

2022-2023 Belding Middle School Student Handbook



MISSION STATEMENT - BELDING AREA SCHOOLS

Belding Area Schools: An engaged staff + a supportive community = successful students

Vision Statement - Belding Area Schools

ALL students who graduate from Belding Area Schools will be career and college ready.

Commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.

WELCOME TO BELDING MIDDLE SCHOOL!

The staff of Belding Middle School welcomes you to another great school year. Many exciting educational and extracurricular opportunities await you, and we look forward to helping you grow and learn. Our entire staff will make every effort to assist you in any way possible. We are proud of Belding Middle School and its students.

It is important that you become familiar with this student handbook and Code of Conduct. Remember, the student handbook contents do not cover every existing situation but only basic, general areas. You and your parent(s) need to read the handbook together, and become familiar with its content.

We are looking forward to a great year!

Joseph R. Barron
Principal

Dan Underhill
Assistant principal

Belding Middle School Mission Statement
An engaged staff + a supportive community = successful students

Belding Middle School Vision Statement
Commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.

DAILY SCHEDULE & LUNCH PRICING (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Period	Time		
1 st	7:30-8:25		
2 nd	8:30-9:40 (Includes 15 minutes of IXL Math Lab at end of period)		
3 rd	9:45-10:40		
4 th	6th Grade SSR: 10:45-11:05 4 th - 11:05-12:00 Lunch 12:00-12:30	7th Grade Lunch 10:40-11:10 SSR: 11:15-11:35 4 th - 11:35-12:30	8th Grade SSR 10:45-11:05 Lunch 11:05-11:35 4 th - 11:40-12:30
5 th	12:35-1:30		
6 th	1:35-2:25		

Lunch Prices for 2022-2023 School Year

Full Lunch Price: \$3.10

Reduced Lunch Price: \$.40

Belding Middle School Belief Statements

- We believe in working as a team.
- We believe in high expectations for all students fostered by supports in all developmental domains.
- We believe that each student should be aware of someone on the staff who specifically cares about them.
- We believe students' learning should require them to demonstrate the full range of thinking skills, rather than mere retention of facts.
- We believe in teaching adolescents to develop healthy lifestyles and socially responsible behavior.
- We believe a teacher's role is to instill the love of learning by helping each student to develop an attitude of "I can do it" and "I am important".

- We believe in an appropriate and consistent discipline program that fosters student self-monitoring by teaching and modeling expected behaviors.
- We believe maximum learning for all students can be accomplished through collaboration and flexible grouping of students.
- We believe in flexible scheduling to create blocks of instructional time to best meet the needs of students.
- We believe in expanding opportunities for learning outside of the traditional school setting.
- We believe that student choice and opportunity for exploration enhance student ownership and motivation.
- We believe that multiple learning strategies and teaching methods should be utilized to accommodate the various abilities and learning styles of our students.
- We believe that it is vital to instill in our students the importance of owning their education.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT-BELDING MIDDLE SCHOOL 2022-2023

We believe that all students are responsible for their own actions and must be taught to respect the rights of others. This means they have to learn how to think of ways to get what they want while, at the same time, respecting the rights of others in the school. Teachers have a right to teach and students have a right to learn in a safe environment. Our school strives to create an atmosphere conducive to learning utilizing the principles of safety, pride, dignity, courtesy, and respect in order to meet the educational and development needs of all students. None of the students have a right to disrupt at school, regardless of where they are, especially if they are preventing other students from learning or are threatening the safety and rights of others.

IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS THE AUTHORITY TO QUESTION BEHAVIOR OF ANY FORM WITHIN THE BUILDING, ON SCHOOL GROUNDS, AND AT SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND DEAL WITH BEHAVIOR ACCORDINGLY EVEN IF THAT BEHAVIOR IS NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN THIS HANDBOOK.

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, THE PENALTIES FOR ALL PROHIBITED ACTS RANGE FROM ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTION TO PERMANENT EXPULSION, DEPENDING ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING; THE SEVERITY OF THE CONDUCT; THE IMPACT OF THE CONDUCT ON THE SCHOOL AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY; APPLICABLE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES; AND STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.

**For a complete list of Belding Board of Education policies please visit
<http://www.neola.com/belding-mi/>**

ABSENCES

- **Parents must confirm every absence** by a phone call or note within 24 hours to the attendance line at 794-4426.
- **Absence notes should be brought to the attendance office before school** the day the student returns if a phone call has not been made.
- Students must be in attendance the entire school day to participate in a game or practice that day. Exceptions may be made IN ADVANCE (Prior to the start of the school day) by the Athletic Director or Principal for valid reasons other than sickness. When not excused in advance, the administrator will grant permission for participation only with proof that the student had a doctor's appointment or in the case of extenuating circumstances.
- **NOTE:** Whenever you miss school, talk with the Athletic Director in advance if you hope to participate in a game or practice that day. If the Athletic Director is not available, see the Principal or Assistant Principal

or call the school attendance line 616-794-4926 the night before the doctor appointment and leave a message.

- NOTE: If a student **is late to school by more than fifteen minutes** that is considered an absence per our school handbook.
- Pre-excused absences can be arranged by contacting the attendance office (794-4426) three days before the absence. If you need to speak with the attendance secretary, call 794-4422 between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Pre-excused forms are available in the office or on the school website.
- **Absences** that remain **unexcused after 48 hours** will be **treated as truancy**. Truancies will be made up minute for minute during lunch times and after school.
- **Reminders** to excuse absences will be made using the School Messenger System which places automated phone calls to the student's home number on the day of his/her absence.
- **Parents will be notified - by letter - of absences (whether excused or not excused) at ten days.**
- An administrative attendance intervention plan could be put in place if truancy pattern of behavior becomes evident. Ten days of missed instruction, within a school year, will be the marker.

The following is a list of possible administrative interventions after the 10th day.

- Phone, or personal conference with family
 - Referral Ionia County Youth Services Bureau for intervention.
 - Family meeting scheduled to discuss interventions.
 - Referral to the Ionia County prosecutor for truancy, if appropriate.
 - Student could be restricted from after school activities.
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- Parents notified that after 15th day, Truancy Officer may be contacted.
 - A second letter will automatically go home after 15 absences. Administration may also refer student to Truancy Court after 15th absence.
 - School related absences and suspensions will not count toward the truancy process.

*Further information can be found under Board Policy 5200.

ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Any form of suspension or placement in the RTC/ISS room, greater than 3 hours, within 5 school days of the event will result in the student being ineligible for the activity night Any form of suspension or placement in the RTC/ISS room, greater than 3 hours on the day of an activity or athletic contest will disqualify the student from that day's activity. Students may not also have overdue Media Center materials, fines, fees, outstanding food service balances, or past-due fundraiser moneys to participate in end of the year activities including the all-school picnic.

- **Chronic Absenteeism:** Students who are chronically absent may lose the privilege of attending after school events and activities. For example, students who miss more than 25% of school days in the month leading up to an Activity Night will not be allowed to attend the dance.

AFTER SCHOOL GUIDELINES

There are several after school activities we encourage students to be involved in. These include academic, fine arts, and athletic activities. If you are in the building after regular school hours, it is essential that you are supervised by a staff member. Students not supervised by a staff member must leave the building at 2:45. Once the activity is over students should leave the building if they are walking home. If they are waiting for a ride they students should be waiting by the front doors and not wandering the halls.

ALCOHOL

Students are not to possess or consume alcohol on school property or at school-sponsored events. Students are prohibited from attending school or school-sponsored activities after having consumed alcohol. Students are also prohibited from possessing or consuming non-alcoholic malt beverages (such as Sharp's, O'Doul's, Kingsbury, and Zing Malt Beverage).

ANIMALS AND PLANTS IN THE SCHOOL

Persons bringing animals into the school must receive prior permission from the building administrator. Live animals, including all vertebrates, invertebrates, and toxic plants such as poison ivy or sumac, may be brought into the classroom for educational purposes. However, neither animals nor toxic plants should be kept overnight at school. While at school, animals must be appropriately housed, humanely cared for and properly handled.

ANTI-HARASSMENT/BULLYING

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5516, 5517.01

General Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain an education and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all School District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") that are protected by Federal civil rights laws (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the School District community as well as third parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

For purposes of this policy, "School District community" means students, administrators, and professional and support staff, as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.

For purposes of this policy, "third parties" include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on School District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the School District community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off School District property).

Other Violations of the Anti-Harassment Policy

The Board will also take immediate steps to impose disciplinary action on individuals engaging in any of the following prohibited acts:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation.

- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of unlawful harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of unlawful harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating harassment charges comprises part of one's supervisory duties.

Definitions:

Bullying

Bullying rises to the level of unlawful harassment when one or more persons systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees and the bullying is based upon one (1) or more Protected Classes, that is, characteristics that are protected by Federal civil rights laws. It is defined as any unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment; cause discomfort or humiliation, or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school or work performance or participation; and may involve: (See Policy 5517.01)

- A. teasing;
- B. threats;
- C. intimidation;
- D. stalking;
- E. cyberstalking;
- F. cyberbullying;
- G. physical violence;
- H. theft;
- I. sexual, religious, or racial harassment;
- J. public humiliation; or
- K. destruction of property.

Harassment

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- A. places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property;
- B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, or an employee's work performance; or
- C. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Sexual Harassment

Pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, "sexual harassment" is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or status in a class, educational program, or activity.
- B. Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of either gender against a person of the same or opposite gender.

Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment may take a variety of forms. Examples of the kinds of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations.
- B. Unwanted physical and/or sexual contact.
- C. Threats or insinuations that a person's employment, wages, academic grade, promotion, classroom work or assignments, academic status, participation in athletics or extra-curricular programs or events, or other conditions of employment or education may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.
- D. Unwelcome verbal expressions of a sexual nature, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; the unwelcome use of sexually degrading language, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls.
- E. Sexually suggestive objects, pictures, videotapes, audio recordings or literature, placed in the work or educational environment, which may embarrass or offend individuals.
- F. Unwelcome and inappropriate touching, patting, or pinching; obscene gestures.
- G. A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another.

