention Form.” These forms are located in the school Guidance Office and Main Office. Forms can also be accessed and completed online on the District’s homepage. Forms can be turned into the Guidance Office or Main Office. Online forms can be emailed directly to the appropriate building coordinator.

### Dignity Act Coordinator

The Board of Education has designated the following individuals as the Dignity Act Coordinator who has been thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. This person will serve as the resource and be responsible for the oversight of investigatory procedures of allegations of bullying. The Dignity Act Coordinator can be contacted at:

Gibson Elementary:

Alysa Law-Shearer - Student Success Coordinator  
89 Midland Drive  
334-1600 ext. 4051 email: [alawshearer@norwichcsd.org](mailto:alawshearer@norwichcsd.org)

Perry Browne:

Suzanne Fagnani - Student Success Coordinator  
89 Midland Drive  
334-1600 ext. 3053 email: [sfagnani@norwichcsd.org](mailto:sfagnani@norwichcsd.org)

Middle School:

Elly Powers-Associate Principal  
89 Midland Drive  
334-1600 ext. 2001 email: [epowers@norwichcsd.org](mailto:epowers@norwichcsd.org)

High School:

Kelly Madden - Social Worker  
89 Midland Drive  
334-1600 ext. 1036 email: [kmadden@norwichcsd.org](mailto:kmadden@norwichcsd.org)

## **IV. PENALTIES**

In assessing disciplinary penalties, school personnel will consider the following:

1. The student’s age
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense
3. The student’s prior disciplinary record
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline
5. Information from parents, teachers or others, as appropriate
6. Other extenuating circumstances

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. Discipline penalties will be assessed in compliance with IDEA and New York State Law where the student is a student with a disability. Students found to have violated the District's Code of Conduct may be subject to one or more of the following penalties:

1. Oral warning
2. Written warning
3. Written notification to parent
4. Counseling
5. Probation
6. Reprimand
7. Detention
8. Alternative Instruction
9. Suspension from transportation
10. Suspension from athletic participation
11. Suspension from social or extracurricular activities
12. Suspension of other privileges
13. Exclusion from a particular class
14. Short-term suspension from school
15. Long-term suspension from school
16. Permanent suspension from school

#### Remedial Consequences

Remedial responses, which may be utilized for, but not limited, to instances of discrimination and harassment of students by students and/or employees may include:

1. Peer support groups, corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experiences
2. Supportive intervention
3. Behavioral assessment or evaluation
4. Behavioral management plans, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
5. Student counseling and parent conferences

Note: Students who are either suspended or assigned to Alternative Instruction are to be excluded from all school sponsored extracurricular and social activities during their disciplinary action. These activities include, but are not limited to, participation in athletic practices and contests, and attendance at any school sponsored events.

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.

#### **V. MINIMUM PERIODS OF SUSPENSION**

1. Students who bring a weapon to school will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year unless otherwise determined by the superintendent.
2. Students who commit violent acts other than bringing a weapon to school shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days unless otherwise determined by the superintendent.
3. Students who are repeatedly substantially disruptive of the educational process or repeatedly substantially interfere with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for

at least five days. For purposes of the Code of Conduct “repeatedly substantially disruptive” means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom pursuant to Education Law 3214(3)(a) and this code on multiple occasions.

## **VI. REFERRALS**

1. Guidance shall handle all referrals of students to counseling.
2. PINS Petitions may be filed on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates he or she requires supervision by:
  - a. Being habitually truant and not attending school as required.
  - b. Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
  - c. Knowingly and unlawfully possesses marijuana in violation of the Penal Law.
3. The superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court.
  - a. Any student under the age of 16 who brought a weapon to school.
  - b. Any student 14 or 15 years of age who qualifies for juvenile offender status.

## **VII. VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

The building principal or designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds for these reasons:

1. Anyone not a regular staff member or student will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors must sign the visitor’s book at the Main Office. Anyone visiting a student must first secure permission from the building principal. All visitors must be issued and must wear a visitor’s identification badge. Visitors must sign out and return the badge upon leaving the premises.
3. Visitors must comply with all of the school rules and regulations contained in this code of conduct while on school grounds.

A **student visitor** should not be absent from their “home” school to visit with us. The student must be in good standing in their “home” school. Multiple days of visitation will **not be** allowed. Permission for a student visitor must be obtained from the Principal at least 48 hours in advance.

## **VIII. PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property. No person shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so;
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property;
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities;
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program;
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability;
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or to remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed;
7. Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place to which this code applies;
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles;
9. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function;
10. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function;
11. Loiter on or about school property;
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions;
13. Use profane or lewd language;
14. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties;
15. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code;
16. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function;
17. Bring any dog onto the property except as part of the educational process and with the approval of an administrator.
18. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

## **IX. TRANSPORTATION RULES AND GUIDELINES**

Students should be on time at the designated school bus stops and should wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter. Obey the following rules:

1. Be courteous, use no profanity.
2. Keep the bus clean.
3. Absolutely no tobacco use.
4. Stay in your seat.
5. Keep your head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
6. Never throw anything out of the windows or in the bus.
7. No glass bottles, jam boxes, or live pets are allowed.
8. No fighting is permitted.
9. Obey the bus driver's directions.
10. The bus driver assigns seats.
11. Avoid making loud noises.
12. Be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
13. Do not leave books, lunches, or other articles in the aisles or on the bus.
14. The same standard of conduct that applies in classroom is expected on the bus.
15. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Failure to abide by the rules may result in the loss of your bus riding privilege.

Transportation is provided to students who live within the school district. All students are expected to behave on the buses in a manner that is respectful to the rights of others. All students are governed by the expectations of the Code of Conduct while on buses. Behavior that is disruptive on school buses threatens the life and safety of all students and will not be tolerated. In an effort to assure safe transportation:

- All drivers will make every attempt to deal with situations that arise among students while they are riding on the bus.
- Drivers will give students only one warning about infractions.
- If a student continues to violate rules, despite warnings, a Bus Discipline Referral will be filed with the Principal.
- A Bus Discipline Referral will be filed with the Building Principal immediately following a violation that seriously endangers other passengers.
- Drivers will verbally notify students that their behavior is being reported.

The Building Principal will respond to discipline referrals through the range of penalties listed in the Code of Conduct. Consultation with the driver prior to the disciplinary response will be initiated if circumstances require. Students receiving more than three referrals will face a transportation review. This review will include the student, parent, Building Principal, and the Director of Transportation. Suspension of bus privileges will occur if students persist in unsafe behavior. Students suspended from bus transportation are required to be in school. Transportation of students while suspended from the bus is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

#### Authorized Transportation

Students may only leave school grounds with authorized transportation. This involves students' own bus and bus stop, or riding with individuals who have been identified as accepted by parents/guardians on the Student Information Form.

#### Video Cameras on School Buses

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of staff and students on school transportation vehicles. Video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior on a school vehicle transporting students to and from school or co-curricular activities.

### **X. SEXUAL HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION OF STUDENTS**

It is the policy of the Norwich Middle School that all members of its school community have a right to work, learn, or visit in a harassment-free environment. In the Norwich City School District, sexual harassment in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The District will take all necessary steps to ensure that the District shall be free from sexual harassment.

#### A. District Responsibility

The District shall take steps to prevent sexual harassment from occurring, such as affirmatively raising the subject, expressing strong disapproval, developing appropriate sanctions, informing students and employees of their rights to raise and how to raise issues of sexual harassment under Title VI and Title IX, and developing methods to educate and sensitize the school community.

#### B. Definitions

The following unwelcome behaviors can constitute sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal conduct
- Unwelcome physical conduct
- Demands of a sexual nature
- Sexual advances or propositions
- Verbal threats of a sexual nature

- Jokes of a sexual nature
- Sexual innuendoes or suggestive comments or telephone calls
- Sexually degrading words to describe an individual or an individual's body
- Whistling or obscene gestures of a sexual nature

#### C. Complaint Procedure

If you believe you have been sexually harassed by a student or staff member, the first step is to make a report to the Building Principal. The Building Principal may refer the report to the School Sexual Harassment Officer.