- H. Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.
- I. Inappropriate boundary invasions by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life.
- J. Verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes unlawful sexual harassment. Sex-based or gender-based conduct must be sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects, limits, or denies an individual's employment or education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive employment or educational environment, or such that it is intended to, or has the effect of, denying or limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activities.

NOTE: Sexual conduct/relationships with students by District employees or any other adult member of the School District community is prohibited, and any teacher, administrator, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual conduct with a student may also be guilty of the criminal charge of "sexual battery." The issue of consent is irrelevant in regard to such criminal charge and/or with respect to the application of this policy to District employees or other adult members of the School District community.

Race/Color Harassment

Prohibited racial harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's race or color and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs, nicknames implying stereotypes, epithets, and/or negative references relative to racial customs.

Religious (Creed) Harassment

Prohibited religious harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's religion or creed and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's religious tradition, clothing, or surnames, and/or involves religious slurs.

National Origin/Ancestry Harassment

Prohibited national origin/ancestry harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's national origin or ancestry and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin or ancestry, such as negative comments regarding customs, manner of speaking, language, surnames, or ethnic slurs.

Disability Harassment

Prohibited disability harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's disability and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as negative comments about speech patterns, movement, physical impairments or defects/appearances, or the like. Such harassment may further occur where conduct is directed at or pertains to a person's genetic information.

Reports and Complaints of Harassing Conduct

Students and other members of the School District community and third parties are encouraged to promptly report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, supervisor or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Anti-Harassment Compliance Officer within two (2) school days.

Members of the School District community, which includes students, or third parties who believe they have been unlawfully harassed are entitled to utilize the Board's complaint process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the complaining individual's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints of harassment under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of alleged bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior, the Principal believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Principal shall report the act of bullying, aggressive behavior and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. While the Compliance Officer investigates the allegation, the Principal shall suspend his/her Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the Compliance Officer's written report. The Compliance Officer shall keep the Principal informed of the status of Policy [5517](#) investigation and provide him/her with a copy of the resulting written report.

Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as "Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers" for the District. They are hereinafter referred to as the "Compliance Officers."

High School Principal	Ellis Elementary Principal
Belding Area Schools	Belding Area Schools
850 Hall Street	850 Hall Street
Belding, MI 48809	Belding, MI 48809
(616) 794-4700	(616) 794-4700

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually on the School District's website.

The Compliance Officers will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful harassment, to assist students, other members of the District community, and third parties who seek support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the student, other member of the School District community or third party in those instances where

concerns have not resulted in the filing of a formal complaint and where all parties are in agreement to participate in an informal process.

Compliance Officers shall accept complaints of unlawful harassment directly from any member of the School District community or a visitor to the District, or receive complaints that are initially filed with a school building administrator. Upon receipt of a complaint either directly or through a school building administrator, a Compliance Officer will begin either an informal or formal process (depending on the request of the person alleging the harassment or the nature of the alleged harassment), or the Compliance Officer will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. In the case of a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or will oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All members of the School District community must report incidents of harassment that are reported to them to the Compliance Officer within two (2) business days of learning of the incident.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful harassment of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one of the Compliance Officers within two (2) business days. Additionally, any Board employee who observes an act of unlawful harassment is expected to intervene to stop the harassment, unless circumstances make such an intervention dangerous, in which case the staff member should immediately notify other Board employees and/or local law enforcement officials, as necessary, to stop the harassment. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer or designee must contact the student, if age eighteen (18) or older, or the student's parents if under the age eighteen (18), within two (2) school days to advise s/he/them of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged misconduct, including the obligation of the Compliance Officer or designee to conduct an investigation following all the procedures outlined for a formal complaint.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

Any student who believes that s/he has been subjected to unlawful harassment may seek resolution of his/her complaint through either the informal or formal procedures as described below. Further, a process for investigating claims of harassment or retaliation and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the claim of legally prohibited harassment or retaliation was substantiated are set forth below.

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment or retaliation, time lines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. Once the formal complaint process is begun, the investigation will be completed in a timely manner (ordinarily, within fifteen (15) business days of the complaint being received).

The informal and formal procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment or retaliation with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

Informal Complaint Procedure

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to stop inappropriate behavior and to investigate and facilitate resolution through an informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who believes s/he has been unlawfully harassed or retaliated against. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed may initiate their complaint through this informal complaint process, but are not required to do so. The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the parties (alleged target of harassment and alleged harasser(s)) agree to participate in the informal process.

Students who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed or retaliated may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

However, all complaints of harassment involving a District employee or any other adult member of the School District community against a student will be formally investigated. Similarly, any allegations of sexual violence will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a student feels that s/he is being unlawfully harassed and s/he is able and feels safe doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. Such direct communication should not be utilized in circumstances involving sexual violence. The complaining individual should address the allegedly harassing conduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The Compliance Officers are available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the individual if requested to do so. An individual who is uncomfortable or unwilling to inform the harasser of his/her complaint is not prohibited from otherwise filing an informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful harassment, such as sexual harassment, the Compliance Officer may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A student who believes s/he has been unlawfully harassed may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: (1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; (2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or (3) directly to one of the Compliance Officers.

All informal complaints must be reported to one of the Compliance Officers who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below on his/her own, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The School District's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students who believe they are being unlawfully harassed with a range of options designed to bring about a resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the student claiming unlawful harassment, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the student about how to communicate the unwelcome nature of the behavior to the alleged harasser.
- B. Distributing a copy of the anti-harassment policy as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the individual whose behavior is being questioned works or attends.
- C. If both parties agree, the Compliance Officer may arrange and facilitate a meeting between the student claiming harassment and the individual accused of harassment to work out a mutual resolution. Such a meeting is not appropriate in circumstances involving sexual violence.

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the Compliance Officer or designee will exercise his/her authority to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the informal complaint. Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, parties may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

All materials generated as part of the informal complaint process will be retained by the Compliance Officers in accordance with the School Board's records retention policy and/or Student Records policy. (See Policy [8310](#) and Policy [8330](#).)

Formal Complaint Procedure

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one of the parties has requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or if the student elects to file a formal complaint initially, the formal complaint process shall be implemented.

A student who believes s/he has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant," may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing, with a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or another District employee who works at another school or at the district level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment and retaliation, timelines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within thirty (30) calendar days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. If a Complainant informs a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, Superintendent, or other District employee, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of harassment or retaliation, that employee must report such information to the Compliance Officer or designee within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process, the Compliance Officer should keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: the identity of the individual believed to have engaged in, or be engaging in, offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the Compliance Officer shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further harassment or retaliation, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or schedule for the Complainant and/or the alleged harasser. In making such a determination, the Compliance Officer should consult the Complainant to assess his/her agreement to the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the Compliance Officer may still take whatever actions s/he deem appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent.

Within two (2) business days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer or a designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the Complainant has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment/retaliation. A Principal will not conduct an investigation unless directed to do so by the Superintendent.

Simultaneously, the Compliance Officer will inform the individual alleged to have engaged in the harassing or retaliatory conduct, hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent," that a complaint has been received. The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and provided with a copy of any relevant administrative guidelines, including the Board's Anti-Harassment policy. The Respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the Compliance Officer or a designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of harassment/retaliation within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the Complainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;

- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other information presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness that is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer or the designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent that summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful harassment as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been subjected to unlawful harassment. The Compliance Officer's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In determining if discriminatory harassment or retaliation occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within ten (10) school days of receiving the report of the Compliance Officer or the designee, the Superintendent must either issue a final decision regarding whether the complaint of harassment has been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and the Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10) school days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent shall issue a final written decision as described above.

A Complainant or Respondent who is dissatisfied with the final decision of the Superintendent may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's final decision.

In an attempt to resolve the complaint, the Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. The decision of the Board will be final.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful harassment/retaliation regardless of whether the student alleging the unlawful harassment/retaliation pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

Privacy/Confidentiality

The School District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. All Complainants proceeding through the formal investigation process will be advised that their identities may be disclosed to the Respondent.

During the course of a formal investigation, the Compliance Officer or his/her designee will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of a harassment investigation is expected not to disclose any information that s/he learns or that s/he provides during the course of the investigation.

All records created as a part of an investigation of a complaint of harassment will be maintained by the Compliance Officer in accordance with the Board's records retention policy. Any records that are considered student education records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or under Michigan's student records law will be maintained in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Federal and State law.

Sanctions and Monitoring

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful harassment by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent further such harassment. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases, where unlawful harassment is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior remedial action has been taken against a member of the School District community, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or Superintendent shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects.

Retaliation

Any act of retaliation against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation is prohibited.

Allegations Constituting Criminal Conduct: Child Abuse/Sexual Misconduct

State law requires any school teacher or school employee who knows or suspects that a student with a disability who is twenty-six (26) years or younger or a student under the age of eighteen (18) has suffered or faces a threat of suffering a physical or mental wound, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of a child to immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to the county children's services agency. If, during the course of a harassment investigation, the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe or suspect that the alleged conduct reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the Complainant, a report of such knowledge must be made in accordance with State law and Board Policy.

Any reports made to a county children's services agency or to local law enforcement shall not terminate the Compliance Officer or a designee's obligation and responsibility to continue to investigate a complaint of harassment. While the Compliance Officer or a designee may work cooperatively with outside agencies to conduct concurrent investigations, in no event shall the harassment investigation be inhibited by the involvement of outside agencies without good cause after consultation with the Superintendent.

Education and Training

In support of this Anti-Harassment Policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of unlawful discriminatory practices. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as information provided regarding the Board's policy and harassment in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.
20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA)
20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.
29 U.S.C. 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

29 U.S.C. 6101, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.
42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.
42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended
42 U.S.C. 1983
42 U.S.C. 2000ff et seq., The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act
29 C.F.R. Part 1635
Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794
The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.
The Handicappers' Civil Rights Act, M.C.L. 37.1101 et seq.
The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, M.C.L. 37.2101, et seq.
Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education, 7-19-01
Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education, 09-2006
National School Boards Association Inquiry and Analysis – May 2008

For further definition and instances that could possibly be construed as: Harassment, see Policy 5517; Hazing, see Policy 5516. M.C.L. 380.1310B (Matt's Safe School Law, PA 241 of 2011) Policies on Bullying, Michigan State Board of Education Model Anti-Bullying Policy, Michigan State Board of Education

ASSAULTIVE BEHAVIOR (See also “Harassment” Section)

Physical or verbal confrontations will not be tolerated under any circumstances in Belding Middle School. Serious attacks causing injury or verbal attacks threatening bodily harm may result in immediate recommendation for expulsion and a police report will be filed. The following will help define assaults; consult the Behavior Consequence Chart for specific sanctions. (See Policy [5610](#))

Fighting - Minor

Minor fights are those characterized by pushing, shoving, name-calling, or encouraging/promoting a fight.

Fighting - Major

Major fights are violent confrontations with hair pulling, punching, kicking and/or biting.

The decision whether a fight is a major or minor offense rests solely with the building administration. Further sanctions may come as a result of students not cooperating with adult intervention.

Physical Assaults

Michigan Public Act 104 of 1999 defines “physical assaults” defined as “Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

Physical Assault Against a school employee, volunteer, or contractor will result in the student being permanently expelled from all Michigan public schools.

By Michigan State Legislature Public Act 102 of 1999 every **student-on-student physical assault** on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or in any school-related vehicle will result in the offending student being expelled up to 180 days.

Verbal Assaults

Public Act 104 of 1999 also calls for mandatory expulsion up to 180 days for verbal assaults against a school employee, volunteer, or contractor. The definition of a verbal assault is the following:

“Any intentional threat or offer to do bodily injury to another by force, under circumstances which create a well-founded fear of actual harm, coupled with the apparent ability to carry out the act if not prevented.”

ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide all students with an environment conducive to the development of their maximum learning potential. We accept the concept of chemical dependency and emotional health problems as treatable conditions and realize that simply excluding those students who are

involved cannot solve the problems in our school. We recognize that there are many contributing factors in problems of this nature.

The district shall initiate intervention strategies via the Student Assistant Program under three circumstances: 1) student seeking help; 2) student exhibiting inappropriate unusual, or atypical behavior; or 3) as disciplinary action where the student has been found breaking rules adopted by the Board of Education. It is the policy of the district to refer students to licensed programs or individuals pursuant to the State of Michigan Public Act 368.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY/ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

- Coaches provide rosters and physicals to ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND/OR SECRETARY
- Everyone is eligible the first week of games
- Sports will have 2-3 checks depending on the length of the season.
- If a student is failing (“F” GRADE) in any class they are ineligible for a period of one full week.
- The check will be on Thursday, but the ineligibility period will begin the following Monday – Sunday
- If a student is ineligible, they will remain ineligible for up to 1 week, or until they obtain a passing grade. If a student improves their grade, then they will become eligible immediately. It will be up to the student to let the Athletic Director know, which is official once the grade is reflected in Skyward.
- If there is only 1 test grade in Skyward at the time of the grade recheck, and no opportunity to obtain a passing grade has been given, the student will become eligible until the next check.
- Students may still practice during the ineligibility period.

BIKES AND MOTORIZED “BIKES”

Bicycles are to be locked in the bike rack on the playground. Motorized bikes are not allowed. BMS is not responsible for damages to, or theft of, bikes brought to school.

BOMB THREATS/ARSON/FALSE ALARMS

The making of bomb threats by students as well as the willful or negligent starting of fires at school or on school property will result in immediate suspension of the student from school for up to ten (10) days pending a formal expulsion hearing with the Board of Education. Further, students are prohibited from causing a false alarm or a false 911 call to be made. All violations will result in a report being filed with appropriate law enforcement officials in addition to school sanctions.

BOOK BAGS/BACK PACKS/GYM BAGS

All bags of this nature are to remain in lockers during the school day. These bags are not to be brought into the classroom as they represent a hindrance to movement in the classrooms as well as in the halls and also represent a potential safety concern in emergency situations.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR & FOOD

Students will act respectfully and show manners when in the cafeteria. Loud voices, eating when not seated, not cleaning up trash, and disrespect for any staff member monitoring the cafeteria will not be tolerated and will result in a referral to the office and possible cleaning of tables and/or floors or lunch detention time.

Identification codes are issued from the office of Food Director for every BMS student at the beginning of the school year for food other than the vending machines. Those students who continually forget their number may have to wait until the line clears in order to purchase food.

Food and drink may only be consumed in the cafeteria or in a classroom by special permission.

CAMPUS SECURITY

For the safety of our students and staff, **ALL** visitors (even parents and former students) must stop and register at the front office and receive a visitor badge. This badge must be worn at all times while in the building and is returned to the front office before exiting. The administration also reserves the right to deny a visitor access to the building if it will be disruptive to staff or students.

PROCEDURES FOR CONCERN

<p>Students – do you have a concern with a teacher?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Parents – Do you have a concern about one of your child’s classes?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>Discuss the concern with that person respectfully and privately. If the issue is not resolved</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>A classroom concern is to be discussed with the teacher. If it is not resolved involve one of the building administrators in the discussion.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>Involve your parents in the discussion with your teacher. If the issue is still not resolved.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>If a parent still has a concern after speaking first with the teacher and then the building administrator then the parent may direct their concerns to the superintendent of schools.</p>
<p>Involve a building administrator in the discussion</p>	

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Cheating is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated. Cheating is defined as - but not limited to - the following: copying another student’s work; looking at another student’s paper/test; taking the teacher’s answer key; talking during testing; sharing work; using a “crib” sheet; and writing answers so they can be seen during testing.

Plagiarism is taking someone’s written (or oral) words and using them as your own without acknowledging the source for the words. This includes taking the work of others from the Internet. Plagiarism is unethical and against the law.

CHROMEBOOK 1:1 DEVICE POLICY

Students will be assigned a Chromebook at the beginning of the school year. The following is the process of how students will have a device during school hours.

- At the beginning of the school day, before school starts, students will go to their 6th period class to get their ASSIGNED Chromebook.
- IF a student arrives late to school, then they can get their device during a class switch/PASSING TIME, NOT DURING CLASS.
- Students will check-in the device to their 6th period class computer cart before dismissal.
- Teachers may assign classwork that requires a device to go home with students. An individual student that needs to use a device at home for instructional purposes will follow the process below.
 - The student will request a Device Travel Slip and complete the questionnaire which includes teacher approval. That form will be placed in the students computer cart spot.
 - In the event that a student does not return a device in the outlined timeline from the Device Travel Slip, or the device is not ready for use in classes (charged/broken etc.), then the student could have an offense recorded in their student record and could receive disciplinary action.

CIGARETTES/TOBACCO PRODUCTS/ LIGHTERS/ ETC.

Students – and adults - are not to possess or use cigarettes, tobacco products, lighters, matches, etc., at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, or within the Drug Free School zone (an area within 500 feet of school property). This includes any nicotine based product (e-cigarettes, gum, patches etc.)

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5512

CLASSROOM RULES

Teachers will distribute classroom/team rules. All students must abide by the rules set forth in the classroom as well as the consequences attached to the rules. Students may need to adjust from teacher to teacher on specific rules and requirements.

CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

Although many parents would love to observe their children in the classroom without the children knowing, it is disruptive to the class to have parents peeking through the door window: children usually discover the parent and are distracted from their school activities.

Parents are urged to make plans with the classroom teacher for a more straightforward visit of at least half an hour. It's a great way to really see how the child functions among his/her peers. Please sign in at the office before proceeding to the classroom for your scheduled visit.

* Further information can be found in Board Policy 9150

CLOSING/CANCELLATION

The decision to close or cancel school rests with the Superintendent of Schools. School closings or cancellations will be broadcast on all area radio and television stations. **In the event of school closing or cancellation, all middle school extra-curricular events, sporting events and practices might be canceled.**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Please telephone the school immediately if your child is diagnosed as having a contagious disease. District personnel will issue the appropriate letters to the parties that have been exposed.

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 8450 and 8453

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Prohibition of the use or threat of inflicting physical pain in the Belding Area Schools does not give license to students to defy authority or disobey rules and regulations. Use of physical contact is still appropriate to guide a student to a desired destination (principal's office, etc.) or to handle an act of insubordination.

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5630

DIRECTORY INFORMATION (RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION ON STUDENTS)

Each year the Superintendent shall provide public notice to students and their parents of the District's intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information." The Board designates as student "directory information":

- A. a student's name;
- B. major field of study;
- C. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- D. height and/or weight, if member of an athletic team which requires disclosure to participate;
- E. awards received;
- F. grade placement;
- G. honor rolls;

- H. scholarships;
- I. school photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs.

The Board designates school-assigned e-mail accounts as "directory information" for the limited purpose of facilitating students' registration for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes and for inclusion in internal e-mail address books. School-assigned e-mail accounts shall not be released as directory information beyond this/these limited purpose(s) and to any person or entity but the specific online educational service provider and internal users of the District's Education Technology.

Parents and eligible students may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the District within fourteen (14) days after receipt of the District's public notice.

The District commonly uses student directory information for the following purposes:

- A. School yearbook
- B. Programs for athletic events, musical/drama presentations, graduation and/or award ceremonies
- C. Academic Honor Roll recognition
- D. School and/or district newsletters
- E. School and/or district web site/social media
- F. Project Graduation

Parents may elect not to have his/her child's directory information disclosed for one or more of the listed uses by completing the opt-out form below and returning it to the child's school within the first 30 days of the school year. This form is also available at the school office.