#### D. Reprisals

The District will follow-up with the complainant to ensure that there is no harassment or retaliation following the investigation. Any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged sexual harassment or who retaliates against a person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to a sexual harassment complaint may become the subject of disciplinary action. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

## ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

### NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

The administration and staff of Norwich Middle School believes regular attendance in classroom instruction is an integral part of the learning process. There is a significant relationship between academically engaged time and student achievement. The insistence of good attendance serves as a clear and constant reminder of the importance of instruction. This Middle School desires to establish and maintain effective programs for learning.

#### Attendance Expectations

There are 180 days in the school year. It is the expectation of the school that students are in school and participate in instruction 180 days of the school year. That being said, it is understandable that students get sick and emergencies happen, but we need students to be a part of the instructional process as close to 180 days as possible.

The troubles of the past few years are behind us, and it is time to get back on track. One of our district goals this year is to improve student attendance!!! We like to use the phrase that ***YOU HAVE TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!!*** Attendance in school is not only a requirement from the state but is essential to a student's learning process. Students who are active in daily instruction:

- Show increased ACHIEVEMENT in all academic performance areas.
- Have daily OPPORTUNITY to ask questions, work with peers, and develop critical thinking.
- Are a PART OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY and able to participate fully in all school activities.
- Increases the likelihood of SUCCESS THROUGH AND AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

We are here to support you in any challenges you are facing, but we need to know if you need support. Reach out to us!! Your teachers, school counselors, On-Track Coordinator, Social Worker, and the Administration are all here to support you throughout the challenges of the school year. Be here, learn, and get smart, NMS!!

## **Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness, and Early Departures**

The School District has determined that absences, tardiness, and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards:

- a. Excused: An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, attendance at school-sponsored events, activities, or competitions or other such reasons as may be approved by the Board of Education. Dr. Note must be produced to the school within 3 days of an appointment or the absence will be considered unexcused.
- b. Unexcused: An absence, tardiness, or early departure is considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories (e.g., family vacation, hunting, babysitting, haircut, obtaining learner's permit, road test, vehicle trouble, private music lessons, oversleeping.)

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions also apply:

1. Scheduled instruction:

Every period that is pupil is scheduled to attend instructional or supervised study activities during the school year.

2. Absent:

K-8 – The pupil is not present for the entire period of the pupil's scheduled instruction.

3. Tardy:

K-8 – The pupil arrives later than the starting time of the pupil's scheduled instruction.

4. Early departure

The pupil leaves before the end of the pupil's scheduled instruction.

## **Student Attendance Record keeping/Data Collection**

The record of each student's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure shall be kept in a register of attendance consistent with Commissioner's Regulations. Therefore, attendance will be taken on a period-by-period basis at a secondary level. An absence, tardiness, or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the District code for the reason.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Consistent with the importance of classroom participation, student absences, tardiness, and early departures may affect a student's grade and/or credit.

Students absent from class due to their participation in a school-sponsored activity are to arrange with their teachers to make up any work missed in a timely manner as determined by the student's teacher.

Upon returning to school following an absence, tardiness, or early departure, it shall be the responsibility of the student to consult with his/her teacher(s) regarding arrangements to make up missed work, assignments, and/or tests in accordance with the time schedule specified by the teacher. Education Law also requires a written excuse from a parent or legal guardian stating the date and reason for the absence upon return to school.

## **Notice of Students who are Absent, Tardy or Depart Early Without Proper Excuse**

Where a student has not been marked as present for the first period of scheduled instruction and the school has not been previously notified of the absence, the district shall attempt to contact the student's parent(s) or person in parental relation to learn the nature of the student's absence and notify the parent that the student has not arrived at school.

If deemed necessary, parents/persons in parental relations will be notified by designated District personnel at periodic intervals to discuss the child's absences, tardiness, or early departures and the importance of class attendance and appropriate interventions. The school principal and staff will address procedures to implement the notification process to the parent/person in parental relation.

## **Disciplinary Consequences**

The student may be subject to disciplinary procedures for unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departure, including verbal and written warnings, detentions, alternative instruction, and loss of extra-curricular privileges, as described in the Code of Conduct. Students may receive disciplinary action in accordance with the Code of Conduct for failure to produce a parentally signed note upon their return to school.

Academic success is directly correlated to attendance. Teachers, administrators and students, and parents must work together to ensure that students are present and on time for school and class each day.

## **THE NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL TARDY POLICY**

**Students must be in their assigned classroom when the bell rings at 8:30. If the student is late to school on an unexcused tardy, the following consequences will result.**

1<sup>st</sup> Unexcused Tardy – The student will receive a warning

2<sup>nd</sup> Unexcused Tardy – The student will receive a warning

3<sup>rd</sup> Unexcused Tardy – The student will be referred to the Associate Principal, where a phone call will be made home and lunch detention may be assigned. Other consequences will follow if the student continues to arrive late to school.

**Excused Tardy** - Acceptable reasons verified by a parental note or email include illness, medical appointments, and extreme family emergencies. Any absences for health reasons requires a doctor's note.

**Unexcused Tardy** - Include, but are not limited to oversleeping (parent / child), alarm didn't go off, or missed bus.

## **NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL WIRELESS DEVICE/ELECTRONICS POLICY/User Agreement**

Norwich Middle School is dedicated to maintaining a strong focus on academics that incorporates the use of technology in an equitable manner for all students. We recognize the importance of technology for communicating and collaborating with staff and peers. As a result, our district has provided enough Chromebooks so that all students can access a device when needed. Therefore, to limit distractions and keep our focus on academics, our school will enforce the following electronic expectations:

- Students who need to make an emergency phone call may ask an adult for permission to go to the main office.
- Parents/Guardians who need to contact their child may call the main office, and the message will be delivered in a manner that does not disrupt class.
- Students may use their cell phones at dismissal (3:12) to arrange transportation with parents/friends.
- Students may never use their wireless devices (cell phone/Smartwatch) camera functions for purposes of taking photos, recording video, or audio without the express consent of school officials, including teachers, aides, assistants, or other adult staff during the instructional day.

- After school hours, students may have access to their devices; however, these devices may never be used—and must remain out of sight—in any area where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy. This includes, but is not limited to, restrooms and locker rooms. This rule applies at all times, including before and after school, during extracurricular events, and on weekends.
- Students must comply with the Student Internet Access Policy A701.3 and the Code of Conduct B402.1, and all other board-approved policies when using a wireless device.

## STUDENT PHONE GUIDELINES

Cell phones, smartwatches, and wireless earbuds will not be used during the school day. Rather, all students will store personal electronic devices in an individually assigned Yondr Pouch. While the Yondr Pouch is considered school property, each student must bring it to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

### Daily Process

As students **Arrive to School**, they will:

- 1) Turn their phone off.
- 2) Place their phone inside their Yondr Pouch, offering proof of the sealed pouch to school staff.
- 3) Store their pouch in their locker or with their belongings for the day.

**At the end of the day**, students open their pouch, remove their phones, and put the pouch in their backpacks. Students must bring their pouch to school with them each day.

\*Students arriving late or leaving early will pouch/unpouch their phones in the Main Office\*

### Progressive Discipline related to the following offense

If a phone, smartwatch, or earbuds is seen or heard during the school day and is not in the Yondr pouch, and/or a student places an alternate phone in the Yondr pouch.

**1st Offense:** The student is reported to the administration, and the phone or smart devices are confiscated until the end of the day. Communication to the parent/guardian will be mandatory.

**2nd Offense:** The student must report to the Main Office every morning for a month to hand in cell phones and smart devices to their Associate Principal.

### Damaged/Lost Pouch

If a student intentionally damages their school-assigned pouch:

The student will be charged \$15 for a replacement pouch, and the student will need to report to the Main Office every morning for a month to hand in cell phone/smart devices to their Associate Principal.

Examples of damage:



- Deep scratches on the globe and on the green ring around it
- Bent pins
- Pin and button not fully recessing due to pin damage

### Forgotten Pouch

If a student forgets their pouch, **their phone will be collected, and a call home will be made to remind caregivers of the student responsibility.** The phone will be returned to the student at dismissal.

If a student consistently forgets their pouch, it is considered lost. **For more information, refer to the Damage/Lost pouch guidelines above.**

*\*Students who refuse to follow the procedures or consequences are subject to additional penalties for insubordination.\**

## **NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY**

Homework is defined as the practice for learning that has occurred in the classroom. Its purpose is to practice skills and concepts your child has received instruction in.