Directory Information Opt-Out Form

Student Name: _____ School Year: _____
 School Name: _____ Grade: _____

I request that my child's directory information not be included in publications listed below:

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Further information: Parents and public have the right to Inspect Educational Material and Review, request amendments to Student Educational Records. See Board Policy 2416, 5780, 9130, 8330.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS/PROCEDURES

BMS teachers are expected to create a positive classroom atmosphere conducive to learning and maintaining order. Individual teachers will distribute and post the rules they have established, and teachers will handle many discipline situations in their rooms. Every effort will be made to communicate with parents about disciplinary action; however, it must be kept in mind that one of the primary objectives of BMS is to instill a sense of responsibility in students. Students are expected to communicate with parents regarding the issuance of disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions include - but are not limited to - the following: detentions (AM or PM), written assignments, cafeteria duty, confinement to the office, learning and/or behavior contracts, in-school and out-of-school suspension from school.

DISRESPECT/FAILURE TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

It is important that all individuals in the middle school show courtesy and respect. When students "talk back," use a disrespectful or sarcastic tone, or refuse to follow directions given by an adult in the building, measures will be taken to correct that behavior.

DRESS CODE

The Student Dress code, and the issue of student dress, are not questions of morality or decency; rather it is recognized that student attire does assist in establishing and maintaining the educational tone of the building as well as helping students in creating a positive, upbeat feeling about themselves and others. Students are expected to dress in neat, clean, safe attire. Any student attire that has a disruptive influence on the educational environment is immodest, unsanitary, or which deviates from the accepted standards of the community and this school, is prohibited. As new clothing styles arrive, the administration will notify parents and students if a given style is inappropriate at school. The following is provided as a guideline for parents and students:

1. Sleeveless shirts are permitted; however, shoulder straps must be at least 2.5 inches wide (no spaghetti straps). Additionally, the shirt should be high enough under the arm area that underwear is not visible and/or bare skin cannot be seen.
2. Tops that permit or promote a bare midriff or any tops that promote a less-than-modest image are prohibited.
3. Clothing that is derogatory to any group of people or is a "put down" to others (including the person wearing the clothing) is prohibited.
4. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length.
5. Clothing that permits or promotes the exposure of underwear, boxer shorts, briefs, shorts, or other undergarments is prohibited.
6. Saggy, baggy, oversized, and tear away pants are prohibited. Pants are to be belted or secured at the waist.
7. See-through clothing is prohibited.
8. Footwear must be worn at all times
9. Jackets, coats, and gloves are not to be worn in classes. The only exception is a coat may be worn when teachers grant permission.
10. Students are allowed to wear hats during school. Hats must be free of offensive, demeaning, or inappropriate messages. Hats that cause a disruption to the learning process or are deemed to have images/writing of inappropriate content will be held by administration until the end of the day and must not return to school. Continued use of this item could lead to disciplinary action by BMS Administration. Students are allowed to wear hoods during school hours. Teachers may request a student lower their hood to inspect for electronic devices such as headphones/earbuds.
11. **All** attire including clothing, patches, buttons, and jewelry may not advertise or promote the use of beer, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or drug paraphernalia.
12. **All** attire including clothing, patches, buttons, and jewelry may not display any offensive, lewd or vulgar language, ideas, or symbols. Clothing with words, numbers, or expressions such as "420," or other similar terms, inappropriate references or vulgarities is not to be worn to school. It will be the judgment of the administration whether attire is vulgar or inappropriate.
13. Clothing that has been excessively mutilated or torn is prohibited. **Rips, tears, or holes above fingertip length in jeans or pants must not reveal bare skin or undergarments (leggings worn underneath jeans or pants will be permitted).**
14. Students may not have inappropriate tattoos or display changes to their appearance that may be distracting or disruptive to the educational environment. Students with excessive piercings will be expected to remove them during school hours or use a clear retainer.
15. No spike wristbands, neckwear or similar items will be worn.
16. Students cannot wear or carry blankets or flags during instructional time.

Students who violate this policy will be immediately required to change into appropriate clothing or call parents to obtain suitable attire. Should the student be unable to secure suitable attire, the office will lend acceptable clothing for the day if appropriate sizes are available. Students will serve ISS until suitable clothing can be obtained.

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the entire school community.

For purposes of this policy, "drugs" shall mean:

- A. all dangerous controlled substances as so designated and prohibited by Michigan statute;
- B. all chemicals which release toxic vapors;
- C. all alcoholic beverages;
- D. any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy;
- E. "look-alikes";
- F. performance-enhancing drugs as determined annually by the Department of Community Health;
- G. any other illegal substance so designated and prohibited by law.

In accordance with Federal and State law, the Board hereby establishes a "Drug-Free School Zone" that extends 1000 feet from the boundary of any school property. The Board prohibits the use, possession, sale, concealment, delivery, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia at any time on District property, within the Drug-Free School Zone, or at any District-related event.

Furthermore, the Superintendent shall take the necessary steps so that an individual eighteen (18) years of age or older who knowingly sells, delivers or distributes controlled substances so designated and prohibited by Michigan statute within the Drug-Free School Zone to another person is prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

The Superintendent shall prepare guidelines for the identification, amelioration, and regulation of drug use in the schools. Such guidelines shall:

- A. emphasize the prevention of drug use;
- B. provide for a comprehensive, age-appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program which:
 1. addresses the legal, social, psychological, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use;
 2. provides information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs, performance-enhancing drugs, and alcohol;
 3. meets the minimal objectives as stated in the essential performance objectives for health education as established by the State's Department of Education;
- C. include a statement to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession, sale, and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful;
- D. provide standards of conduct that are applicable to all students which clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, sale, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as a part of any school activity;
- E. include a clear statement that disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on students who violate the school standards of conduct and a description of those sanctions;

The sanctions may include, together with punitive action, voluntary referral to appropriate persons or agencies for screening and assessment. Such referral may only be made to qualified and properly licensed individuals or programs.
- F. provide information about any drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and reentry programs available to students and provide procedures to direct students and their parents to the appropriate programs;
- G. require that all parents and students be given a copy of the standards of conduct regarding the unlawful possession, sale, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students;
- H. require the notification to parents and students that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory;
- I. provide a biennial review of the school district's program to determine its effectiveness and implement changes as needed and to ensure that disciplinary sanctions are consistently enforced;

- J. establish means for dealing with students suspected of drug use or suspected of possessing, selling, or distributing drugs in school and ensure that the District's policy and administrative guidelines on Search and Seizure AG [5771](#) and Policy [5771](#) and Suspension and Expulsion AG [5610](#) and Policy [5610](#) are complied with fully.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines necessary to implement this policy.

*Further information can be found in Board Policies 2431D, 5530, 5532, 5771, and 5330.

DUE PROCESS

Every effort will be made by the administration and faculty to resolve problems with effective utilization of school district resources in cooperation with the student, parent(s) or guardian. Students will be given the right to a hearing with the appropriate administrator to answer charges of wrong doing against the student to hear evidence being used on the charges, and to present witnesses as well as evidence the student would like considered in the matter. If requested, the parent will also be granted the same rights of the students.

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5611

ELASTIC CLAUSE

The following rules, regulations, and procedures are guidelines for student conduct. It is impossible to cover every possible action that interferes with student learning and safety. Therefore, conduct that deliberately interferes with the educational process, safety of staff or students, or violates accepted and ordinary standards of conduct is also prohibited even though not specifically addressed in this handbook. The degree of severity of this misconduct, as well as the accumulative effect of the misconduct, will determine whether the offense warrants detention, suspension, expulsion or referral to a law enforcement agency. Please take the time to read through this handbook and understand it in its entirety

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES/ CELLPHONES

Cellular telephones may only be used by students outside of regular school hours. Devices should be put in a student locker inside their backpack or purse when the student arrives at school. Any cellular telephones causing a disturbance will be confiscated. All ringers/auditory alarms must be turned off during school hours.

In no case will any student utilize a personal communication device in a manner that would allow for an unfiltered connection to the Internet. Video/camera devices, provided by the school or a personal device given permission to use by the school, are not to be used in an inappropriate manner or venue. Any violation will result in confiscation and/or possible disciplinary action. Students must receive permission prior to taking video or pictures of another person at school.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/ CD PLAYERS/ MP3 PLAYERS / IPODS/ HANDHELD GAMES/HEADPHONES

Students assume responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen devices. Headphones/Earbuds use will NOT be allowed in the hallways during passing time or in bathrooms as communication with students and staff is imperative to safe and secure buildings. Headphones/Earbuds use prevent such communication. Devices should be placed in the student's locker and backpack/purse when the student arrives at school and cannot be removed until the school day is over, BMS administration directs student to do so, or the student leaves the school.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency room exit and shelter procedures are placed in each classroom. Students are to become familiar with the procedures. Fire and tornado drills will be held periodically to familiarize everyone with what to do in the event of an emergency of this nature.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (CONTINUED)

Tornado Watches and Warnings

- A. The District shall follow procedures which provide maximum protection and safety of students in the event of potentially dangerous or hazardous weather conditions, outbreaks of communicable disease, environmental threats, or threats of violence against the school. Existing conditions and circumstances at a given time will dictate the actions to be taken by school authorities.
- D. During either a watch or a warning, students will be released to adults other than their parents with permission only.

ENDANGERMENT

Students are prohibited from creating a situation that could cause harm to themselves or to others. Such behaviors include - but are not limited to - throwing objects, tripping, and shoving. Students violating this rule will be subject to discipline based on the specific act.

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUILDING

Students must follow school "Sign Out" procedures in order to leave the building. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. Any attempt to leave the building through an unauthorized door, to prop open an exterior door or to let someone in an unauthorized door will result in at least one day of suspension. Local authorities are contacted anytime a student leaves the building without parental approval or permission.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual origination or transgender identity), disability, age (excepts as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes").
- Any question concerning Title VI or Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin and on the basis of sex, respectively) or questions related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap) should be directed to the district's Coordinator (see below).
- If any person believes that the Belding Area School District or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulation of (1) Title VI of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, (2) Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, and (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he/she may bring forward a complaint which shall be referred as a grievance to the local civil rights coordinator at the following address:

Civil Rights Coordinator – High School Principal
Belding Area Schools
850 Hall Street
Belding, Michigan 48809
(616) 794-4700

Civil Rights Coordinator – Ellis Elementary Principal
Belding Area Schools
850 Hall Street
Belding, Michigan 48809
(616) 794-4700

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5723

EXPLOSIVES

Students shall not possess any type of explosive on school property or at school-sponsored activities. All violations will result in a report being filed with appropriate law enforcement officials.

The possession or use of smoke bombs, fireworks, firecrackers, or ammunition, etc., will result in suspension from school. First offense will result in five days suspension; second offense, 10 days; expulsion the third.

The possession or placement of a bomb or bomb-type device will result in immediate suspension from school for up to ten (10) days pending a formal expulsion hearing with the Board of Education.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS, PRIVACY ACT, and RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Each year the district will provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as “directory information.” The Board designates as student “directory information” the following: a student’s name; address; telephone number; photograph; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; height and weight (if a member of an athletic team); dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; or any other information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed.

Parents and adult students may refuse to allow the district to disclose any or all of such directory information about written notification to the district within twenty days after receipt of the district’s public notice.

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 8330

FIELD TRIPS & END OF THE YEAR PICNIC

To be eligible to participate in any field trips and the end of the year picnic students must meet the following criteria as these events are celebrations of academic and social success.

	<i><u>To be Eligible</u></i>	<i><u>2nd Chance Eligible*</u></i>	<i><u>Ineligible</u></i>
Attendance	Less than 15 absences	15-20 Absences	20+ Absences
Discipline	Less than 22 Hours	22-35 Hours	35+ Hours
Academics	Must pass 80% of Classes		

*Students that qualify for a 2nd Chance will be given a worksheet to be completed and signed by parents and teachers.

FOOD/ SNACKS/DRINK OUTSIDE CAFETERIA

No food or beverages may be consumed outside the cafeteria during school hours, except on special occasions in a classroom. Glass bottles are not to be brought to school. Vending machine beverages purchased but not consumed must be capped and sealed until the appropriate time and place. No food or drink may be consumed in the playground area during school. **Energy drinks are prohibited at BMS. They are not allowed in the cafeteria or to be stored in lockers.** Students will be allowed to carry water bottles with them throughout the day in order to stay hydrated.

GANG RELATED ACTIVITY

Any activity related to gangs - including but not limited to - the demonstration or use of hand signs, display of colors, pins, graffiti, or recruitment of other students is strictly prohibited. Violence related to gang activity will be grounds for referral for an expulsion hearing.

GLASS CONTAINERS, BOTTLES, PERFUMES & COLOGNES

Glass containers, bottles, perfumes and colognes in the building are prohibited for safety reasons.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS

Michigan Merit Curriculum Guidelines for High School Credit and Graduation

Please find information pertaining to the Michigan High School Graduation Requirements listed below. As always, you are welcome to contact your child's school with any questions you may have or visit <http://www.mi.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-38924---,00.html> for more information regarding Michigan's graduation requirements.

Earning High School Credit:

A credit is a completed unit of study. Credits may be earned through successful coursework (59.5% or higher grade in course). This grade will be based at least in part on student performance on subject area assessments, which measure the extent to which the student meets state credit expectations and guidelines. Students may also potentially earn credit by testing out, taking advanced placement courses, on-line classes, dual enrollment and "related" courses (vocational/career tech. courses etc).

8th Grade Algebra I Credit Requirement:

A student must earn at least a cumulative grade of C- (69.5%) over the course of 2 semesters including the mid-term and exit exams to earn high school credit for Algebra I. High school credit may also be earned by testing out of the course by scoring at least 79.5 (B-) on the MDE end of course examination.

8th Grade Spanish I Requirement:

A student must earn at least a cumulative grade of C- (69.5%) over the course of 2 semesters including the mid-term and exit exams to earn high school credit for Spanish I. High school credit may also be earned by testing out of the course by scoring at least 79.5% (B-) on the end of course examination(s).

Possible High School Credit Options at BMS

- Spanish (using criteria above)
- Algebra I (using criteria above)
- Honors English 9

Testing Out of High School Courses:

A student who wishes to test out of a class must fill out a request prior to the deadline of June 1st for the following school year. Applications for testing out will be available in the Main Office. The application requires a parent signature. If a student decides to attempt to test out of a class, a syllabus and a textbook (if utilized) will be provided by the appropriate BHS department. At no time, should a student expect to receive instruction. Testing out will occur during a several day time span during the weeks prior to school beginning in the fall. Students must earn a minimum of a B- (79.5%) to be considered successful.

Personal Curriculum Options:

Basic information is listed below. For more details refer to Belding Area Schools Board Policy 7113, <http://www.mi.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-38924---,00.html> or contact a high school counselor at (616) 794-4900.

- **Four Reasons for a student to request a PC**
 - **To add additional math, English, science or world language courses.**
 - **To modify credit requirements because he or she has transferred from out of state or from a non-public school.**
 - **To modify the credit requirements based on a student's disability.**
- **Subjects that cannot be modified**
 - **English Language Arts**
 - **Science**
 - **World Languages**
 - **Civics**
 - **Online Learning Experience**

Exception – Students with a disability and transfer students

HONOR ROLL

Students who meet the requirements for the Honor Roll will have their names published at the end of each marking period. The Honor Roll will consist of any student receiving 2.7 honor points or more.

Grade	Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

All BMS students will be issued picture student ID cards. The cards are bar-coded for use in the Media Center and for purchase of meals in the cafeteria. Students must have their ID cards with them at all times. They also must show their ID cards to enter Activity Nights. Lost or stolen cards may be replaced in the office at a cost of \$5.

ILLNESS/INJURY/CLINIC USE

Students who become ill during the day are to report to the office so care may be given and a record maintained. Calls home for illness may not be made from classrooms. All injuries are to be reported immediately to the clinic or office. Office personnel will assist the student and evaluate the condition. If school personnel feel the student's condition warrants, his/her parent or other person listed on the emergency card will be contacted. Students who claim illness or injury and leave the building without the knowledge or permission of the office will be considered truant. Students who go to the restroom rather than report to the office for personal or medical reasons will also be considered truant.

*Further information see Board Policy 5340A.

IMPEDING AN INVESTIGATION

A student shall not refuse to cooperate with administrators and/or teaching staff investigating a possible violation of this Student Handbook, other codes of conduct, and/or building rules. No student shall make false statements or give false evidence to administrators and/or professional staff. A student shall not refuse to testify or otherwise cooperate with school personnel in any disciplinary proceeding. Students who voluntarily or knowingly impeded/ interfere with an investigation are subject to school consequences including suspension.

LATE WORK AND RETAKES

Students are expected to complete work that is of high quality and turned in on time. However, if a student does not complete an assignment on time, the work is still important and should be turned in. Late work for a unit will not be allowed to be turned in for credit once the final assessment is given for that particular unit. When retakes are available, they must be completed no later than one week after the original assessment is graded and handed back to students. Teachers will have a process for students to follow in order to be eligible for the retake.

*Further information can be found under Board Policy 5200

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The Library/Media Center (LMC) is available to BMS students. Students who violate LMC rules face the loss of LMC privileges. Students who lose or destroy material or equipment are responsible for the cost of replacement or will be fined the cost of damaged materials. All fines, fees, and overdue obligations must be met during the school year to be eligible to attend activities. Two weeks prior to the close of the LMC year-end, students must have all fines, fees and overdue obligations met and paid to be eligible to attend end of the year activities including the school picnic.

LOCKERS

Lockers are provided as a convenience to students and remain the property and under control and supervision of the school district at all times. Lockers may be examined periodically (or as needed) to locate contraband items. Stickers must not be placed in lockers, and lockers must also meet criteria of Student Dress Code in regard to appropriateness of inside locker decorations. Padlocks are not to be used. Students who willfully or negligently damage or misuse lockers will be responsible for the damages and could lose locker privileges. Students must use their assigned lockers unless the office grants a change. Students are not permitted to share lockers.

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5771

MAKEUP WORK

Students with excused absences will be allowed two days for each day of excused absence to complete work missed. It is the responsibility of the student to ask for the missed work. Requests for work for absent students may be made in the office in advance.

*Further information can be found under Board Policy 5200

RETESTING

Students who fail a summative assessment:

- Students who fail (59% or lower) a summative test can be required to re-test. (Teacher or Student initiated)
- Students will complete the “Re-Test Checklist” to review areas of the unit in which they did not fully understand prior to a re-test.
- Students will turn-in the “Re-Test Checklist” before the re-take occurs to verify that all of the relearning activities have been completed and that parent notification has occurred

Students who pass a summative assessment:

- Students who pass the summative test and are not satisfied with their learning results may retest - one retest per summative assessment. Passing percentages are set by department. (Student initiated)
- Students who have completed all pre-assessment work on time (daily work, homework, etc.) and do NOT have any **unexcused** absences during the unit are eligible for a retest option to improve the intended learning outcomes.
 - Unexcused Absences are defined on page 2 of this handbook
- Students will complete the “Re-Test Checklist” to review areas of the unit in which they did not fully understand prior to a re-test.
- Students will turn-in the “Re-Test Checklist” before the re-take occurs to verify that all of the relearning activities have been completed and that parent notification has occurred

Exceptions for student who pass or fail a summative assessment and wish to retest:

- **Students perceived as not taking the first assessment seriously so they can re-test will be referred to the administration and may be considered as violating our Academic Integrity policy.**
 - Parents will be notified by the classroom teacher.
- Students who pass a summative assessment and have mastered the content will not be allowed to re-test. Mastery is defined by department.
- If a response on the “Re-Test Checklist” states that the student cannot re-test, then the student will be unable to re-test.

Re-testing must be completed within the timeline established by the teacher (located on the checklist).

- The newest score on the test will be recorded.