Homework can and will be assigned to your child if the teacher can assess whether or not your child has the skills and understanding to be able to practice that skill independently. This means that your child should be able to complete any homework assigned without assistance.

Homework can and may be assigned to only specific students in the class based on the above criteria.

Homework completion will not factor into the determination of whether or not your child is proficient in regards to a specific state standard.

## **INTERIM/PROGRESS REPORT AND REPORT CARDS**

Interim/Progress Reports are sent home with students every five weeks. Report cards are mailed every 10 weeks. Any parent who wishes to have additional information regarding academic status should contact the School Counselor Office at 334-1600, ext. 2002.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

Middle school physical education consists of both individual and team sports. Skill development, knowledge of rules, and basic strategies are all emphasized. Also, the development of positive attitudes, sportsmanship, fair play, and fitness are stressed. The requirement for class includes sneakers.

## **NO BACKPACKS**

Students may not use a backpack in the school building throughout the school day. Backpacks must be removed and stored in the student's locker upon entering the building until dismissal. Lunchboxes will still be permitted.

## EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS CLUBS, ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES AT NORWICH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Archery Club	Language Club	National Junior Honor Society
Art Club	Garden Club	Odyssey of the Mind
Band	Liberty Partnership Program (LPP)	Orchestra
Choir	HS Musical (8th Grade)	Ski Club
Color Guard	Jazz Lab Band	Student Government
Esport Club	Marching Band	
Future Farmers of America (FFA)	MS Musical	

## INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM

### **Norwich Tornado Philosophy of Athletics**

Athletic programs are made available to provide the building blocks for the development of and enriched, well-rounded education. It is an ideal arena in which to cultivate the development of the whole person and to promote the qualities of responsible citizenship. Our athletic programs achieve this through education, skill development and leadership.

Members of the athletic department and our caring, committed coaches, play a role in and athletes' total education. They provide fundamental skill development not only in athletics but also in the area of academics, when needed, allowing the student athlete a chance for greater success in both areas.

Success is not defined as being the "team star," but rather a team member who practice good sportsmanship on the playing field, in the classroom, and in the community. The qualities embodied in teamwork and that responsible citizenship should be evident as our student athletes and coaches interact with the greater community.

Our school supports the NYS Education Department's education goals of a quality interscholastic athletic program, which includes the four "C's" of Athletics (competence, character, civility, and citizenship).

### **Age-Modified Level**

"Upon entry into the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, a student is eligible for modified program competition. One is ineligible when the 16<sup>th</sup> birthday is attained; however, if a student attains the sixteenth birthday during a sport season he/she may compete in that sport season" (NYSPHSAA Handbook, 2004-06, p.55).

### **Selective Classification**

Students, teachers, coaches, or parents/guardians may request the Director of Physical Education/Athletics to process a student through the Selection/Classification screening procedure. Students will not be exposed to the screening procedure without a specific request.

If a student in grade 7 or 8 has reached the chronological age of 15 years old prior to July 1, they are eligible to participate on high school athletic teams without being processed through the Selection/Classification screening procedure. Only medical approval by the school district physician is required. The reason that these students are eligible for the high school teams is that they are already at an advanced age and will lose some of their four

years of high school eligibility due to being over age if not allowed eligibility. If a student has been processed through the Selection/Classification screening procedure and participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the process would not have to be repeated in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade as long as they remain at the same level of athletic competition in the same sport category. If the student changes levels or sports, the Selection/Classification screening procedure must be repeated to meet the specific athletic performance and developmental standards. If a student fails to meet one or more of the athletic performance standards related to the Selection/Classification screening process, he/she may be retested as many times as is appropriate for a specific item or items. If there is a sound basis for a special approval, it can be requested from the State Education Department (see Attachment B).