MEDICATION

Students are not allowed to carry or dispense any type of medication including over-the-counter medication to themselves or others. **This includes Midol, Motrin, or Tylenol-type drugs.**

A parent or guardian must bring any medicine to be given at school to the front office. This medicine must be in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician specifically identifying the contents by name, dosage, etc. All medication shall be clearly identified on the outside of the vial or package, and the medication will be stored in a secured area. School personnel will administer the medication. Students who must carry an inhaler with them at all times must have a completed “Asthma Action Plan” on record in the office. The parent(s)/Guardian(s) request/permission and a physician’s instruction for administration shall be renewed every school year.

Students who use any medication, stimulate, or depressant – prescribed or not prescribed – and do not follow these guidelines will be subject to the discipline outlined in our drug policy (see the “Drug and Substance Abuse Policy” section of this handbook.)

*Further information can be found in Board Policy 5330

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The Belding National Junior Honor Society operates under a set of predetermined policies, procedures and chapter bylaws set forth by the National Junior Honor Society. Selection into the chapter is based upon service, leadership, character, and scholarship criteria.

OBSCENE, FOUL OR UNACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE AND GESTURES

Obscene, profane, foul or unacceptable language and gestures are not tolerated at BMS. The use of these will result in disciplinary actions. Obscenities directed at staff or adults will be dealt with in a severe manner.

ONLINE HANDLE POLICY

During the school day, students will likely engage in different online activities led by school staff. Examples include Kahoot, GimKit or Prodigy. To be safe, responsive to learning needs and secure when interacting online, when a username or handle is not automatically created by the program administrator, students should meet the following expectations:

- Include First name and Last name combination
- Pictures or Avatars used need to be appropriate and cannot imitate staff or other students
- Avoid private information such as DOB, ID number or other personal information
- Avoid nicknames, aliases or non-related words, phrases or messages
 - Appropriate Example : JohnSmith001 or SmithJ001
 - Inappropriate Example: BlackKnight2010

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

An opportunity will be provided each day for students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Students are not required to participate, but must be respectful of those who wish to participate during this time.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

In order to maintain a business-like atmosphere, public displays of affection - including but not limited to - hand holding, kissing, and romantic hugs will not be allowed. Engagement in sexual behavior or acts on school property is grounds for suspension and/or expulsion.

QUESTIONING BY LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL OR PROTECTIVE SERVICES AUTHORITIES

The administration will make every reasonable effort to notify parents or legal guardians before permitting the interrogation or detainment of a student by law enforcement personnel. Law enforcement authorities may not question students at school without parent permission. If law enforcement officials find it necessary to interview a student during school hours and the parent requests, one of the building principals may represent the parent to insure the student's rights are represented. By state law, Protective Services personnel have the authority to interview students without parental permission.

RESPONSIBLE THINKING PROCESS RTP

Belding Middle School is a Responsible Thinking Process (RTP) school. This means that we believe all students are responsible for their own actions and must be taught to respect the rights of others. This means they have to learn how to think of ways to get what they want while, at the same time, respect the rights of others in the school. Teachers have a right to teach and students have a right to learn in a safe environment. Our school strives to create an atmosphere conducive to learning utilizing the principles of safety, pride, dignity, courtesy, and respect in order to meet the educational and development needs of all students. None of the students have a right to disrupt at school, regardless of where they are, especially if they are preventing other students from learning or are threatening the safety and rights of others.

No student is allowed to disrupt in the classroom or anywhere else in the building. When they do they will be asked to think about what they are doing and compare their action to the rules or standards of the classroom (or wherever they are at – for example the cafeteria, gymnasium, library, etc.). If the student persists in breaking the rules they have lost their right to be where they are and will then be assigned to the Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) where they will stay until they indicate they are willing to follow the rules and return to class. The RTC teacher will assist the student to create a plan which the student will use to negotiate with their teacher for their return to the classroom where the original disruption occurred. Students are permitted to go to all other classes that day and all other areas where they've acted responsible - such as the library, cafeteria, and recess. The negotiation of the plan between teacher and student is a very important part of the Responsible Thinking Process.

Students who do commit major infractions will be dealt with according to the handbook. BMS will continue to use the RTC room for infractions that require in-school suspension. We need to be clear and upfront that we will **not** tolerate disruptions in the RTC room. Disruptive students in RTC/ISS will be given one chance to own and correct their behavior. If they disrupt RTC/ISS one more time they will be sent home that day. A parent/student conference with the administrator will be required before the child may return to school. When a student reaches 5 visits to the RTC room a parent/student conference with the administrator will be required before the child may return to school.

When a student disrupts in school the following process will be followed:

If a student disrupts the classroom, the teacher will initiate the following RTP Steps:

Step #1: When a student disrupts, the teacher will ask them the following RTP questions. The expected student responses are in parenthesis.

1. What are you doing? (student admits mistake)
2. What are the rules? (student must be respectful of others)
3. What should you be doing?
4. What will happen if you disrupt again? (Go to the RTC)

Step #2: If the student disrupts again during the same class period, the teacher will ask these questions:

1. What are you doing? (student admits mistake)
2. What did you say would happen the next time you disrupted? (Go to the RTC)

3. Where do you need to go now? (Go to the RTC)

Step #3: When a student won't follow the process and refuses to fully cooperate the teacher will ask the following questions:

1. Do you want to work on this or not? If the student answers "Yes" teacher should go back to Step #1 and ask the questions. If the student continues to avoid dealing with the teacher, the teacher will say: "You have chosen to go to RTC."
If the student still fails to comply, teacher will contact administrative staff for assistance.

When a student reports to RTC the following will take place:

The student will write a plan which identifies alternate behaviors which would be acceptable in a classroom setting. The student will review this plan with the classroom teacher to negotiate their return to class. Students will not be allowed to return to that class until the student and the teacher agree on the plan. If a student fails to negotiate and return a plan within 3 days, the student will be placed on OSS until a parent/student meeting takes place. If a sub is in the room and the student has not negotiated their plan the student will remain in RTC for that class period until the plan is negotiated.

Students will follow the following process for each trip made to the RTC room.

- 1st trip – write a plan, have a parent sign the plan at home, negotiate the plan with the teacher, and bring the plan back to the RTC coordinator
- 2nd trip – write a plan, student calls home, have a parent sign the plan at home, negotiate the plan with the teacher, and bring the plan back to the RTC coordinator
- 3rd trip - write a plan, student calls home, have a parent sign the plan at home, negotiate the plan with the teacher and bring the plan back to the RTC coordinator
- 4th trip - write a plan, student calls home, have a parent sign the plan at home, negotiate the plan with the teacher, and bring the plan back to the RTC coordinator. Letter is sent home to parent regarding 4th trip to RTC room
- 5th trip – Suspension until parent brings the student to school for a meeting with the administrator and teacher(s).

Any behavior in RTC/ISS room which is disruptive will result in an out of school suspension until a parent/student meeting is held with the administrator to create a plan about the student's return to school.

RETENTION POLICY

Students who fail two or more core academic classes in two or more marking periods may be recommended for retention the following school year. The final decision to retain will rest with a team consisting of the student's parents, teachers, principal, and counselor.

Eighth grade students must earn a minimum of 24 credits in their 8th grade year to progress to the ninth grade. Each core and encore class is worth one credit each. Students who fail to earn 24 credits may be recommended for retention based on factors that may include teacher recommendations, parent request, and The Light's Retention Scale. Guided Independent Reading grades will not factor into the 24 credits required. The final decision to retain will rest with a team consisting of the student's parents, teachers, principal, and counselor.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

To the greatest extent possible, all teacher/class requests submitted last spring were honored if submitted in a timely manner. The master schedule and individual student schedules are in delicate balance. Changes in student schedules will be kept to a minimum. Any request for such change **must be made in writing to the building principal with parent approval within 3 days of the 1st day of class.** Forms are available in the office. Those requests will be addressed on an individual basis.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

All school property is held in public trust by the Board of Education. Use of such property, including - but not limited to - school lockers and student desks is provided for student convenience. The Board makes notice of its intent to retain joint control over such property provided for student use. Further, the Board expressly maintains its right of access to that property.

For more information, see Board Policy 5771

SIGN OUT PROCEDURE

If a student must leave school during regular school hours the student must have prior parental permission and must check out through the office prior to leaving. If a student must leave school during school hours because of illness, he/she shall report to an adult employee in the office. The parent/guardian or the emergency contact person shall be contacted by the school before the student is sent home. Failure to follow this expectation will result in disciplinary action. Local authorities are contacted anytime a student leaves the building without parental approval or permission.

SKATEBOARDS/ROLLER SKATES/SHOES WITH WHEELS

For the safety of all students, skateboards, roller skates, and shoes such as “Heelys” with built-in wheels are not to be used in school or on school grounds. Wheels are to be removed from Heelys shoes before wearing them to school. Violations will result in confiscation and/or possible disciplinary action in repeat cases.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER/BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

BMS values its dedicated substitute teachers who have a very difficult task. To support our substitutes, any student who is sent out of a classroom by a substitute teacher will receive disciplinary action.

TARDINESS

Students will be issued 30 minutes of lunch detention for three unexcused tardies and subsequent tardies. The classroom teacher will handle tardiness issues; however, chronic tardiness will be referred to the office and will result in this late time being made up during lunch or after school. Chronic tardiness may also result in the student losing extra-curricular privileges including field trips and the school picnic.

*Further information can be found under Board Policy 5200.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE POLICY - VIOLATION

Technology is an increasingly important part of a student’s education. Belding’s Electronic Information Access and Use Policy specifies the rights and responsibilities associated with the proper use and care of the school’s very expensive technological hardware and software. Besides being a tremendous asset, the use of technology also lends itself to special degree of misuse. Misuse may take the form of questionable ethical practices, criminal activity or vandalism. Students will be disciplined for violation of the policy based on both the intent and end result of their actions. Any student who intentionally removes security from a school technology device, gives out their password to others, tampers with a school technology device or uses a school technology device inappropriately will receive a minimum of a one-day suspension.

TEXTBOOKS/CHROMEBOOK

Students are issued textbooks for some classes, a Chromebook at the beginning of the year. The teacher will record the inventory number of the textbook/Chromebook and its condition. Students are responsible for taking care of these items issued to them and will be fined for undo wear or charged the cost of replacement if the book/device is found to be unusable or lost. Students are asked to keep textbooks covered during the year.

TIMES – SCHOOL DAY

Every effort is made to open the building by 7:10 AM, and students should not arrive before that time. In the afternoon, students are to leave the building within 15 minutes after the bell unless directly supervised by an adult or attending a sanctioned school club, activity, or sport. **Athletes waiting for practice will remain in the area designated by the office while waiting for practice.**

SEMESTER GRADING

Each eighteen-week semester will be divided into two nine-week marking periods. These two marking periods, and a final exam (if given), will be averaged together to determine a final semester grade. Official grade point averages will be determined by the marking-period grade. Report cards will be issued after each marking period.

VALUABLES/PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are not to bring non-essential valuables to school. The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal property that is brought to school.

VOLUNTEERS AND CHAPERONES (See School Board Policy 2112)

Belding Area Schools encourages parents and community members to volunteer in the schools. A yearly background check must be completed for volunteers/chaperones to ensure the safety of all students. Individuals chaperoning an activity or field trip must be 18 years old and at least one year out of high school. (Example - a senior cannot graduate and then chaperone an end of the year field trip one week later)

VISITORS

BMS is unable to accept student visitors during the school day. BMS allows only Belding Middle School and sixth grade Faith Community Elementary students to attend Activity Nights. Students may not bring younger siblings.

WEAPONS (See School Board Policy 5772)

The Board of Education prohibits students from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon in any setting that is under the control and supervision of the District for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the District including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the District, a school-sponsored event, or in a District vehicle without the permission of the Superintendent.

The term "weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.

This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish instructional programs on weapons which require students to immediately report knowledge of weapons and threats of violence by students and staff to the building principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

The Superintendent will refer any student who violates this policy to the student's parents or guardians and to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Policy exceptions include:

- A. weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel;
- B. items pre-approved by the building principal as part of a class or individual presentation under adult supervision, if used for the purpose and in the manner approved; (Working firearms and any ammunition will never be approved as part of a presentation.)

- C. theatrical props used in appropriate settings.

This policy will be published annually in all District student and staff handbooks. Publication is not a precondition to enforcement of this policy.

M.C.L. 380.1311, 380.1312(1), 380.1313
20 U.S.C. 7151

THIS INFO IS LISTED ABOVE UNDER ANTI-HARASSMENT

Helpful Community Resource Telephone Numbers:

Community Mental Health:	(616) 527-1790
Youth Service Bureau	(616) 527-5332
DHS Protective Services	
Child abuse and Neglect	(616) 527-5252
Health Department	(616) 527-5339

AGAIN, IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS THE AUTHORITY TO QUESTION BEHAVIOR OF ANY FORM WITHIN THE BUILDING, ON SCHOOL GROUNDS, AND AT SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES AND DEAL WITH BEHAVIOR ACCORDINGLY EVEN IF THAT BEHAVIOR IS NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IN THIS HANDBOOK.

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, THE PENALTIES FOR ALL PROHIBITED ACTS RANGE FROM ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTION TO PERMANENT EXPULSION, DEPENDING ON A NUMBER OF FACTORS, INCLUDING; THE SEVERITY OF THE CONDUCT; THE IMPACT OF THE CONDUCT ON THE SCHOOL AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY; APPLICABLE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES; AND STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.

**For a complete list of Belding Board of Education policies please visit
<http://www.neola.com/belding-mi/>**

Belding Area Schools Transportation Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

The Belding Area Schools Transportation Department is dedicated to providing safe and efficient transportation to eligible Belding students to the School they attend from the vicinity of their home.

A. Operation of System

1. In organizing and operating the transportation system, all applicable statutes, rules and regulations of the State of Michigan and its agencies, shall be strictly adhered to and all recommendations and suggestions shall be carefully considered.
2. In all cases, first consideration shall be to provide eligible pupils safe transportation to regularly scheduled classes. Careful consideration shall be given also to efficiency and economy of operation.
3. Transportation shall be considered a privilege to be enjoyed by a student only as long as he/she accepts responsibility for his/her own conduct, carefully follows all rules and regulations and promptly responds to the directions and requests of the bus driver.
4. Students will be eligible for transportation if they live one-half (1/2) mile or further from the school they attend.
5. Wherever possible, stops for students, who qualify for transportation, will be located within one-quarter (1/4) mile of their homes. Stops will be kept to a practical minimum. Parents will be responsible for transportation from the home to the bus stop. Belding Area Schools will be responsible for transportation from the assigned bus stop of the child to and the return from school. This shall apply to all students K-12.
6. The measurement of the mileage to determine student eligibility for transportation shall be the responsibility of the Transportation Supervisor. His/her measurement shall be accepted as conclusive evidence of eligibility for transportation – except, that any person who feels himself/herself aggrieved by this measurement may, at his/her own personal expense, employ a qualified engineer to make a more precise measurement and may present this measurement to the Superintendent of Schools

along with an application for approval of transportation service for children living in his/her home who are legal residents of the school system.

7. Students identified by an individual educational planning committee (IEPC) as a “Handicapped Person” in accordance with RE40.1702, who would otherwise be unable to participate in an appropriate special education program or service operated or contracted for by the Ionia Intermediate Schools, shall be eligible for only that additional transportation, determined by the committee, to be necessary for the person to participate in the program or service. Only students identified by an IEPC shall be eligible for transport services that exceed those described above.
8. A Belding resident pupil enrolled in a nonpublic school shall be eligible for transportation to his/her nonpublic school (if that school is located within the boundaries of the Belding Area Schools system) according to the same eligibility provisions and schedules in effect for public school pupils.
9. School transportation equipment shall be used only for the transportation of pupils to and from school and be used to furnish transportation to groups identified by and in accordance with the school code.
10. The Board recognizes the needs of the District to own or lease vehicles to carry out the instructional program and the business of operating the schools. The Superintendent is authorized to determine the extent to which District-owned vehicles might be used for official school business. Such vehicles shall not be used for personal travel unless expressly approved by the Board. Drivers of school-owned vehicles shall be properly licensed. Privately-owned vehicles may be used to conduct school business when approved by the Superintendent.
11. There shall be no charge for pupil transportation to non-mandatory, non-credit events unless it is determined by the Board of Education that adequate funds to support these activities are not available; in which case, such charges shall be determined, as permitted by State regulations, according to procedures recommended by the administration and approved by the Board.
12. Routes are to be planned to keep individual riding distance and time to a practical minimum.
13. Each eligible pupil will be assigned to use a specific bus and bus stop and shall not be permitted to use any other bus or bus stop without permission from the Transportation Supervisor, or his/her designee.
14. The Transportation Supervisor may grant permission for a pupil to ride a different bus or use a different stop. Such permission may be granted only upon request of a parent, guardian or other responsible adult. The request shall be for a specified period of time subject to the following conditions and limitations:
 - The request change must not result in the overcrowding of any bus; alteration of any regular bus route, bus stop or time schedule or in any other way interfere with the regular operation of the transportation system.
 - The purpose for which special permission is requested shall be:
 - To relieve a temporary situation which would otherwise cause a severe hardship on a pupil getting to and from school.
 - For such other emergency or unusual reason as shall be approved by the Transportation Supervisor, or his/her designee.
 - Drivers are to transport only their regularly assigned passengers unless other authorization is received from the Transportation Supervisor.
 - In an emergency, written requests may be waived. Emergency requests should be made to the child’s Principal, who will be responsible to coordinate necessary actions with the Transportation Supervisor.
 - In case of an emergency with the bus transportation system whereby the buses are unable to run, it is the responsibility of the parents to get the children to and from school.
15. Parents may request transportation to or from baby sitters or an alternate location instead of their home address. The request may be granted, if the following conditions are met:
 - An established stop will be used.
 - There is room on the bus to accommodate the student.
 - The stop will be the same every night.
16. A permanent change in a student’s bus stop (pick-up or drop-off) may be made over the phone by calling the Transportation Department year round at 616-794-4970. Please allow up to 24 hours for a change in bus stop location.
17. Groups of students will not be transported for overnight slumber parties, scouting, etc.
18. For the safety of the students, no one other than a school employee may enter a school bus that is in route to/from school, without the permission of the Transportation Supervisor or the Superintendent.
19. The safety and conduct of a pupil while going to and from a bus stop and while waiting at a bus stop, is the responsibility of the parent. The school recognizes a secondary responsibility to assist and cooperate with the parents.

B. Expectations for Student Behavior and Discipline Response for Misbehavior

1. Belding Area Schools consider the school bus to be “an extension of the classroom.” All school handbook policies apply on the school bus.
2. Pupils transported in a school bus shall be under the authority of and are responsible to the driver of the bus. This includes advising students concerning rules and regulations, assigning seats, encouraging good behavior, and other generally accepted means of maintaining and developing constructive pupil-school relationships. Continued disorderly conduct or persistent refusal to submit to the authority of the driver shall be sufficient reason for a pupil to be denied transportation in accordance with regulations as set by the Belding Board of Education. No driver shall require any pupil to leave the bus before he or she has reached his/her destination. Under no circumstance, shall a parent stop a school bus for personal reasons. The parent shall contact the Supervisor of Transportation and the problems will be handled through his/her office.
3. For minor infraction or first-time offenses, the driver will issue a warning by means of a “Bus Conduct Report.” Copies will be given to the student, Transportation Supervisor, Building Principal and will become part of the student’s disciplinary record. To assure the parent has seen the Bus Conduct Report, it must be signed by a parent returned to the driver by the next school day.
4. For repeated offenses or a major infraction (i.e. fighting or in some other way jeopardizing the safety of the bus) the driver may issue a Conduct Report suspending the student from riding the bus. Copies of the Conduct Report will be given to the student,

Transportation Supervisor, Building Principal and will become part of the student's disciplinary record. This Conduct must be signed by the parent and returned to the driver. Typically, suspensions will be given as follows:

- First Bus Conduct Report: Warning
 - Second Bus Conduct Report: One-Day Suspension
 - Third Bus Conduct Report: Two-Day Suspension etc.
5. If either because repeated suspensions have failed to improve behavior or, because of gross misconduct on the bus, the student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus for extended periods by the Supervisor of Transportation and the Building Principal.