For further clarification please see the NYSPHSAA Handbook. The process for Selective Classification starts on page 53 - <http://www.nysphsaa.org/handbook/pdf/Handbook1214.pdf>

**Age and Grade – JV and Varsity Levels**

AGE AND GRADE: Regulation of the Commissioner of Education: A student shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen years is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports. NOTE: Students may be eligible regardless of age or grade if they have been approved through the State Education Department’s Selection/Classification Program. The 15-year-old below the 9th grade needs only to meet selection/classification maturity standards to be eligible at the high school level. (Duration of Competition, p. 46, 96) Reporting Procedure: All violations shall be reported to the League and Section. (NYSPHSAA Handbook, 2012-13, pp. 92)

**Fall Modified Sports:** usually starts on the first day of school.

**Winter Modified Sports:** usually starts the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October (call the office for the actual start date).

**Spring Modified Sports:** usually starts the third week of March (call the office for the actual start date).

<p><b><i>Fall Sports</i></b>  <i>Cross Country</i>  <i>Football</i>  <i>Golf</i>  <i>Soccer</i>  <i>Girls Swim</i>  <i>Volleyball</i></p>	<p><b><i>Winter Sports</i></b>  <i>Basketball</i>  <i>Wrestling</i>  <i>Bowling</i>  <i>Boys Swim</i>  <i>Winter Track</i></p>	<p><b><i>Spring Sports</i></b>  <i>Baseball</i>  <i>Softball</i>  <i>Boys Tennis</i>  <i>Girls Tennis</i>  <i>Spring Track</i></p>
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**DANCES**

School dances are subject to the academic eligibility policy, which you can [find here](#). Students failing two or more classes will not be permitted to attend school dances.

Students who get removed from class or receive a discipline referral the week of the dance will not be permitted to attend the dance. Students must attend school on the day of the dance; exceptions will be made for excused absences. **The student must be a registered Norwich Middle School student to attend.**

Students must enter the school within the first hour of the dance. All doors will be locked after one hour, and no students will be admitted after that. Once any individual leaves the school dance, they will not be permitted to return later in the evening. Any students who are unable to conduct themselves properly will be asked to leave and risk the possibility of being excluded from future school functions. Further disciplinary actions may also occur beginning on the following day of school. The exact nature of the offense will determine this action.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies are a privilege to be enjoyed by all students. The student's behavior reflects his/her manners and should be courteous. By our behavior in assemblies, we leave either a good or poor impression of our school to guests and performers. It is appropriate to applaud by clapping hands when something on the stage pleases you. Whistling, talking, throwing objects, or boisterousness is not acceptable. Students are to be seated in the area assigned for their classes.

## **PUPIL SERVICES**

The school district provides counseling to students as judged necessary by the teachers, school counselors, and the principal after contact is made with the parents. Parents may inquire about these services by contacting the Principal, the Counseling Office, or the Assistant Superintendent.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

The services of the school counselors are available to all Norwich Middle School students. Caregivers with questions regarding their child's course schedule or academic progress are encouraged to contact the teacher directly or school counselors.

Many problems concerning both school and one's personal life may be helped by counseling. The school counselor or teacher will gladly help you with these problems. Your teacher, the Main Office personnel, or your counselor may provide you with a pass to the Counselor Office at your request.

## **CAREGIVER CONFERENCES**

Caregivers are encouraged to make appointments for conferences with teachers and counselors by calling Student Services at 334-1600, ext. 2002.

## **EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES (Working Papers)**

The Norwich Middle School Guidance Department will supervise the issuance of working papers to students 14 years of age or over to work in those places of employment that conform to State and Federal rules with respect to the employment of youths. Information about working papers and/or Child Labor Law shall be in the Counseling Office.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills are required by law and are held at unannounced times during the school year. The drills must be carried out in an orderly manner with no unnecessary talking. Once evacuated, students must remain away from the building until the signal to re-enter is given. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.

## **LOCKDOWN**

Lockdowns are required by law and are held at least four (4) times during the school year. The drills must be carried out according to our emergency response protocol. All students and staff will be annually trained in the use of the protocol.

## THE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library has books, magazines, and pamphlets for assigned study and recreational reading. There are computers for students to utilize. It is open for use during the entire school day unless in use for class instruction.

All students must “sign-in” upon entering the library and “sign out” when leaving the area. All library rules regarding computers, books, other resources, and behavior will be followed, or action will be taken.

## LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the Main Office, where the owner may claim them.

## TEXTBOOK/LIBRARY MATERIALS

Textbooks and library materials are furnished by the school, and students are expected to treat them with care. Students who lose or damage school property while it is checked out to them will be expected to pay for it.

## CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students should not mark school furniture, walls, cameras, floors, or equipment with a pen, pencil, paint, or any other instrument. Fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and electrical systems should not be tampered with. Anyone who willfully destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. **Any student who damages school property is expected to make financial restitution.**

## LOCKERS

Lockers are the property of Norwich Middle School. They are to be kept neat and orderly. Each student will be assigned a locker. An administrator will make periodic inspections. **Use only the locker assigned to you** and keep it locked at all times. All personal items and books, when not in use, are to be kept in lockers. Do not tamper with another’s locker or give your combination to another person. Lockers are to be used for storage **but are not a safe place for valuables.** If you have valuables that you want to keep in a safe place for the day, please register them in the Main Office. Bottles and cans of liquid may not be kept in lockers. These can fall out, resulting in broken glass and a sticky floor. There should be no open containers in the building.

It is recommended that students use locks on gym lockers. Gym lockers with clothing in them **should be locked** during P.E. class. Locks are provided by the Physical Education Department. Personal locks should not be used. **The school is not responsible for articles stolen from lockers.**

## CAFETERIA

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered **at no cost to the student.**

## **VISITS TO THE SCHOOL NURSE**

Students needing to visit the nurse must have a valid pass from a teacher except for emergencies. The student must sign the register upon arrival. Visits between periods are not permitted. When leaving the nurse's office, students are to report directly back to class with a pass from the nurse stating the time of departure. Students will be assessed for the reported illness or injury and will be allowed to rest in the nurse's office for a maximum of fifteen minutes. Illnesses requiring a longer stay will involve a parent/guardian being called to pick up the student and take him/her home or for more medical attention. The nurse will speak directly with a parent by phone whenever a student requests to go home for minor illnesses. With phone permission from a parent/guardian, a specified designee will be allowed to pick up the student if the parent cannot do so. Relatives and friends who are listed as emergency contacts will be called only in case of serious illness or injury requiring immediate attention and only after attempts to reach a parent/guardian by phone are unsuccessful.

## **FUNDRAISING**

The appropriate advisor and the principal must approve all fund-raising activities.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

All students must bring basic supplies, such as notebooks, paper, pens, pencils, and erasers. Anything above and beyond this can and will be provided by the school. All students are expected to come to school prepared for classes every day.

## **POSTERS**

Students wishing to place posters anywhere in the building must have the permission of the faculty member sponsoring the activity and the principal, who will initial the poster. All posters must be approved before they are hung in the hall.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Due to weather closings, it may be necessary to close the school. If this should occur, the local tv and radio stations will broadcast the notification of school closings. Additionally, the district will communicate using the "ALL CALL" phone and email system. Social media sources will be updated as soon as possible.



**“WHAT TO DO IF?”**

**“WHERE TO GO FOR HELP”**

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**LATE (Tardy after homeroom)**

Main office Ext. 2001/2002

**ILL (Permission to go home)**

Nurse/Health Office Ext. 2066

**PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE BUILDING**

Main Office Ext. 2001-2002

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

Main Office Ext 2001/2002

**STUDENT SCHEDULE ISSUES**

Student Services/Main Office Ext. 2006

**LOCKER INFORMATION**

Main Office Ext. 2002

**WORKING PAPERS**

Student Services/Main Office Ext. 2001

**CRISIS**

Principal/Main Office Ext. 2001

Associate Principal/Main Office Ext. 2500

Nurse/Health Office Ext. 2066

Counselors/Main Office Ext. 2006/2008

**ATHLETIC INFORMATION**

Athletic Coordinator/Main Office Ext. 1139

Athletic Secretary/Main Office Ext. 1127

**LOST & FOUND**

Main Office Ext. 2002

**FIRE DRILL/LOCKDOWN.....**With Teacher

**CLUBS.....**Club Advisor



# **Code of Conduct Receipt:**

**2025-2026**

I have received the code of conduct represented in my student planner. By signing this, I agree that I have been provided an explanation and understand the expectations set forth by Norwich Middle School.

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_