In case of extended suspension, the Principal will notify the parents and explain to them the action of the student and the length of the suspension. The bus driver cannot permit the suspended student to ride on the bus until the suspension period has been completed by the student. In case of a student over 18 years of age, it is required that only the student be notified of the suspension.

In case of suspension, the parent or the student has the right to appeal to the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall establish the procedure and time limits for appeal. The parent shall be notified, in writing, of this procedure. The parent shall be responsible for the transportation of the pupil to and from school during the effective time of any suspension of the pupil's riding privilege.

6. In emergency cases or serious misbehavior which demands immediate action, the driver may request that the Supervisor remove a student from a bus until regular disciplinary procedures are instituted.
7. Basis Rules for Bus Stop Conduct
- Stay off the traveled roadway at all times while waiting for a bus.
 - Wait until the bus has come to a stop before attempting to get on or off.
 - Leave the bus only with the consent of the driver.
 - Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a stop, except in case of emergency.
 - Stay out of the "danger zone" and never crawl under the bus.
 - Cross the traveled highway, if necessary after leaving the bus, in the following manner:
 - Make certain the bus is not moving.
 - Upon leaving the bus, go to the front of the bus within sight of the driver and wait for the proper signal for crossing.
 - Upon signal from the driver, or from a personal escort, look both to the right and left and proceed across the highway in front of the bus.
 - Walk (do not run) in front of the bus when crossing the highway.
 - Student conduct rules described in Building Use Student Handbook (fighting, substance abuse, etc.) shall be enforced while the student is riding district transportation equipment.
 - It should be remembered that administrators have the authority to question misbehavior of any form within the building, on school grounds, on district transportation equipment, at school-related activities or when directed toward any staff member. Any behavior which adversely affects the learning process or atmosphere of the school, as interpreted by the administration, will be handled by disciplinary action.

C. Basic Rules for Bus Riding Safety

1. Follow directions given by the driver.
2. Wait until bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus. Remain seated while bus is in motion. Enter or leave the bus only at the front door, except in case of emergency.
3. Do not leave the bus without the driver's consent, except at home or school. No unauthorized stops will be made.
4. Occupy only the seat assigned by the driver. Keep feet out of aisles, off of seats and off the back of seats. Standing will not be permitted unless all seats are filled to capacity.
5. Musical instruments will be held by the owner. Do not leave them in the aisles, or at front or rear emergency door.
6. Remain seated, sit erect with your feet on the floor, and back against the seat at all times.
7. Please keep head, arms and hands inside bus at all times.
8. Avoid unnecessary disturbing noises. The driver should not be distracted while bus is in motion. Do not shout at passing persons or vehicles.
9. Be courteous! Use no profane or vulgar language.
10. Please use "inside voices."
11. Help keep the bus clean.
12. No littering
13. Keep hands to yourself.
14. Be considerate of small children.
15. Inform driver when absence is expected from school.
16. Fighting, pushing, shoving or other rowdy behavior will not be tolerated.
17. Report any damage you observe to the driver. Student-caused damage to the interior or exterior of the bus will result in payment for damages and in suspended bus riding privileges.
18. No pets or animals may be transported on the bus.

19. A student will leave or board the bus only at his or her assigned stop. Any deviation must have prior approval of the Transportation Supervisor, upon written request of the parent and approval of the Building Principal.
20. The bus driver has the authority to issue a report of misconduct for violation of the rules by a student.

D. Field Trips (including Athletics and Band)

1. All rules which apply to students on regular bus routes, also apply to students on field trips.
2. Failure to follow the rules may result in the loss of future riding privileges. This may apply to entire groups or teams as the situation warrants.
3. Students on a field trip must be supervised on the bus by a staff member other than the driver.

E. Responsibility of the Parents: It is the responsibility of parents whose children are transported by the Belding Area Schools.

1. To ascertain and insure that their children arrive at the bus stop ten (10) minutes before the scheduled stop time.
2. To provide necessary protection of their children when going to and from the bus stops and while waiting for the bus to arrive for pick-up.
3. To accept joint responsibility with the school authorities for proper conduct of their children while the children are in school custody.
4. To make reasonable effort to understand and cooperate with school employees responsible for pupil transportation.
5. To ensure all address and phone number information is always up-to-date with the Transportation Department.

F. Guidelines for Special Education

1. All Rules and Regulations which apply to general education transportation will also apply to students assigned to special programs.
2. Parents or Guardians must be available to help load or unload those students who need assistance. It is the parents' responsibility to get the student from the house to the bus.
3. Drivers will not drop a student off when it is obvious there is no one home. If this situation arises, the driver will radio the transportation office for guidance. If convenient, the driver will stop back at the home at a later time. The Parents/Guardians may be requested to pick up the child at the transportation office at the completion of the route. The student may be dropped at an alternate drop-site if such a site has been listed on the student's Emergency Information form and someone is known to be at that alternate site. If Parent/Guardian cannot be contacted within a reasonable time after completion of the route, the student will be taken to the Police Station.
4. Parents will be asked to fill out an Emergency Information Form giving medical information, emergency instructions and other pertinent information.
5. Any special equipment to be used in transporting a student identified for special education (i.e. harnesses, restraints or medical equipment) will be identified by the IEPC or its use coordinated with the parent, Transportation Supervisor and Building Administrator.

G. Operation of School Buses During Times of Inclement Weather

1. Morning Run: Upon consideration of the road and weather information available, the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, will decide whether buses can safely travel their routes. The completeness with which any route is covered will be in accordance with the judgment of the Transportation Supervisor and the driver of the bus on that particular route. Roads which are not traveled in the morning will not necessarily be traveled in the afternoon. Parents who bring their children into school should plan on picking them up at the end of the school day.
2. Early Dismissal: Buses will be sent out early whenever, in the opinion of the Superintendent of Schools or designee, it is felt that deteriorating weather and road conditions advise early release of students.
3. Belding Area Schools Two-Hour Delay Policy: When the weather requires the District Administration to delay the start of school by two hours because of fog, snow, ice or other conditions, it is important that parents, students and staff understand what a "two-hour delay" means.
 - In the event of a two-hour delay, there will no morning Pre-K programs (ECSE, GSRP, Preschool, Headstart). Afternoon sessions of these programs will start on schedule.
 - Buses will pick students up at their regular bus stop two hours after their normal, scheduled time. For example: if a child normally catches the bus at 6:30 a.m., the pick-up will be at 8:30 a.m. on days when a two-hour delay is called.
 - Likewise, school will start two hours after the normal start-time, so high school students will begin classes at 9:25 a.m. (students should report to their second block class) and morning Heartlands will be cancelled; middle school students will begin classes at 9:30 a.m.; Ellis Elementary students will begin classes at 10:45 a.m. and Woodview Elementary students will begin classes at 10:50 a.m.
 - If the start of school is delayed, breakfast will not be served but lunch will be available as usual. Dismissal time will remain the same.
 - Safety remains the primary focus when the determination is made to close school or delay the start of school by two hours. From time to time, it may be predicted that a two-hour delay will allow morning fog to lift or roads to be cleared. If the weather has not cleared after the two-hour delay, school will be cancelled for the day and broadcast via

local media. Please remember that parents always have the right to make the final decision if they feel it is not safe to send their child(ren) during inclement weather.

4. Parental Prerogative: If parents feel that it is unsafe for their children to ride the bus because of poor weather or road conditions, they should keep their children home. Also parents are encouraged to pick their children up at school and take them home if the parents feel that weather or road conditions will be unsafe at the regularly-scheduled school dismissal time.
5. Closing Information: Local radio, TV and Internet Sites will broadcast information furnished by our school district regarding all actions necessary in the event of “severe or hazardous weather” situations.
6. Severe and Hazardous Weather Bulletin Policy Tornado Policy – to clarify terms used, definitions are stated to guide intent and interpretation of this Bulletin.
 - Tornado Watch: means weather conditions are such that tornadoes could occur.
 - Tornado Warning: means a tornado has been sighted in the area.
 - Hazardous Weather: means that weather and/or resulting road conditions are such that the safe operation of vehicles involves unnecessary risk.

H. Operation Procedures

1. When the school receives official information of a tornado watch during school hours, action by school authorities will depend on the extent of the forecast and time element involved.
 - The situation may require action as follows:
 - Dismissal of students that walk to school with instructions to proceed immediately for their homes or other parentally-designated places.
 - Transportation of others as time permits: an attempt to transport the middle and high school students to their regular bus stops first, followed with the transportation of elementary students approximately one hour later.
 - Generally, no children will be picked up and brought to school by buses when a Tornado Watch is in effect.
 - Parents or designated representatives may pick up children at school if they so desire, but are requested to avoid school bus loading areas and bus traffic routes.
2. When the school is officially notified of a tornado warning during school hours, it is expected that the time available will be insufficient to disperse students. If so, procedures will be placed in operation to provide the students with maximum protection offered at each school building.
3. If hazardous weather conditions develop when schools are in operation, the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, will decide on the matter of early dismissal of students. Such decision will be based on reports and information received by the Transportation Supervisor. Procedures for early dismissal in this situation are as follows:
 - The middle and high school students will be dismissed first and appropriate bus route schedules will be placed in operation.
 - Elementary students in session will similarly be dismissed approximately one hour later depending on prevailing weather and road conditions.
4. Hazardous weather conditions may develop requiring a decision by the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee, not to commence operation of schools on a particular day. Action will be based on reports and information received by the Transportation Supervisor and on consultation with the Superintendent.